



Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Safer Infant Sleep Management

Purpose & Scope

This policy ensures total compliance with the updated statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) safety standards. It applies to all practitioners working with children under two years old.

Preparing the Sleep Environment

- **Clear the Space:** Remove all soft toys, comforters, pillows, duvets, nests, and cot bumpers from the sleep area.
- **Inspect the Mattress:** Ensure the mattress is completely firm, flat, waterproof, and covered only by a tight, well-fitted sheet.
- **Check Temperature:** Verify the room thermometer reads between 16°C and 20°C before settling any child.

Settling and Placing Children to Sleep

- **Back to Sleep:** Always place infants under two years old flat on their backs to sleep.
- **Feet to Foot:** Position the child with their feet touching the bottom end of the cot or mat to prevent them from wriggling down under blankets.
- **Secure Bedding:** If a blanket is used, tuck it in securely around the mattress, no higher than the child's armpits. (Note: Lightweight, correctly sized baby sleeping bags without hoods are a preferred alternative).
- **Clear Faces:** Ensure the child's head and face remain completely uncovered at all times.

Active Supervision and Monitoring

- **Maintain Ratios:** Keep statutory EYFS staff-to-child ratios active inside the sleep room at all times.
- **Continuous Presence:** A practitioner must remain physically inside the sleep room; never leave sleeping infants unattended.
- **Physical Checks:** Conduct physical, in-person checks on every child every 10 to 15 minutes.
- **Observation Criteria:** Look closely for chest movement, clear breathing, and normal skin colour. Touch the child's chest or back to check for overheating.
- **No Tech Reliance:** Use baby monitors or webcams only as extra reassurance; they must never replace your physical 10-15 minute checks.

Documentation and Incidents

- **Log Instantly:** Record the exact time, child's status, and initials on the sleep chart immediately after every physical check.
- **Rolling Over:** If an infant over six months old rolls onto their stomach independently, gently return them to their back unless they are fully able to roll both ways confidently. Document this in their daily notes.