

Safer Sleep Policy

At the Nest we aim to ensure that all children have enough sleep to support their development, well-being and natural sleeping rhythms in a safe, calm and nurturing environment.

The safety of babies and children while sleeping is paramount. Our policy follows current safer sleep advice provided by The Lullaby Trust and the NHS to minimise the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Our safer sleep practice also reflects our responsibilities under the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and relevant safeguarding, welfare, health and safety requirements.

We make sure that:

- Babies are placed on their backs to sleep. If a baby has rolled onto their tummy, we turn them onto their back again unless they are able to roll independently from back to front and back again, in which case we enable them to find their own sleeping position.
- Babies/toddlers are never put down to sleep with a bottle to self-feed.
- Babies/toddlers are monitored visually when sleeping. Practitioners observe the rise and fall of the child's chest, their general well-being and whether their sleeping position has changed.
- Checks are recorded every 10 minutes via the Famly app.
- As good practice, we monitor younger babies and babies who are new to the Nest every five minutes during their first few weeks, until we are familiar with the child and their individual sleeping routines. This also provides reassurance to families.
- Babies and children always sleep in an environment with continuous staff supervision.
- Practitioners remain alert to sleeping children throughout their sleep. Recorded checks do not replace continuous supervision.

We provide a safe sleeping environment by:

- Monitoring the room temperature.
- Using clean, appropriate bedding and ensuring babies are appropriately dressed for sleep to avoid overheating.
- Providing babies with a firm, flat and clear sleep surface.
- Only using safety-approved cots, travel cots, coracles, sleep mats or other suitable sleeping equipment that is appropriate for the child's age and stage of development and meets relevant safety requirements.
- Using a firm, flat and appropriate mattress with a clean fitted sheet and suitable waterproof mattress protection where required.

- Keeping babies' heads and faces uncovered during sleep.
- Not using cot bumpers, pillows, duvets or other soft furnishings within a baby's sleep space that could present a risk of suffocation or overheating.
- Keeping all spaces around cots, coracles, sleep mats and beds clear from potential hazards such as hanging cords, blind cords, cables, drawstring bags and other hanging objects.
- Ensuring every baby/toddler is provided with clean bedding individually identified for them.
- Working in partnership with parents/carers to meet individual needs. For example, if a child prefers to sleep in an appropriate sleeping bag, we will ask parents/carers to provide one from home.
- Cleaning all bedding as required and at least weekly.
- Transferring any baby who falls asleep while being held or nursed by a practitioner to an appropriate safe sleeping surface to complete their rest.
- Transferring a baby/child who is brought into the nursery while sleeping to an appropriate safe sleeping surface to complete their rest.
- Maintaining our no smoking/vaping policy.

Sleep equipment – babies under and over 12 months

At the Nest, we ensure that the sleeping equipment used is appropriate for each child's age, stage of development and individual needs.

Babies under 12 months

- Babies under 12 months sleep in a suitable travel cot or other approved baby sleep space with a firm, flat, well-fitting mattress.
- Babies aged 12 months and under must only be placed to sleep on their back in a cot
- Travel cots are checked before use to ensure they are clean, safe, in good condition and correctly assembled.
- The mattress provided or approved for the travel cot is used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. We do not add additional mattresses, cushions, folded blankets or other padding underneath the baby.
- The baby's sleep space is kept clear and our safer sleep procedures are followed at all times.
- Travel cots are positioned away from potential hazards including blind cords, cables, hanging objects, heaters and anything else that may be within the baby's reach.

Children aged 12 months and over

- Children aged 12 months and over may sleep in a coracle or on an appropriate sleep mat, depending on their age, stage of development, individual needs and sleep routine.

- Coracles and sleep mats are checked before each use to ensure they are clean, safe, in good condition and appropriate for the child.
- Coracles and mats are positioned in a safe sleeping area away from blind cords, cables, hanging objects, bags and other potential hazards.
- The area immediately surrounding the child's sleep space is kept clear.
- Clean, individually identified bedding is used and cleaned as required and at least weekly.

Regardless of which type of sleep equipment is being used, children are continuously supervised and our recorded 10-minute sleep checks are followed, increasing to five-minute checks for younger/new babies as set out within this policy.

Sleeping in prams and outdoor sleep

Babies are only allowed to sleep in a pram where it is appropriate and safe for sleep, can lie completely flat and provides suitable support. We obtain parents'/carers' permission where required.

Where babies sleep outdoors, the same safer sleep principles apply. Babies are placed on their backs on a firm, flat sleep surface, appropriately dressed for the conditions and closely supervised at all times.

Working with parents and carers

We ask parents/carers to communicate their child's sleeping routine with their child's key person when they start at the Nest. Sleep routines will be reviewed and updated as the child's needs and routines change.

If a baby has an unusual sleeping routine or a sleeping position that we would not normally use within the nursery, for example sleeping on their tummy or sleeping in a sling, we will discuss our Safer Sleep Policy and current safer sleep guidance with their parents/carers.

We will not follow a sleeping practice that could place a child at increased risk solely at parental request.

Where an alternative sleeping position or arrangement is required for a medical reason, we will ask for appropriate advice or information from the child's healthcare professional. We will work with the parents/carers to document the agreed arrangement and complete an individual risk assessment or care plan where appropriate.

We recognise parents' and carers' knowledge of their child and, wherever it is safe to do so, we will work together to ensure each child's individual sleep routine and well-being continue to be met.

However, practitioners will not force a child to sleep or deliberately keep them awake against their needs. We will also not usually wake children from their sleep unless there is a specific reason relating to the child's individual needs, health, safety or well-being.

Individual sleep routines

Individual sleep routines are followed rather than having one set sleep time for all children.

At the Nest, we create a calm and nurturing environment that helps children who require sleep to settle. This may include dimming the lights and using soft music where appropriate.

At the same time, we continue to meet the needs of children who do not require sleep so they can continue to play, explore, learn and develop. This may involve taking children outdoors or linking with other rooms and children within the Nest.

Practitioners will discuss relevant changes in sleep routines with parents/carers and share observations and information where a child's behaviour or well-being may be affected by not receiving enough sleep.

Sleeping twins

We follow current advice from **The Lullaby Trust** regarding safer sleep for twins while recognising and supporting each child's individual sleep needs.

Keeping our safer sleep practice current

At the Nest, safer sleep is part of our ongoing responsibility to safeguard the babies and children entrusted to our care.

Practitioners are made aware of our safer sleep procedures through induction, training, supervision and ongoing team discussions.

Further information and safer sleep advice for families can be found at:

www.lullabytrust.org.uk

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
01/09/2026		01/09/2027