

Favours Day Nursery Ltd Policy and Procedure

Sleep

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

The safety of babies and children sleeping is paramount. Our policy follows the advice provided by the DfE, the Lullaby Trust and NHS to minimise the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)¹ in babies up to 12 months of age, and sudden unexpected death in childhood (SUDC) in children over 12 months of age.

We make sure that all babies and children are placed down to sleep safely, with every practitioner reading the NHS advice on sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)¹ and the safer sleep guidance from The Lullaby Trust².

Babies Under Two Years Old

For babies under two years old, we ensure that:

- Babies aged 12 months and under³ are only placed to sleep on their back in a cot⁴
- 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 bed or mattress on the floor which has suitable British Safety Standards⁵
- Once asleep, 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 are never put down to sleep with a bottle to self-feed
- We monitor the sleep room temperature for babies under 12 months, ensuring it remains between 16-20°C at all times, where possible
- Babies under six months of age have their sleep monitored every 5 minutes. Babies under 2 years of age have their sleep monitored every 10 minutes
- 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 over 12 months only and follow The Lullaby Trust advice regarding the safe use of dummies while babies are sleeping⁶

Sleeping Environment

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

- Ensuring every child has their own separate sleep space
- Only using safety-approved cots and other suitable sleeping equipment (i.e. mats) that are compliant with British Standard regulations
- 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 child is placed feet-to-foot at the bottom of the bed, with lightweight blankets tucked in, if used
- Ensuring every child is provided with clean bedding (washed at least weekly), labelled for them

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

² https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Early-years-safer-sleep-booklet_Digital.pdf

³ If a baby was born prematurely (before 37 weeks) or weighing less than 2.5kg or 5.5lb, we follow the safer sleep advice for a year from their due date, rather than when they were born

⁴ Cots refer to: Cots, carrycots, moses baskets, travel cots

⁵ Providers may find it useful to check whether products 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
- mattresses: BS 7177:2008+A1:2011
- mattresses for cots, travel cots and cribs: BS EN 16890:2017+A1:2021
- sleepbags: BS EN 16781:2018

⁶ <https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/baby-safety/baby-product-information/dummies/>

- Well-fitted baby sleep bags may be used according to the manufacturer recommendations and with written parent permission
- Ensuring children are appropriately dressed for sleep to avoid overheating⁷
- Ensuring children's heads are not covered
- Keeping all spaces around cots and beds clear from hanging objects, i.e. hanging cords, blind cords, drawstring bags
- Children are monitored visually when sleeping by looking for the rise and fall of their chest and if their sleep position has changed
- Any baby who falls asleep in a pushchair while out on a visit will be transferred to a safe sleeping surface to complete their rest on their return to the nursery; coats, hats, extra clothing and blankets will be removed as soon as they are inside, even if this means waking them
- We have a No smoking/vaping policy which includes the requirement for staff to change their clothes and wash their hands after smoking/vaping. In addition, we require staff to wait for 30 minutes after smoking/vaping before holding babies or children, even with a change of clothes.
- We will not use a baby monitor to enable the sleeping children to be always seen. Children are always within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping.

We ask parents to complete forms on their 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 child.

We recognise parent knowledge of their 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 child to sleep or keep them awake against their will. They will also not usually wake children from their sleep.

We create an environment that helps to settle children that require a sleep, 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 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.

Sleeping Twins

We follow the advice from The Lullaby Trust regarding sleeping twins⁸, while working with parents to maintain their sleep routines and well-being.

Information from the NHS:

Sleep is very important to a child's wellbeing. These are hours of sleep based on age, as recommended by the Millpond Children's Sleep Clinic:

Age of child	Daytime	Night time
3-5 months	4-5 hours	10-11 hours
6-9 months	3 hours	11 hours
10-17 months	2 hours 30 minutes	11 hours
18-23 months	2 hours	11 hours 30 minutes
2 years	1 hour 30 minutes	11 hours 30 minutes

⁷ To check if a baby or child is too hot or cold, 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, remove one or more layers of clothing or bedding. You should use your professional judgement during extreme temperatures.

⁸ <https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/baby-safety/premature-babies-and-multiples/twins-and-multiples/>

3 years	Up to 45 minutes	11-12 hours
4 years		11 hours 30 minutes
5 years		11 hours
6 years		10 hours 45 minutes
7 years		10 hours 30 minutes

Staff will not wake a sleeping child unless necessary within the guidelines above. For example, a child aged 2 will not be woken up until they have had at least 1 hour 30 minutes of sleep. If a child is close to the next age bracket the nursery manager may be able to discuss gently decreasing the limit. Evidence shows that sleep is just as important as healthy eating and exercise for children to develop. Those who don't get enough sleep are more likely to be overweight or obese. This is because they tend to crave and eat sugary or starchy food during the day to give them energy to stay awake. Younger children who are persistently sleep-deprived seem irritable and overactive, seek constant stimulation and don't concentrate well.

Arrival of Sleeping Children

In line with our safeguarding responsibilities and paediatric first aid training guidance, we do not accept children into the setting while they are asleep. Children must be awake and handed directly to a member of staff on arrival. This policy ensures that practitioners can safely complete the necessary daily health and wellbeing checks, confirm the child's condition on arrival, and maintain appropriate supervision in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory safeguarding and welfare requirements.

Accepting a sleeping child into the setting may prevent staff from:

- Carrying out an initial visual wellbeing check
- Confirming the child's breathing, responsiveness, and general health
- Ensuring the child is safely transferred from parent/carer to staff supervision

If a child arrives asleep in a pushchair, car seat, or being carried, the parent/carer will be politely asked to wake the child before the handover can take place. We appreciate parent cooperation in supporting this procedure as part of our commitment to keeping every child safe.

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A. Cooke

Written with guidance from the National Day Nurseries Association, NHS & DfE