A four-year-old boy was found dead in the locked boot of his father’s taxi on Friday, alongside his three-year-old brother who survived but is now in hospital in a serious condition.

Police believe the boys accidentally locked themselves in the boot.

The boys were found by their father in the taxi parked outside their house in Talin Chon district on Friday night, police from Thammasala station said.

The boys were rushed to Thon Buri 2 Hospital but doctors said the elder brother was dead on arrival.

His younger brother was in a coma and sent to Phyahtai 3 Hospital.

The boys' father, Subin Tuekbangprom, 27, said he usually looked after the boys in the daytime and worked as a taxi driver at night, when their mother took care of them.

Issara Sankavadee of Phyahtai 3 Hospital said the surviving boy was suffering from a cerebral edema as a result of heat and a lack of oxygen since he had been stuck in the boot for about five hours.

Mr Subin said he let the boys play together while he took a nap before starting his taxi shift.

However, when their mother came home, she could not find the boys and the couple searched all over the house.

Finally, the father noticed the taxi’s doors were unlocked so he checked inside the boot and found the boys.

Police suspected the boys had been playing in the car.

The boot might have closed accidentally or the boys might have closed it themselves and then been unable to reopen it from the inside, police said.