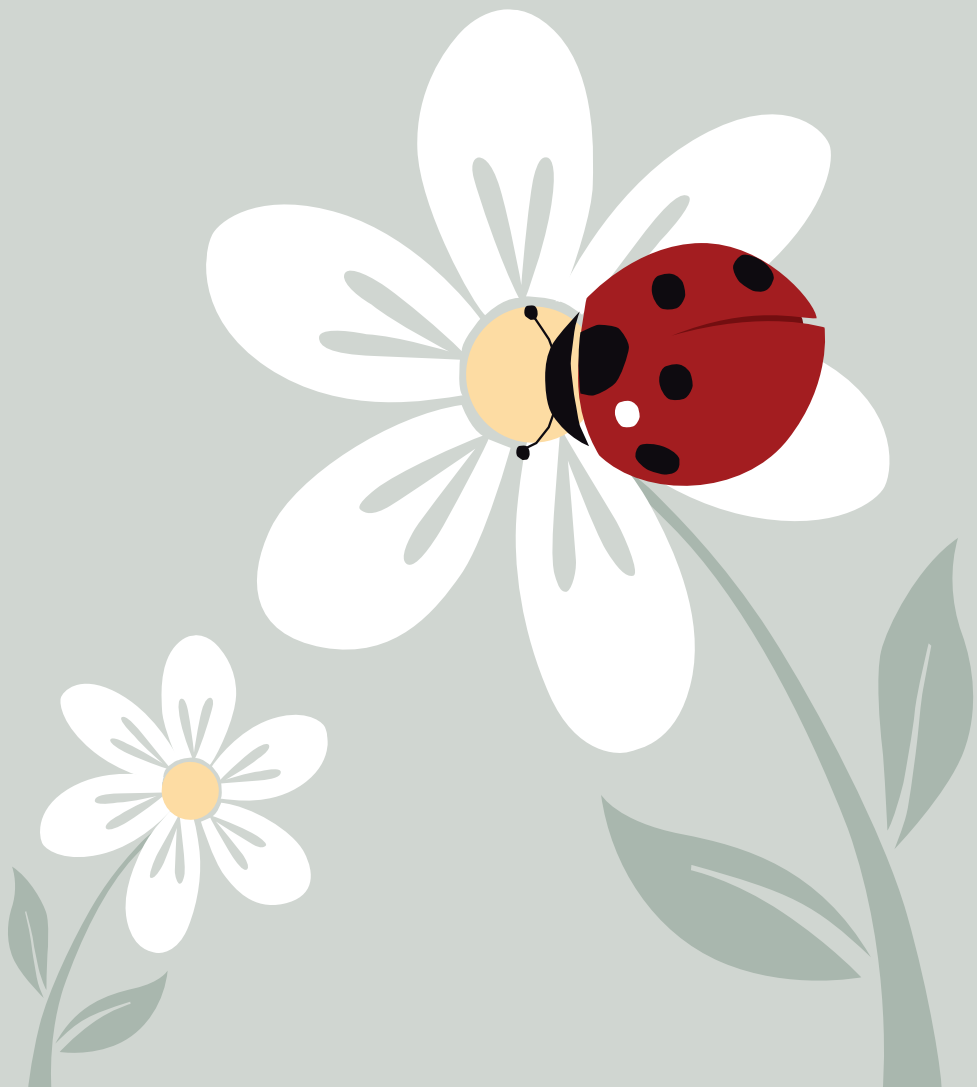


# What we have to do when a child dies

Information for parents, families and carers



The death of a child is tragic and we don't usually expect children to die before their parents. Talking and thinking about a child's death is a sensitive and painful subject, particularly for parents, families and carers.

The following information helps explain what has to happen in a child death review following the death of a child or young person under the age of 18.

## What is a review and why is it needed?

Government legislation requires that every Local Safeguarding Children Board reviews the death of each child or young person who lived in their area. Parents and family members should be assured that the objective of the child death review process is to learn lessons in order to improve the health, safety and well being of children.

**The process is not about culpability or blame.**

## How does a review happen?

Information about each child and how they died is collected together and anonymised into a short report. The information comes from records held by hospitals, local health services (eg GPs and health visitors), schools, police, children's services or other agencies whose staff knew the child. The report also includes something about the family circumstances so that the Child Death Overview Panel can understand the death in its context.

A Child Death Overview Panel includes health professionals, children's services and the police and meets regularly to look at the reports. They want to be clear about what caused the child's death so they can decide whether to recommend changes or improvements to services for children that might prevent similar deaths in the future.

## What does this mean for you?

As part of this process, our Panel has been informed of your child's death. We will be looking at an anonymised report about what happened and some information about your home circumstances. We will not need to contact you directly about this review.

It may take several months before we have finished our work as we have to wait until the other enquiries about the death are completed, such as the work of the pathologist and coroner, or any legal processes.

## Can you contribute?

Unfortunately, it is not possible for parents or family representatives to attend the Panel meetings. If you have information that you would like to contribute to the review you may do this via your GP or other health professionals who will forward this information onto the review Panel.

All the information we gather will be treated with the greatest respect and in strictest confidence. We guarantee that none of our findings, recommendations or reports will name or identify your child or family.

We cannot give you individual feedback about your child's death but you are welcome to read our anonymised annual report that is available on the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board website:  
**[www.hertssafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.hertssafeguarding.org.uk)**

If you have any questions or queries please contact your GP or health professional.



