

Little Bears Daycare – Sleep Policy (6.13)



Little Bears knows the importance of sleep and rest for all children in the setting. We ensure children are able to have sleep and rest periods when required regardless of their age.

All children develop at different rates. As a result, we need to adapt our practice and provision to meet these needs throughout the day. As children grow, they usually develop a routine in which they can reduce the length and frequency of daytime sleeps. Children at Little Bears will have the opportunity to rest or sleep if they need or want to. At these times, staff will create an environment for children i.e a quiet area to cuddle up with a book and place a sleep mat out for an older child.

In keeping with best practice, we will also ensure that the cots/stackable beds/sleep mats we use are inspected regularly and maintained to a high standard. The purpose of this policy is to make parents and staff aware of our approach to sleep and rest opportunities at Little Bears to ensure that all children get all the sleep they need whilst in our care. Babies will use the designated sleep area/room.

Whilst parental wishes will be taken into consideration when allowing a child to sleep, staff cannot force a child to sleep, to wake up or to stay awake against his or her will. Parents/Carers can input their child's routine on to the Family App for staff to access and familiarise with. During initial settling in sessions, children's individual sleep routines will be discussed to consider the length of sleep, any comfort objects they may use, their sleeping positions and whether they display any actions when they are tired, for example playing with their sleeve.

The safety of babies sleeping is paramount. Our policy follows the advice provided by The Cot Death Society and Lullaby Trust to minimise the risk of sudden infant death syndrome.

We ensure that:

- Babies are placed on their backs to sleep; however, once a baby can roll from back to front and back again, on their own, they can be left to find their own position.
- All children sleeping will be placed in a feet to foot position.
- Babies/toddlers are never put down with a bottle to self-feed.
- Babies/toddlers are monitored visually and physically when sleeping. Checks are recorded every 5 minutes with staffs initials (timers set within the rooms)
- The door between the sleep room and Bear Cubs room has been removed allowing clear visibility at all times to the room.
- When monitoring the children, staff will look and physically check for the rise and fall of the chest if the sleep position has changed and will mark the chart accordingly initialling to show they have done the 5-minute check.
- Lullaby's will be played to soothe the children to sleep.
- If parents/carers request, we will accept white noise soothers if brought in from home.
- Minimum staff ratios remain in place even if children are sleeping.

We provide a safe sleeping environment by:

- Monitoring the room temperature. Guidance on the Lullaby Trust suggests that the ideal temperature should be between 16 and 21 degrees Celsius. (this is recorded daily on our risk assessments)

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- In the warmer months then children will ideally sleep with no blankets within the sleep room to reduce both the danger of suffocation and also overheating.
- Sleep Pods and Mats are never left in direct sunlight or next to radiators.
- Using clean, light bedding/blankets and ensuring babies are appropriately dressed for sleep to avoid overheating.
- Only using safety-approved cots or other suitable sleeping equipment (e.g., Sleeping Mats and Pods) that are compliant with British Standard Regulations and ensuring mattress covers are used in conjunction with a clean fitted sheet.
- Children under 12 months will sleep in a cot, over 12 months will be in sleep pods and 18m + will be on mats.
- When sleeping with blankets children will have them tucked in around all edges and below their armpits.
- We understand many children use comforters, muslins or soft toys to settle. However, once a child is asleep, these must be removed to prevent the risk of covering their face and restricting breathing.
- Keeping all spaces around the sleeping area clear from hanging objects i.e hanging cords, blind cords, drawstring bags.
- Each child has their own designated basket in which their fitted sheets and blanket is kept. These will be washed regularly and checked for any signs of wear. Replacing them as needed.
- All used sleep mats will be sprayed and wiped down with anti-bacterial spray after every use.
- Should a baby fall asleep while being nursed by a practitioner they will be transferred to a safe sleeping surface to complete their rest
- Having a no smoking policy
- If a child is a twin, we follow the advice given from the Lullaby Trust regarding sleep arrangements. We will not put them together in the same pod/cot to sleep.
- Wherever possible a staff member will remain in the room when children are sleeping, otherwise staying within sight and sound. If a child sleeping within the room is under 6 months, then an adult will be present within the room at all times.

Minimum Sleep Cycle Guidance

In line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework, which emphasises supporting children's individual care needs and promoting their overall wellbeing (Section 1.6 and 3.28), we recognise the importance of uninterrupted sleep for young children. Where possible, children will be supported to sleep for a minimum of 45 minutes, as this allows them to complete a natural sleep cycle and gain the full restorative benefits of rest. Waking a child before this point may result in them feeling unsettled or overtired.

Therefore, staff will avoid waking sleeping children unless necessary for safeguarding reasons, individual care requirements, or in agreement with parents/carers. Each child's sleep routine will be respected, acknowledging that sleep patterns are individual and may vary in accordance with their stage of development and home routines.

Staff will discuss any changes in sleep routines with parents during hand overs and ensure they have all the information to make a formative decision on sleep routines for their child during their time at Little Bears, this could include explaining a change in behaviour due to dropping a nap or sleeping a lot during the day and it is affecting sleeping in the evenings.

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This Policy Was Adopted By	Little Bears Daycare
Last Updated	22 July 2026 (in line with September updates)
Signed on Behalf of Provider	Signed by: 22 July 2026
Name of Signatory	Laura Leath
Role of Signatory	Chairperson of Little Bears Daycare