

## SAFER SLEEP POLICY



### Statement of intent

The safety of babies and children sleeping is paramount.

Our intent is to minimise the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)<sup>1</sup> in babies up to 12 months of age, and sudden unexpected death in childhood (SUDC) in children over 12 months of age. We do this by following the advice provided by the DfE, the Lullaby Trust and NHS.

### Aims

We aim to ensure that all children have enough sleep to support their development and natural sleeping rhythms in a safe environment.

Our aim is also to make sure that all babies and children are placed down to sleep safely and that they are kept safe whilst they are sleeping.

We aim to support families so that they are aware of the risks when their children are sleeping at home.

### Methods

We ask parents to complete forms on their baby's/child's sleeping routine with their key person when starting at nursery; these are reviewed and updated at timely intervals. If a baby has an unusual sleeping routine or a position that we do not use in the nursery, i.e. babies sleeping on their tummies or in a sling, we will explain our policy to the parents and not usually offer this unless the baby's doctor has advised the parent of a medical reason to do so. In such cases, we would ask parents to provide written permission to adopt a different position or pattern for their baby/child.

We recognise parent knowledge of their baby/child with regard to sleep routines and will, where possible, work together to ensure individual sleep routines and well-being continue to be met. However, staff will not force a baby/child to sleep or keep them awake against their will. They will also not usually wake children from their sleep.

Individual sleep routines are followed rather than having one set sleep time for all children. We create an environment that helps to settle children that require a sleep,

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for example dimming the lights or using soft music, where applicable. We will maintain the needs of the children who do not require a sleep and ensure they can continue to play, learn and develop. This may involve taking children outdoors or linking with other rooms or groups of children.

Staff will discuss with parents any changes in sleep routines at the end of the session and share observations and information if they do not receive enough sleep.

The policy changes for different age groups as follows:

### **Children under two years old**

For babies/toddlers under two years old, we ensure that:

- Babies aged 12 months and under must only be placed to sleep on their back at the foot of the cot.
- Babies aged over 12 months are placed down on their back in their own separate sleep space on a clear, flat, firm surface such as a cot, bed or mattress on the floor which has suitable British Safety Standards
- If a baby has rolled onto their tummy, we turn them onto their back again unless they are able to roll from back to front and back again on their own, in which case we enable them to find their own position
- Babies and toddlers are never put down to sleep with a bottle to self-feed
- Babies under six months of age must always have an adult with them in the same room for every sleep. We will monitor their sleep every 10 minutes
- Babies and toddlers are monitored visually when sleeping by looking for the rise and fall of their chest.
- Babies/toddlers are always within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping.
- All comforters will be removed from cots/beds once asleep.

### **Children 2 years old or over**

- Toddlers are monitored visually when sleeping, looking for the rise and fall of the chest and if the sleep position has changed and checked every 10 minutes as a minimum

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- Toddlers should be placed on their backs to sleep, transitioning to a different position if they can roll over by themselves.
- Toddlers will only be placed on a sleep mat, with a fitted sheet.
- Toddlers will be allowed comforters, but will be removed once asleep.

### Sleeping twins

We follow the advice from The Lullaby Trust regarding sleeping twins <sup>2</sup>, while working with parents to maintain their sleep routines and well-being.

### Premature and low birth weight babies

We follow The Lullaby Trust guidance regarding premature and low birth weight babies <sup>3</sup>. If a baby was born prematurely (before 37 weeks) or weighing less than 2.5kg or 5.5lb, we apply safer sleep advice for a year from their due date, rather than the date they were born.

### The Sleeping environment

We maintain a safe sleeping environment for all babies and children by:

- Ensuring every child has their own separate sleep space.
- Children on mats will sleep head to toe.
- Only using safety-approved cots and other suitable sleeping equipment (i.e. mats) that are compliant with British Standard regulations.
- Using a firm flat surface such as a cot, bed or mattress on the floor. Babies aged 12 months and under are only placed to sleep in a cot.
- Using a firm, flat waterproof mattress, a clean fitted sheet and lightweight bedding which is firmly tucked in around the child below their shoulders to prevent head covering.
- Ensuring the baby/child is placed with their feet at the bottom of the cot.
- Ensuring every baby/child is provided with clean bedding.
- Ensuring babies/children are appropriately dressed for sleep to avoid overheating.
- Ensuring babies'/children's heads are not covered at all times.

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- Ensuring no extra items such as toys, pillows, extra blankets, bumpers, wedges or straps are used in cots; we will use sleep comforters for babies until they have fallen asleep and then will be removed.
- We Lullaby Trust advice regarding the safe use of dummies while babies are sleeping.
- Keeping all spaces around cots and beds clear from hanging objects, i.e. hanging cords, blind cords, drawstring bags.
- Monitoring the sleep room temperature and ensuring it remains between 16-20°C at all times, where possible.
- Ensuring babies and children over six months of age are always within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping, and are checked every 10 minutes; we will not use video/baby monitors to enable the sleeping children to be seen and heard at all times.
- Ensuring babies under six months of age always have an adult with them in the same room for every sleep and are checked every 10 minutes.

| This policy was adopted on | Signed on behalf of the nursery | Date for review |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| 01/07/2026                 | Amisha Dhir                     | July 2027       |

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nhs.uk/baby/caring-for-a-newborn/sudden-infant-death-syndrome-sids/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/baby-safety/premature-babies-and-multiples/twins-and-multiples/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/baby-safety/premature-babies-and-multiples/premature-babies/>