

Safer Sleep Policy

At New Beginnings 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 NHS¹ to minimise the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) 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 being made aware of the safer sleep guidance from The Lullaby Trust².

Babies/toddlers under two years old

Practitioners ensure that children, particularly babies and those under two years old, are placed down to sleep safely. For babies/toddlers under two years old, we consistently put into practice safe sleeping arrangements, including ensuring that:

- Babies aged 12 months and under³ must only be placed to sleep on their back in a cot with lightweight bedding which is firmly tucked in around the child below their shoulders to prevent head covering. Alternatively, a well fitted bed bag may be used. Check the manufacturer recommendations before using a baby sleep bag.
- 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 cot, bed or mattress on the floor with lightweight bedding.
- 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 and toddlers are never put down to sleep with a bottle to self-feed
- Babies under six months of age we will monitor their sleep every five minutes
- For babies (over six months of age) and toddlers who are new to the setting we will monitor their sleep every five minutes, until we are familiar with the child and their sleeping routines
- Children's heads are never covered
- Babies and toddlers are monitored visually when sleeping by looking for the rise and fall of their chest and if their sleep position has changed

¹ <https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/safer-sleep>

² <https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/>

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

- Babies/toddlers are always within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping.

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 mattresses that are compliant with British Standard regulations
- Using a firm flat surface such as a cot, bed or mattress on the floor. Babies aged 12 months and under are only placed to sleep in a cot
- 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 baby/child is placed feet-to-foot at the bottom of the cot, with lightweight blankets tucked in, if used
- Ensuring every baby/child is provided with clean bedding, labelled for them, working in partnership with parents to meet any individual needs
- Ensuring babies/children are appropriately dressed for sleep to avoid overheating
- Ensuring babies'/children's heads are not covered
- 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 and children over 12 months only and follow The Lullaby Trust advice regarding the safe use of dummies while babies are sleeping⁴
- Keeping all spaces around cots and beds clear from hanging objects, i.e. hanging cords, blind cords, drawstring bags
- Monitoring the sleep room temperature and ensuring it remains between 16-20°C at all times, where possible
- Ensuring babies and children over six months of age are always within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping, and are checked every 10 minutes; we will not use a video/baby monitor to enable the sleeping children to be seen and heard at all times
- Ensuring babies under six months of age always have an adult with them in the same room for every sleep and are checked every five minutes
- Ensuring babies who are new to the setting always have an adult with them in the same room for every sleep and are checked every five minutes until staff are confident with their usual sleep patterns and sleeping style.

Supervision During Sleep

In accordance with paragraph 3.86 of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework, children must always remain within the sight and/or hearing of staff and be

⁴ <https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/baby-safety/baby-product-information/dummies/>

appropriately supervised at all times. This expectation applies equally when children are settling to sleep, sleeping, or waking.

Staff must ensure they remain in a position that enables them to continuously observe and respond to children whilst maintaining effective oversight of the wider sleep environment. Staff must be able to recognise signs of distress, changes in a child's condition or any potential risks without delay.

To ensure effective supervision, **New Beginnings Day Nurseries Ltd does not recognise lying alongside, reclining next to, or positioning themselves in a manner that restricts their ability to observe sleeping children as an appropriate method of settling or supervising children during sleep.** Staff must not close their eyes, cover their face, or adopt a position that compromises their ability to provide continuous safeguarding oversight.

Where a child requires additional comfort or reassurance before sleeping, staff should provide this in a manner that maintains full awareness of all children within the sleep area and enables continuous supervision in accordance with this policy.

Failure to follow these requirements may place children at risk and will be treated as a safeguarding matter and managed in accordance with the nursery's disciplinary procedures. Sleep checks alone do not replace continuous supervision. Staff are expected to maintain active safeguarding oversight of all sleeping children between recorded sleep checks.

Recording Sleep Monitoring

All sleeping children will be monitored in accordance with this policy and the nursery's safer sleep procedures.

Each sleep check will be recorded in the nursery's **Sleep Monitoring Record**. Staff must record:

- the time the check was completed;
- their initials;
- the child's condition and wellbeing, where appropriate; and
- any actions taken or observations made.

The member of staff recording the check is responsible for ensuring that the information is accurate and completed at the time of the observation.

For children **under two years of age**, sleep information is also recorded within the child's **Family Activity Log**, enabling parents to view when their child slept and the duration of their sleep.

For children **aged two years and over**, sleep information will be shared with parents via the **Family App** where this has been requested through the Nursery Manager or where staff consider it appropriate to support the child's individual needs.

The completion of sleep records does not replace continuous supervision. Staff must maintain active oversight of sleeping children at all times in accordance with this policy.

Sleep monitoring records may be audited by the Nursery Manager, Area Manager or nominated safeguarding lead to ensure compliance with this policy and identify any training or support needs.

Further considerations

- We will not let babies/children sleep in buggies, bouncers, pushchairs or prams
- Well-fitted baby sleep bags may be used according to the manufacturer recommendations and with written parent permission
- All bedding will be cleaned, as required and at least weekly
- We will transfer any baby who falls asleep while being nursed by a practitioner to a safe sleeping surface to complete their rest
- To support children's wellbeing and ensure a smooth transition into the nursery day, children must not be brought into the nursery while asleep. If a child arrives asleep, they must be gently woken by their parent or carer before entering the nursery.
- Any baby/child who falls asleep in a buggy, pushchair or pram 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.

During a child's settling-in session, we complete an "All About Me" form, which includes a discussion about the child's sleep routine. We ensure that all children sleep in safe, appropriate environments: babies under 12 months are placed in cots, and children over 12 months use bed mats unless requested otherwise by a parent.

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

Individual sleep routines are followed rather than having one set sleep time for all children. 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 rooms or 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 twins⁵, while working with parents to maintain their sleep routines and well-being.

⁵ <https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/baby-safety/premature-babies-and-multiples/twins-and-multiples/>



Staff training

All staff receive safer sleep training as part of their induction. Managers provide ongoing support, guidance, and supervision to ensure staff consistently follow safe sleep practices when putting children to sleep.

All practitioners will read NHS advice on [Sudden infant death syndrome \(SIDS\) - NHS](#). Also, more information on safer sleep guidance is available from the [Home | The Lullaby Trust](#)

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