

BERMAGUI PRESCHOOL



4.15 Death of a Child or Other Person at the Service Policy

This policy has been developed by Bermagui Preschool in consultation with educators and families and approved by the Approved Provider.

Date Approved: August 2025

Review Date: August 2028

Aim

Bermagui Preschool is committed to providing a safe environment for children, educators, families, volunteers and visitors. While the death of a child or other person at the service is an extremely rare event, the preschool recognises the need to respond promptly, respectfully and in accordance with legislative requirements.

This policy outlines the procedures for responding to the death of a child or other person at the service to ensure emergency assistance is obtained promptly, legislative notification requirements are met, and children, families and educators are supported with dignity and compassion.

Strategies

Immediate Response

In the event of the apparent death of a child or other person while at Bermagui Preschool, educators will:

- immediately assess the situation and ensure the area is safe
- commence first aid and/or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) in accordance with current Australian Resuscitation Council guidelines where appropriate
- call 000 immediately and request an ambulance
- follow all directions provided by emergency services
- continue to provide care until relieved by emergency personnel.

Notification of Families

The Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person will:

- contact the child's parent or authorised emergency contact as soon as practicable
- arrange for the family to attend the nominated hospital or medical facility where appropriate
- provide factual information only.

Medical practitioners or emergency services personnel are responsible for formally confirming and communicating a death to the family. Preschool staff will not make this notification.

Mandatory Notifications

The Approved Provider and/or Nominated Supervisor will make all required notifications, including where applicable:

- NSW Police, where required
- SafeWork NSW if the incident is a notifiable incident under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- the NSW Department of Education (Regulatory Authority) within the required legislative timeframe
- the service's insurer as soon as practicable
- the Approved Provider / Board of Directors.

Where the death of a child occurs while being educated and cared for by the service, or following an incident while receiving education and care, the incident is considered a serious incident under the Education and Care Services National Law and will be notified to the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours.

Records relating to the incident will be retained in accordance with the 2.12 Record Keeping and Retention of Records Policy and legislative requirements.

Preserving the Incident Site

The site of the incident will be preserved and not disturbed unless it is necessary to:

- assist an injured person
- remove a deceased person
- make the area safe
- prevent further injury or risk
- comply with directions provided by emergency services or an authorised inspector.

Communication

Only the Approved Provider or the Nominated Supervisor will communicate with families, educators, external agencies or the media unless otherwise authorised. Communication with families will be respectful, factual and protect the privacy and dignity of those involved.

All media enquiries will be managed in accordance with the 1.08 Publicity and Media Policy.

Supporting Children, Families and Educators

Following a death at the service, Bermagui Preschool will:

- provide appropriate emotional support to children, families and educators
- access professional counselling or employee assistance services where appropriate
- provide children with developmentally appropriate support and reassurance
- communicate with families regarding available support services.

The wellbeing of all affected persons will remain a priority throughout the response and recovery process.

Support strategies will be determined having regard to the age, developmental needs and cultural background of the children and families involved.

Post-Incident Review

Following the incident, the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will:

- conduct a debrief with educators
- review the circumstances surrounding the incident
- complete all required investigations and documentation
- implement corrective actions where identified
- review relevant policies, procedures and risk assessments
- identify opportunities for continuous improvement.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Information relating to the incident will be managed confidentially and in accordance with the 2.06 Confidentiality Policy. Personal information will only be shared where authorised by law or required for the management of the incident.

Resources

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)
- NSW Department of Education
- SafeWork NSW
- NSW Health
- Kidsafe NSW
- Australian Resuscitation Council

References

Education and Care Services National Law

- Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW)

Education and Care Services National Regulations

- Regulation 12 – Meaning of serious incident
- Regulation 85 – Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures
- Regulation 86 – Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
- Regulation 87 – Incident, injury, trauma and illness record
- Regulation 168 – Education and care service policies and procedures
- Regulation 176 – Time to notify certain information to the Regulatory Authority

National Quality Standard

Quality Area 2 – Children's Health and Safety

- Standard 2.2
 - Element 2.2.2

Other Legislation

- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 (NSW)

Related Documentation

Related Policies

- 1.08 Publicity and Media
- 2.06 Confidentiality
- 2.12 Record Keeping and Retention of Records
- 2.13 Notification to the Regulatory Authority
- 4.12 Incident, Injury and Trauma
- 4.16 Emergency Procedures (Evacuation and Lockdown)
- 4.20 Workplace Health and Safety
- 4.32 First Aid
- 4.41 Paramountcy in Child Safe Practice

Related Documents

- Incident, Injury and Trauma Record
- Serious Incident Notification
- Emergency Contact Records
- Risk Assessments
- First Aid Records
- Emergency Evacuation Procedures
- Staff Debrief Records
- Critical Incident Documentation

Version History

V1.0 – First Published: Pre-October 2021

V2.0 – August 2025: Comprehensive review completed. Updated to reflect current legislation, contemporary terminology, notification requirements, emergency response procedures, post-incident review processes and alignment with the Bermagui Preschool Policy Manual.