



Caring for Babies and Toddlers Policy

At New Beginnings Day Nursery, we care for babies and toddlers under the age of two as well as pre-school children.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Nappy changing, Respectful intimate care, Safer sleep and Nutrition and mealtimes policy.

We ensure their health, safety and well-being through the following:

- Implementing the EYFS requirements at all times and caring for babies and toddlers in a separate base room with a maximum number of NB Rainham – 9, NB Romford – 15, NB Loughton – 12, children with a minimum ratio of 1:3.
- Allocating each baby and toddler a key person who works in partnership with their parent to meet their individual needs and routines
- Having well qualified staff who understand the needs of babies and toddlers, ensuring that at least half of the staff team caring for children under the age of two have undertaken specific training for working with babies
- Ensuring babies and toddlers have opportunities to see and play with older children whilst at nursery
- Toddlers transitioning to the older age groups or rooms when assessed as appropriate (see separate Transitions policy)
- Staff supervising all babies and toddlers and organising the environment to support both non-mobile and mobile babies and toddlers.

Environment

- The environment, equipment and resources are risk assessed and checked daily before the children access the rooms or area. This includes checking the stability of cots and areas around, low/highchairs and ensuring restraints on these, pushchairs and prams are intact and working
- All doors are fitted with viewing panels and door finger-guards to prevent accidents
- Outdoor shoes are removed or covered when entering the baby and toddler area(s). Staff remind parents and visitors to adhere to this procedure. Flooring is cleaned regularly
- Sterilisers are washed out and cleaned daily
- Large pieces of furniture are fixed to the walls to stop them falling on top of babies and young children
- Play and learning is planned in line with children's individual interests and the EYFS learning and development requirements.



Resources

- Care is taken to ensure that babies and toddlers do not have access to resources or activities containing small pieces, which may be swallowed or otherwise injure the child
- Babies and toddlers are closely supervised during all activities
- Resources and equipment that babies and young children have placed in their mouth are cleaned and/or sterilised after use
- All resources are frequently cleaned
- Soft furnishings are frequently cleaned
- The use of resources that restrict babies' movement such as baby walkers, pushchairs, jumparoos, etc will not be used on a regular basis because these can contribute to delayed physical development. We follow NHS guidelines which recommends that if these resources are to be used then it should be for no more than 20 minutes at a time.

Intimate care

- Babies'/toddlers' privacy is considered and balanced with safeguarding and support needs when changing nappies and toileting
- Babies and toddlers have their nappies changed according to their individual needs and requirements by their key person, wherever possible. Checks are documented with the time and staff initials and information is shared with parents
- When developmentally appropriate, we work closely with parents to sensitively support toilet training in a way that suits the individual needs of the child
- Potties are washed and disinfected after every use. Changing mats are wiped with anti-bacterial cleanser before and after every nappy change
- Staff ensure all the equipment is ready before babies and toddlers are placed on the changing mat
- No child is ever left unattended during nappy changing time
- Intimate care times are seen as opportunities for one-to-one interactions
- Staff do not change nappies whilst pregnant until a risk assessment has been discussed and conducted. Students only change nappies with the support and close supervision of a qualified member of staff (see separate Student policy)
- Cameras, mobile phones and other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities are not permitted in toilet and nappy changing areas
- Nappy sacks and creams are not left in reach of babies and children

We always follow systems in place to ensure there is an adequate supply of clean bedding, towels and spare clothes.

See separate Nappy changing policy and Respectful intimate care policy.



Bottles

- Feeding times are seen as an opportunity for bonding between practitioner and child and, where possible, babies are fed by their key person
- Food and milk for babies is prepared in a separate area within the kitchen or base room which is specifically designated for this preparation. Handwashing is completed before preparation is undertaken.
- Bottles of formula milk are only made up as and when the child needs them, we use a prep machine to make up formula bottles. The hot shot is tested with the milk prep thermometer to ensure it is at least 70C before the cold shot is added.
- Bottles of milk can also be made from the kettle at a parent/carers request, these bottles are checked with the milk prep thermometer to ensure they are no higher than 37.5 before giving to a child.
- Bottles are tested with a sterilised thermometer to ensure they are an appropriate temperature for the child to drink safely
- Bottles are only made following the instructions on the formula. If, during the making process, there are discrepancies, a new bottle will be made
- All new staff will be shown the procedure, and only when competent and confident will they make them on their own.
- Nursery bottles and teats are thoroughly cleaned with hot soapy water and sterilised after use (they are not washed in the dishwasher). They are replaced as and when required
- Unwanted or left over contents of bottles are disposed of after two hours
- Babies are never left propped up or laid in a cot or a pram with bottles as it is both dangerous and inappropriate
- A designated area is available for mothers who wish to breastfeed their babies or express milk
- Labelled breast milk is stored in the fridge or Freezer.
- Breast milk stored at nursery to be kept in a fridge 4C or lower.
- Breast milk can be stored in a freezer for no longer than 6 months.
- To defrost frozen breast milk, we will place in a jug of warm water or run under warm water.
- Once the child has started to drink their bottle of breast milk it will be used within 1 hour and anything left over will be thrown away.
- Expressed milk can be given straight from the fridge if the child is happy to drink it cold. Or the milk can be warmed to body temperature by placing the bottle in warm water.
- We will not use microwaves to heat or defrost breast milk or formula milk.



Mealtimes

- All babies and young children are seated safely in low/highchairs used for feeding. The chairs are fitted with restraints (where age requirements permit), and these are used at all times. Children are never left unattended when eating or when in low/highchairs. Restraints are removed and washed as needed
- Mealtimes are seen as social occasions and promote interactions. Staff always sit with babies and young children, interacting, promoting communication and social skills
- Staff supervising mealtimes will have ongoing discussions with parents about the stage their child is at in regard to introducing solid foods, including to understand the textures the child is familiar with. Assumptions will not be made based on age
- Food will be prepared in a suitable way for each child's individual developmental needs, working with parents to help children move on to the next stage at a pace right for the child
- Children are always supervised whilst eating and if any choking incidents occur paediatric first aid will be administered
- Babies and young children are encouraged to feed themselves with support, as required
- We work together with parents regarding weaning and offer any support, as required.

See separate Nutrition and mealtimes policy for further details.

Comforters and dummies

- We recognise that a dummy can be a source of comfort for a child who is settling and/or upset, and that it may often form part of a child's sleep routine.
- We also recognise that overuse of dummies may affect a child's language development as it may restrict the mouth movements needed for speech. As babies get older, they need to learn to move their mouths in different ways, to smile, to blow bubbles, to make sounds, to chew food and eventually to talk. As babies move their mouths and experiment with babbling sounds, they are learning to make the quick mouth movements needed for speech. The more practice they get the better their awareness of their mouths and the better their speech will be.
- We will discuss the use of dummies with parents as part of babies' individual care plans
- Only allow dummies for comfort if a child is really upset (for example, if they are new to the setting or going through a transition) and/or as part of their sleep routine
- Store dummies in individual hygienic dummy boxes labelled with the child's name to prevent cross-contamination with other children
- Immediately clean or sterilise any dummy or bottle that falls on the floor or is picked up by another child



- Comforters including teddies and blankets are kept safe and provided at sleep times, or if the child becomes unsettled.
- Dummy straps will not be used.

When discouraging the use of a dummy staff will:

- Make each child aware of a designated place where the dummy is stored
- Comfort the child and, if age/stage appropriate, explain in a sensitive and appropriate manner why they do not need their dummy
- Distract the child with other activities and ensure they are settled before leaving them to play
- Offer other methods of comfort such as a toy, teddy or blanket
- Explain to the child they can have their dummy when they go home or at sleep time.
- We ask children who use dummies for parents and carers to provide the nursery with 2. For us to have one available while the other is being sterilised.
- We will also offer support and advice to parents to discourage dummy use during waking hours at home and suggest ways in which the child can be weaned off their dummy through books and stories (when appropriate).

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>1st August 2026</i>	Joanna Wilkinson	<i>1st August 2027</i>