

Caring for Babies and Toddlers

At St Bernards we care for children under the age of two and ensure their health, safety and well being through the following:

Children under the age of two are cared for within our setting in smaller groups and enjoy learning opportunities via the dedicated staff and the designated layout of the areas which allow for the children to explore safely whilst promoting development and learning.

Care is taken to ensure that babies and toddlers do not have access to activities containing small pieces, which may be swallowed or otherwise injure the child. Food Play will be governed by this also taking into account allergies of any child attending on the day.

The environment and equipment are checked daily before the children access the area. This includes checking the stability of cots and areas around, low/high chairs and ensuring restraints on these and pushchairs are intact and working.

All doors are fitted with vision panels.

Babies and toddlers have their nappies changed accordingly to their individual needs and requirements by their key person where possible. The changes are both recorded in the nappy changing log and the child's personal daily diary where appropriate.

Information will be shared between parents and the key person about nappy changing and toilet changing in a way that suits the child. Decisions will be made following contact and agreement with parents.

Potties are washed and disinfected after every use. Changing mats are wiped with anti bacterial cleanser before and after every nappy change.

Each baby must have his/her own bedding, which is washed at least weekly when necessary.

Cot mattresses meet safety standards.

Children under two years are not to be given pillows, cot bumpers or any soft furnishings in order to prevent risk of suffocation.

We follow all cot death prevention/safety guidelines and advise parents of this information as directed by both Ofsted and The Lullaby Trust. Babies are always laid to sleep on their back, with their feet touching the foot of the cot. Parents must sign a form to advise staff on their child's preferred sleeping position.

Sheets or thin blankets will come no higher than the baby's shoulders, to prevent them wriggling under the covers. We make sure the covers are securely tucked in so they cannot slip over the baby's head.

Cots are checked before use to ensure no items are within reach i.e. hanging over or beside the cot (e.g. fly nets, cables).

Children are never left unattended in high chairs. Restraints are removed and washed regularly.

No child is left unattended during nappy changing time.

Babies are never left propped up with bottles to aid sleeping, for comfort or by following pattern of behaviour at home. Nursery reserves the right to refuse this as normal practice.

Our quiet room where babies and toddlers sleep is monitored by both staff and a baby camera/sound system. A data system records all checks on a check sheet. These are done on a 3-minute basis. Staff initials the form following the check. Children under the age of 6 months are always monitored by a staff member.

The quiet room temperature is monitored, and bedding will be altered accordingly. Staff will judge the temperature of the quiet room and if necessary will use the top opening windows/air con to establish the correct room temperature in both the warmer seasons.

Parents are given the opportunity to choose the method of sleeping facility for their child, we prefer children to sleep on the mattresses or within the cot/cot beds. Forms are completed to include their preferences

Bottles of formula are only made up as and when the child needs them by means of our preparation machine, which dispenses water at the correct temperature.

Bottles and teats are thoroughly cleaned with hot soapy water.

A designated area within the quiet room is available for mothers who wish to breast feed or express milk.

Labelled mothers breast milk is stored in the fridge.

During the initial home visit the Key Worker will promote weaning and discuss with the parent their preferred method to be used at this stage of development. There are several methods that can be used: Purees or Spoon Fed weaning, Baby Led Weaning or the Mixed method.

Purees' or spoon-feed – this is where you spoon feed your baby purees leading onto mashed chopped textures and the introduction of finger foods at around 6 months.

Baby Led Weaning – this is where you let your baby take the lead and explore foods for themselves, normally there isn't a special meal provided they would just enjoy family food. With this process you move straight to soft solid foods and miss out the purees.

Mixed Method – this is a combination of methods, beginning with the purees and spoon-feeding with the introduction of finger foods from the onset.

We support any of the methods above in line with parental choice, however with the Baby Led Approach the staff will take into account the foods provided and the potential risk element in the baby experiencing solid foods, which can be more difficult to digest. The key worker will liaise with the parents and kitchen staff closely to ensure the foods served are both suitable for the child and their ability to digest them appropriately. We do reserve the right to exclude certain foods from the menu we deem not to be suitable for this method. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of mealtimes and we have risk assessments in place for this type of method to ensure the child's safety and well being at all times.

If dummies or comforters are used, they will be washed or sterilised as good practise dictated, however these may be more frequent due to health and safety issues or general preventative measures of potential cross contamination.