

Sunflowers Day Nursery Policy & Procedures Document.

Safe Sleep and Rest Policy

At Sunflowers Nursery, we recognise that babies and young children need sleep and rest to support their health, wellbeing and development. We provide safe, age-appropriate sleep opportunities that meet individual needs while following the latest Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS 2026), NHS and Lullaby Trust safer sleep guidance.

We work closely with parents and carers to understand each child's sleep routine and ensure that all sleeping arrangements are safe and appropriate.

Safer Sleep Requirements

In line with EYFS 3.84 and current safer sleep guidance:

- Babies aged **12 months and under must always sleep in a cot.**
- Babies will be placed on their **back to sleep.**
- Cots will have a **firm, flat mattress** that meets relevant British Standards.
- Sleep spaces will be kept **clear of pillows, duvets, cot bumpers, sleep positioners and soft toys.**
- Children will be dressed appropriately to prevent overheating.
- Sleeping children will remain **within sight or hearing of staff at all times.**
- Formal sleep checks will be completed and recorded at least every **10 minutes.**
- Any alternative sleep arrangements must be supported by **written medical advice** and an individual risk assessment.

Sleep Environment

Sunflowers Nursery will ensure that all sleep areas:

- Are clean, safe and well ventilated.
- Are maintained at a comfortable temperature.
- Are free from hazards, cords, furniture or equipment that could cause injury or entanglement.
- Allow staff to supervise sleeping children effectively.

Children under 12 months will sleep in a cot. Older children may sleep in an appropriate sleep pod or sleep mat following an individual risk assessment and supervision arrangements.

Supporting Children to Sleep

Staff will:

- Follow each child's individual sleep routine where possible.
- Help children settle through comfort, reassurance, stories, songs or quiet activities.
- Ensure nappies are changed where necessary and children are comfortable before sleep.
- Remove bibs, coats, hooded clothing and other items that may pose a risk.
- Never leave children to cry for prolonged periods without comfort and support.

If a child falls asleep unexpectedly on a member of staff, they will be transferred to a safe sleep space as soon as possible.

Monitoring Sleeping Children

A member of staff will supervise sleeping children at all times.

Checks will be carried out and recorded every 10 minutes and will include:

- Breathing is normal and unobstructed.
- The child's face remains uncovered.
- The child is comfortable and appropriately positioned.
- The child is not too hot or too cold.
- The sleep environment remains safe.

Children who are unwell may require more frequent checks.

Individual Sleep Arrangements

Parents will be consulted regarding their child's sleep routines during the settling-in process and whenever routines change.

Where a child has a medical need or specialist sleep requirement that differs from this policy:

- Written advice from a healthcare professional must be obtained.
- An individual risk assessment must be completed.
- Arrangements will be reviewed regularly with parents and relevant professionals.

Sleeping Outdoors

Outdoor sleeping may be offered where appropriate and will follow the same safer sleep requirements and supervision arrangements as indoor sleeping.

Babies aged 12 months and under sleeping outdoors must sleep in a travel cot that meets relevant British Standards.

Hygiene

- Each child will have individual bedding.
- Bedding will be laundered regularly and immediately if soiled.
- Cots, pods and mats will be cleaned and disinfected between uses.
- Sleep equipment will be maintained in a clean and safe condition.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and current safer sleep guidance.
- Completing and recording sleep checks.
- Maintaining safe sleep environments.
- Communicating effectively with colleagues and parents regarding children's sleep needs.
- Reporting any concerns immediately to the Room Lead or Manager.
- Sharing safer sleep information with parents, students and volunteers where appropriate.

Appendix 1: Sleep Equipment

- **0-12 months:** Cot only.
- **12 months+:** Cot, sleep pod or sleep mat as appropriate following risk assessment and supervision arrangements.
- All sleep equipment must be regularly checked, maintained and used in accordance with manufacturer's guidance.

Appendix 2: Pushchair Sleeping

Sleeping in a pushchair is **not routine practice** and will only occur in exceptional circumstances, such as when a child falls asleep during an outing.

Where this occurs:

- The pushchair must be fully reclined.
- The child must remain within sight of staff at all times.
- Checks must be completed every 10 minutes.
- Parents must be informed.
- The child must be transferred to an appropriate sleep space as soon as reasonably practicable.