

Home-Grown in Malvern at the Wyche Institute
Safer Sleep Policy and Procedure

This policy and procedure have been written in accordance with The Lullaby Trust and The Department of Education to meet the mandatory safer sleep guidelines set out in The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) September 2026.

At Preschool we only care for children aged 2 years+ but find it useful to include guidelines for children under the age of 2 years old in this policy for staff training and awareness purposes, as we strive to demonstrate a high level of practice within our setting.

Policy Statement:

In September 2026, The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework sets out requirements for providers to ensure the safety and wellbeing of babies and children within safer sleep environments. Ensuring that early year's settings provide safer sleep environments for children is essential. This includes establishing clear and concise guidelines to ensure babies and young children's sleeping environment minimises the risk to sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and sudden unexpected death in childhood (SUDC). This involves providing an appropriate sleep environment, establishing secure sleep time procedures and implementing proactive measure to safeguard all children in accordance with guidelines.

Statement Intent:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all members of staff recognise that it is highly important to provide babies and children with a safer sleep environment to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) in babies up to the age of 12 months old, and sudden unexpected death in childhood (SUDC) in children over the age of 12 months old.

SIDS is the sudden unexpected death of a baby where no cause is found. Whilst it is uncommon, there are some factors that can increase a baby's risk of SIDS that we must be aware of. These include:

- being born prematurely (before 37 weeks)
- low birthweight (less than 2.5kg or 5.5lb)
- exposure to smoking in pregnancy
- sleeping with babies and children on sofas or chairs

SUDC is the sudden unexpected death of a child where no cause is found. Creating a safer sleep space can help avoid accidents, such as the risk of suffocating when sleeping from becoming entangled in soft bedding and/or getting trapped in soft furniture.

In recognition of factors that may elevate a baby or child's risk of SIDS or SUDC, we request that parents inform us of any health conditions related to these risk factors prior to enrolment at preschool. This will ensure that we are aware of any increased risk of SIDS and can take appropriate precautions.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework and NHS guidance both state that children should be awake at drop-off. To support safe handovers, we do not accept children who arrive asleep. If a child is sleeping, staff may be unable to assess their health properly, check immediately for injuries, or identify signs of illness or, in rare cases, unconsciousness. If a child does arrive asleep members of staff will ask the parent to wake the child up before leaving and if needed afterward the

child can then be safely put into our cot by a member of staff once we have done all our safety checks.

Providing a safer sleep space for babies and children under two years of age

Providers must ensure that:

- babies aged 12 months and under must only be placed to sleep in a cot - this includes travel cots. For the use of the products we must ensure we check whether products meet the British Safety Standards listed at the end of this policy. We use a travel cot at preschool.
- children are placed down on their back in their own separate sleep space on a clear, flat, firm surface such as a cot.
- sleep spaces should only contain a firm, flat, waterproof mattress and lightweight bedding which is firmly tucked in around the child no higher than their shoulders to prevent head covering - alternatively, a well fitted baby sleep bag may be used, and we must check the manufacturer recommendations before using a baby sleep bag.
- where blankets are used, the baby should be placed feet-to-foot at the bottom of the cot, with blankets tucked in and under their arms pits.
- children's heads are not covered
- cots must not contain extra items such as toys, pillows, loose bedding, bumpers, wedges or straps.
- Sleep comforters may be used for babies and children aged over 12 months only.
- children should not get too hot or cold - the recommended room temperature for babies (those aged 12 months and under) is 16 - 20°C. We measure the temperature of the room using the air quality and CO2 Monitor which shows the room temperature on the screen.
- babies under six months of age must always have an adult with them in the same room for every sleep - all children must be frequently checked when they are sleeping. We operate a sleep time checker record for sleeping children where children are checked every 10 to 15 minutes. Staff check the child's breathing, place a hand on their neck to check the child's temperature and check their comfort/position when making their checks and this is recorded. We also record the time the child was placed in the cot, the time the child fell asleep.
- children are always within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping

We do not use a baby monitor at the setting, but we recognise that where a baby monitor can be used for children over six months of age, we must ensure it allows children to be seen and always heard. To check if a baby or child is too hot or cold, we will feel their chest or the back of their neck (hands and feet will usually be cooler, which is normal). If their skin feels clammy or sweaty, we will remove one or more layers of clothing or bedding. We will use our professional judgement during extreme temperatures.

Once babies can move from their back to their front and back again by themselves, they can find their own sleeping position. However, continue to place them on their back to sleep.

If a child falls asleep anywhere other than a cot, they will be moved and placed in the travel cot.

If we do have children who require a sleep, we regularly check with parents to ensure the child's routine is the same or if changes need to be made and actively encourage parents to make us aware of any changes to the child's sleep routine.

Children's Needs

According to the NHS, sleep is a vital part of children's lives and is just as essential as eating, drinking, and breathing. It allows their brains and bodies to recover from daily activities. Sufficient sleep is crucial for supporting a child's physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

- We recognise that the amount of sleep children need varies from child to child. Some children will need lots of sleep whereas others need to have a lot less sleep.
- We will distract and discourage children not to sleep if the parent has specifically requested that, however we will never physically keep a child from falling asleep. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNRCR, 1990) is an international human rights treaty that grants all children and young people (aged 17 and under) a comprehensive set of rights. The UK signed the convention on 19 April 1990, ratified it on 16 December 1991 and it came into force on 15 January 1992. Under Article 31 of the UNCRC, every child has the fundamental right to rest. It recognizes that taking time to relax and recharge is not a luxury, but an essential requirement for a child's health, growth, and development
- Similarly, if the child does not want to sleep, we will not force them and they will be provided with appropriate activities during the quiet, rest times.

Prior to sleep/rest time, staff will ensure the following:

- If the child is wearing a nappy then their nappy is changed with a fresh, clean nappy
- Outer clothing and thick clothing are removed to prevent the child from getting too hot during their sleep or rest time.
- lights are dimmed where possible during sleep time by turning off the light and closing the blinds
- sleeping children never left unsupervised and are within sight and hearing of members of staff.
- We remove small items from the child, such as clips, hair bobbles and jewellery.
- We ensure there are no items within the child's reach.
- Sleeping children are provided with their own, individual bedding. Their bedding is cleaned weekly at the end of each week.
- If needed and or advised by parents, the child will be supported by a member of staff to sleep such as being patted gently on the back. Not all children fall asleep by themselves and where possible we follow parent's routines for getting the child to sleep using the child's preferred method if this means we can adhere to safer sleep guidelines.
- When a child has a dummy, check it is not obstructing the babies/ young child's breathing, as good practice, we will remove the dummy once the child is asleep.

Checking sleep products to meet the relevant British Safety Standards:

- cots, travel cots, moses baskets and carry cots: BS EN 716-1:2017, BS EN 1466:2014 or BS EN 1466:2023
- Cots should no longer have a side that fully drops down.

Policy Written by: Natalie Mason, Setting Manager.

Date Written: 13/05/2026

Review Date:

Signed by all staff:

