



Safe Sleep Policy and Procedure

At Sherwood Green Nursery we aim to ensure that all children have enough sleep to support their development and natural sleeping rhythms in a safe environment.

Children need sleep and rest periods to support their growth, development and wellbeing. As every child develops at different rates, we ensure individual sleep routines are followed and respected throughout the day.

Aim

To ensure all babies and children receive the rest and sleep they need to support their health, wellbeing and development.

To ensure that all children are provided with a safe, secure and appropriate sleep environment at all times, in line with the statutory requirements of the EYFS and current safer sleep guidance from the NHS and The Lullaby Trust.

Sleep plays a vital role in children's physical development, brain growth and emotional wellbeing. Our approach ensures that children are supported to feel safe, settled and well-rested - creating the foundations for confident learning and development.

Policy Statement

The nursery recognises that sleep is an essential part of early development. We are committed to:

- Meeting each child's individual sleep and rest needs
- Working in partnership with parents and carers
- Providing a calm, consistent and nurturing sleep environment
- Ensuring all sleep practices are safe, compliant and regularly reviewed

**This policy relates to the Safety and Welfare requirements of the EYFS.
3.42, 3.84, 3.91**

Our Approach to Sleep

We understand that every child is different. Some children need regular sleep, while others require quiet rest.

For this reason we will:

- Respond to each child's individual sleep needs and cues
- Allow children to sleep when they are tired and wake naturally where possible
- Work in partnership with parents to follow agreed sleep routines, adapting where necessary to meet safety requirements
- Use a sleep questionnaire to gather detailed information about each child's routine and create a sleep plan for individual children where needed
- Never force a child to sleep
- Provide calm, consistent opportunities for rest
- Ensure all sleep environments are safe, clear and appropriate

- Support children to sleep at times suited to their individual needs
- Use appropriate, soothing environments to support sleep and rest

And critically:

- Ensure all sleep practices follow the statutory safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS and safer sleep guidance from the NHS and The Lullaby Trust

Methods

The nursery follows recognised safer sleep guidance to minimise the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and ensure the safety of all sleeping children.

We work in close partnership with parents to ensure consistency between home and nursery, while always prioritising safe practice in line with statutory guidance.

What is SIDS?

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the sudden and unexplained death of an otherwise healthy baby, usually occurring during sleep.

Risk awareness:

While rare, SIDS most commonly affects babies under 12 months, particularly in the first 6 months. Certain factors may increase risk.

What Causes SIDS?

Sudden infant death syndrome also known as SIDS, is rare but it does still happen. It's not known what causes SIDS, but certain things can increase the risk. Babies born early (before 37 weeks) or with a low birth weight (less than 2.5kg or 5.5lb) are also more at risk of SIDS.

SIDS is more likely to happen in the first 6 months of life, but it can affect babies up to 12 months old, it can happen anytime a baby is asleep, day or night.

How to Reduce the Risk of SIDS:

Do:

- Place babies on their back to sleep in the feet-to-foot position in the bottom of the cot
- Use a firm, flat mattress
- Use a dummy for children who have these

Don't:

- Let babies get too hot or too cold – keep the room between 16°C -20°C
- Have anything in the cot that could cover a babies face – such as bumpers, pillows, duvets, loose bedding, soft toys, sleep pods or sleep nests.

Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC) refers to the unexplained death of a child over the age of 12 months that remains unexplained after thorough investigation.

Although **SIDS** and **SUDC** are both rare, they highlight the importance of maintaining safe sleep practices for all babies and young children.

At the Nursery, we take this responsibility seriously.

All staff are trained in safer sleep practices and understand their role in reducing risk through:

- Consistent application of safer sleep guidance
- Maintaining safe, clear sleep environments
- Close supervision and regular monitoring of sleeping children
- Ensuring children are positioned safely at all times
- Working in partnership with parents to support safe routines

Safer sleep is a key safeguarding priority within the nursery. Our procedures are designed to ensure that all babies and children are protected, safe and closely monitored while resting.

Room Temperature

Maintaining a safe and comfortable room temperature is essential, as overheating increases the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

- Room temperatures in all areas where children are sleeping are carefully monitored
- Sleep areas are **well ventilated**, with airflow adjusted appropriately to maintain a safe and comfortable environment
- The temperature is maintained between **16–20°C**, in line with safer sleep guidance
- A room thermometer is used, and temperatures are **checked and recorded regularly** as part of sleep monitoring procedures
- Cots and beds are positioned **away from direct heat sources**, including radiators and direct sunlight
- Heating is adjusted as needed during sleep times to prevent overheating

Staff also monitor each child's temperature:

- Children are checked by feeling the **back of the neck or chest** (not hands or feet)
- If a child feels hot, clammy or sweaty, **layers or bedding will be reduced immediately**

Room and child temperature checks form part of ongoing sleep supervision to ensure children remain safe and comfortable at all times.

Blankets and Bedding and Children's Clothing

To ensure children sleep safely and comfortably, all bedding and clothing used during sleep must be appropriate, well-fitted and in line with safer sleep guidance.

- Only **lightweight blankets provided by the nursery** or **well-fitted sleep bags provided by parents** are used for babies
- When a sleep bag is used, **no additional blankets are added**
- Sleep bags must be **correctly fitted** to prevent children from slipping down inside, and the **appropriate tog rating** is used and appropriate to room temperature and season
- Where blankets are used, they are **firmly tucked below the child's shoulders** and the child is placed in the **feet-to-foot position**
- **Children's heads are never covered** by blankets or bedding
- **Cots are kept clear**, with no additional items such as bumpers, pillows or loose bedding

Sleep surfaces:

- **Fitted sheets** are used on all cot mattresses and sleep mats
- All bedding is kept **clean, dry and well maintained**

Clothing:

- Children are dressed in **suitable, comfortable clothing for sleep**
- **Outdoor clothing** (including shoes, coats and hats) is always removed before sleep
- Any **excessive, restrictive or unsuitable clothing** (including hooded items, thick layers or bibs) is removed
- Wet or soiled clothing is changed promptly

Temperature adjustments:

- Bedding and clothing are adjusted in line with **room temperature and individual child comfort**
- During warmer conditions, **blankets may be reduced or not used**, and alternative cooling measures (such as fans) are used safely to maintain a comfortable environment

Staff remain attentive to each child's comfort and will adjust clothing or bedding as needed to ensure they remain safe and at an appropriate temperature throughout their sleep.

Swaddling

Swaddling will only be used where requested by parents and agreed as part of the child's individual care plan. All swaddling practices must follow current safer sleep guidance.

- Swaddled babies are always placed on their **back to sleep** and never on their front or side
- Swaddling is **discontinued as soon as a baby shows signs of rolling**, to prevent the risk of turning onto their front
- Only **lightweight, breathable materials** (such as muslin or thin cotton) provided by parents are used
- **No additional blankets or bedding** are placed over a swaddled baby
- Babies are dressed in **minimal, appropriate clothing** underneath the swaddle to prevent overheating

Swaddling must be applied safely:

- Swaddles are **secure but not tight**, ensuring they cannot rise over the baby's face or head
- Swaddles must allow **free movement of the hips and legs** and must not be tight around the hips, in line with guidance to reduce the risk of hip development issues
- Babies who are **unwell, have a raised temperature or show signs of overheating will not be swaddled**

Staff closely monitor swaddled babies as part of ongoing sleep supervision to ensure they remain safe, comfortable and at an appropriate temperature.

Sleeping Position

Safe positioning during sleep is essential in reducing the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

- Babies are always placed on their **back to sleep**, never on their front or side
- This position is consistently used for every sleep, as it significantly reduces the risk of SIDS

As babies develop:

- Once a baby is able to **roll independently from back to front and back again**, they may be allowed to find their own preferred sleep position
- However, babies are always **initially placed on their back** when put down to sleep

Sleep surfaces:

- All mattresses are **firm, flat and not inclined**
- Mattresses are never propped up or adjusted, as this can increase risk

For babies in cots:

- Babies are placed in the **feet-to-foot position**, ensuring their feet are at the base of the cot
- This helps prevent babies from wriggling under blankets

For older children using sleep mats:

- Sleep mats are positioned with **appropriate spacing between each child** to maintain safety and comfort
- This ensures children cannot roll onto or disturb one another during sleep

All sleep positioning practices are closely monitored by staff as part of ongoing supervision to ensure children remain safe and settled throughout their rest.

Cots, Mattresses and Bed Mats

All sleep equipment is carefully selected, maintained and used to ensure children are safe, comfortable and supported during rest.

Sleep Spaces and Age-Appropriate Equipment

- The nursery provides **approved cots, mattresses and sleep mats** that meet current safety standards
- Each child is provided with **their own clean bedding** for every sleep
- Children sleep **individually**, with **one child per cot or sleep mat**

Sleep spaces are allocated based on age and developmental stage:

- **Babies under 12 months** sleep in a **cot only**, in line with safer sleep guidance
- **Younger toddlers (under 2 years)** may sleep in a cot or appropriate sleep space based on their development and individual needs

- **Older children** sleep on **sleep mats**, supporting independence while maintaining safety

All children are only placed to sleep in **designated, appropriate sleep spaces**.

If a child falls asleep elsewhere, e.g. on a cushion or 'cosy area':

- They are **moved promptly and safely** to a cot or sleep mat by a member of staff and sleep checks are started

Safe Sleep Environment

The following are **not used for sleep**:

- Cushions, beanbags or soft furnishings
- Pillows, quilts or duvets
- Cot bumpers, pods, nests or sleep positioners
- Wedges or straps
- Large soft toys or any items that could pose a risk of covering the face

Cots are always kept **clear and uncluttered**, in line with safer sleep guidance

Mattress Safety

- All mattresses are **firm, flat, well-fitted and waterproof**
- Mattresses are never inclined or propped
- When purchasing new mattresses, they are measured to ensure a **gap of no more than 3cm** between the mattress and cot sides
- Cot mattresses are **labelled with the date of purchase** and replaced **every 3 years**, or sooner if required

Cleaning and Hygiene

- Sheets are **washed daily**
- Blankets are **washed regularly** and immediately if soiled
- Sleep mats are **cleaned and disinfected after each use** and allowed to dry before storage

All bedding and sleep equipment is maintained to a high standard of cleanliness to support children's health and wellbeing.

Daily Safety Checks

- Cots, mattresses and sleep mats are **checked daily** for signs of damage, including tears, sagging or staining
- Waterproof coverings are checked to ensure they remain intact
- Any damaged equipment is **removed from use immediately** and reported to the Nursery Manager

Sleep Mat Positioning

- Sleep mats are positioned with **adequate spacing between each child** to ensure safety and comfort
- Children resting side by side are positioned in a **top and tail arrangement** where appropriate, reducing face-to-face contact

Sleeping Children who are brought to nursery

- Due to Safeguarding and Health and Safety reasons we are unable to accept sleeping children into the nursery.
- If children come to nursery and are asleep in prams, pushchairs or car seats, they must be taken out by the parent and woken.
- If children are still tired and need to go back to sleep, they will be placed in cot or on to a bed mat. This is to ensure that children are put to sleep in a safe environment and are able to be regularly checked by the staff team.
- Any coats, hats or other outdoor clothing will be removed before children are put back down to sleep

Dummies and Comforters

The nursery follows current guidance which suggests that dummy use at sleep times may reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

- Babies and children who use a dummy are **offered it at the start of each sleep**
- If a dummy falls out during sleep, it is **not replaced unless the child wakes or becomes unsettled**

To ensure safety:

- Dummy clips may be used during waking times; however, **they are always removed before sleep** to prevent any risk of entanglement
- Dummies are kept **clean and stored appropriately** to maintain hygiene

Comforters

- Where children use a comforter (such as a small soft toy or blanket), this may be used to support settling
- For **babies**, comforters are used with **careful consideration** and are **removed once the child is asleep** where appropriate, in line with safer sleep guidance
- For **older children**, comforters may remain, provided they do not pose a safety risk

All comforters are:

- **Age-appropriate and safe**
- Regularly checked by staff during sleep monitoring
- Removed immediately if they pose any risk (e.g. covering the face or affecting breathing)

Staff remain vigilant to ensure that dummies and comforters are used safely and appropriately at all times.

Sleeping Environments

Settling, Sleep Routines and Practice

We provide a calm, safe and secure environment to support children in settling to sleep.

- Sleep areas are kept **calm and soothing**, with low lighting and gentle background noise where appropriate
- Blinds may be adjusted to create a **restful environment**, while maintaining appropriate supervision

Settling to Sleep

- Babies are **never put down to sleep with a bottle** to self-feed
- Where a baby feeds to sleep, this is done **safely in the arms of a practitioner**, and the baby is then carefully transferred to their cot
- If a baby wakes during transfer, staff will respond promptly and **soothe them appropriately**
- Children are settled in line with their **individual preferences and comfort needs**
- Some children may prefer gentle reassurance (such as patting), while others prefer space - staff follow the child's cues
- Key persons share information with the team to ensure **consistent approaches to sleep and settling**

Partnership with Parents

- Parents provide information about their child's **sleep routines and preferences**
- The nursery follows these routines **where possible**, while ensuring all practices remain safe and appropriate
- As children settle into nursery, routines may naturally adapt
- The child's key person may adjust sleep times based on the child's needs and wellbeing, and will **communicate with parents where appropriate**

Waking and Sleep Duration

- Children are generally **allowed to wake naturally**, supporting their wellbeing and development
- Where parents request specific wake times, this is:
 - **Formally recorded and agreed**
 - Followed where it is **appropriate, safe and in the child's best interests**
 - **Regularly reviewed** with parents
- Children who wake are **removed from the sleep area promptly** to minimise disruption to others

Supervision and Safety

- Staff are **always within sight and hearing of sleeping children** to carry out regular sleep checks
- Children are prepared safely for sleep:
 - **Hair accessories, clips and bobbles are removed**
 - Any items that could cause discomfort or risk are taken off

Sleep Checks

The safety of sleeping children is a priority at all times. Staff remain vigilant and carry out regular, recorded sleep checks to ensure all children are safe and well.

- All sleeping children are **checked at least every 5 minutes and this is recorded**.
- Staff are particularly attentive when monitoring **babies and younger children**

Each sleep check includes confirming that:

- Every child is **breathing normally**, checked by observing the rise and fall of the chest or by gently sensing airflow
- Children are at a **safe and comfortable temperature**, checked by feeling the chest or back of the neck
- Any child who feels hot, clammy or sweaty has **bedding or clothing adjusted immediately**
- **Blankets and bedding remain below the shoulders** and are not covering the head or face
- The child's **position remains safe** and unchanged

Recording Sleep Checks

- All checks are **formally recorded every 5 minutes** on the sleep monitoring chart
- Staff record:
 - The **time of the check**
 - Their **initials**
 - The **room temperature**

By completing the sleep check record, staff are confirming that:

1. Every child has been checked and is **breathing, safe and not overheating**
2. The **sleep environment remains safe**, including room temperature

All sleep checks are carried out in line with safer sleep guidance and EYFS requirements, ensuring children are continuously monitored while resting

Staffing and Supervision During Sleep Times

The safety and supervision of sleeping children is a priority at all times.

Staff are deployed effectively to ensure that all children remain **within sight and hearing of staff while sleeping**, in line with EYFS requirements

It is the nursery's expectation that a member of staff is **present in the sleep room wherever possible** to provide direct supervision.

Staff Deployment

- A **minimum of two staff** are present on each level during sleep periods, including lunch cover
- Lunch rotas are **planned in advance and signed off by a manager by 10:30am daily**
- Staff deployment is **continuously risk assessed** by room leaders and management to ensure safe supervision is maintained at all times

Supervision of Sleeping Children

- All sleeping children are **continuously supervised and remain within sight and hearing of staff at all times**
- Staff carry out and record **5-minute sleep checks** in line with nursery procedures
- The Nursery Manager and leadership team **monitor compliance** with sleep supervision and recording

Use of Monitors (Exceptional Circumstances)

On occasions where staffing arrangements temporarily prevent a staff member from being physically present in the sleep room:

- A **video and audio monitor** will be used to ensure children remain **within sight and hearing at all times**
- This is used as a **short-term measure only** and does not replace direct supervision
- Staff remain **immediately available to respond** and continue regular physical checks

Babies Under 6 Months

- Babies under 6 months of age **must always have a staff member present in the same room while sleeping**

- These babies receive **heightened supervision**, with staff remaining vigilant to breathing, positioning and temperature at all times

Room-Specific Arrangements

Baby Rooms

- A minimum of **two staff are present across the baby rooms at all times**
- Doors between rooms may remain open to support supervision, with **safety gates in place**

Toddler/Pre-School Rooms

- Children who require sleep are cared for in a **designated sleep area**
- Remaining children are supervised in another area, engaged in **quiet, appropriate activities**
- Staff deployment ensures **both groups are safely supervised at all times**

All sleep practices are regularly reviewed by Management to ensure they remain safe, consistent and in line with current guidance.

Arrival of Sleeping Children

We ask parents not to bring children to nursery already asleep. This supports safe transitions and ensures children can be safely settled in line with our safer sleep procedures.

However, if a child does arrive asleep, staff must:

- Check immediately that the child is responsive and breathing normally
- Children must be alert on handover (open eyes, showing awareness, looking, moving, reacting)
- A child who not responding – would not be considered alert.
- If a child is responsive and breathing normally, staff can carefully transfer the child to a safe, flat and firm sleep space (small enclosed bed/mat)
- Remove any coats, hats or extra layers to prevent overheating
- Ensure the sleep space is clear and safe
- Begin sleep monitoring checks straight away and record accordingly

At all times, children must remain **within sight and hearing of staff** and monitored in line with our safer sleep policy.

Sleeping Whilst Travelling

- Babies under 12 months must be transferred to a cot upon return
- Children over 12 months should be moved to a flat, firm sleep surface where possible
- Car seats must not be used as a main sleep space
- Hats, coats and blankets must be adjusted to prevent overheating

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>April 2026</i>	Emilia Olkowska	<i>April 2027</i>