



**Briefing Note for DSLs:
Updated Ofsted Requirements
for Reporting Serious
Childcare Incidents
May 2026**



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Purpose of this Update

Ofsted has updated its guidance on reporting serious childcare incidents, emphasising that **providers must notify Ofsted of significant events as soon as possible and always within 14 days** of the incident occurring. This applies to Ofsted-registered childminders, nannies, nurseries and other daycare providers.

For school-based early years provision, this update is a timely reminder to ensure internal safeguarding and incident-reporting systems are robust, timely and compliant.

What Counts as a Reportable Incident?

Ofsted requires notification of any **significant event affecting the safety, suitability or welfare of children**, including:

- Allegations of **serious harm or abuse** committed by anyone living, working or caring for children on the premises.
- **Disqualification** of a registered provider, employee or household member.
- Any event that may affect a person's **suitability** to work with children (e.g., health changes, police involvement).
- Events affecting the **condition or safety of the premises**, including fire, flooding or closures.
- The **death of a child** in your care.
- A child's **serious accident, injury or illness**, including food poisoning affecting two or more children.

Minor injuries (e.g., sprains, grazes, insect bites) do **not** need to be reported.

Key Expectations for Providers

Ofsted is explicit that:

- Notifications must be made **as soon as possible**, and **no later than 14 days**.
- Providers must use the **online reporting form**, which takes around 10–20 minutes to complete.

- Sufficient detail must be provided, including the setting's reference number, address, and full incident information.

Implications for DSLs and Early Years Leaders

This update reinforces the need for DSLs, nursery managers and school-based EYFS leaders to ensure that safeguarding and incident-reporting systems are clear, timely and well understood.

A. Staff Understanding

- Staff must know **what constitutes a reportable incident** and the threshold for notifying Ofsted.
- Clear examples should be shared during induction and refresher training.

B. Escalation Processes

- Internal procedures must allow staff to **escalate concerns immediately** to the DSL or manager.
- Leaders should ensure there is **no delay** between internal reporting and external notification.

C. Accurate and Timely Records

- Incident records must be **detailed, factual and contemporaneous**.
- Systems should support leaders to submit notifications **within the 14-day statutory timeframe**.

D. Training and Clarity of Roles

- Staff training should be revisited to ensure everyone understands:
 - Their **responsibilities**
 - What to report
 - How to escalate
 - Who is responsible for submitting the Ofsted notification

Recommended Actions for DSLs

- **Review the updated Ofsted guidance** on reporting serious childcare incidents.
- **Audit current internal procedures** to ensure they support rapid escalation and timely reporting.
- **Update staff training** to include clear examples of reportable incidents.
- **Check record-keeping systems** to ensure they capture the information required for Ofsted's online form.
- **Communicate expectations** to all early years staff, including supply and agency workers.
- **Ensure leadership oversight**, including periodic checks that incidents are being reported appropriately.