
Safer Sleep Policy

Policy statement

I am committed to providing a safe sleeping environment for all children in my care and to minimising the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and sleep-related accidents. This policy sets out how I put babies and young children down to sleep safely, how I supervise them while they sleep, and how I work in partnership with parents to keep sleep routines consistent and safe.

Legal framework and guidance

This policy meets the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, against which Ofsted inspects my setting. It also follows current NHS advice on safer sleep and the guidance of The Lullaby Trust.

Explicit safer sleep requirements are being written directly into the EYFS statutory framework, coming into force on 1 September 2026. The Department for Education has made clear that providers are expected to comply with these requirements now. This policy reflects that updated wording so that my practice is already compliant and inspection-ready. Safer sleep is a safeguarding issue and Ofsted will check safer sleep practice at every inspection.

Safe sleep requirements for children under two

For every child under two years old I ensure the following:

- Children are placed down to sleep on their back, in their own separate sleep space, on 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 (this includes cots, carrycots, Moses baskets and travel cots).
- The sleep space contains only a firm, flat, waterproof mattress. If a cot sheet is used it is securely tucked in around the mattress.
- Cots and sleep spaces do not contain extra items such as toys, pillows, extra blankets, cot bumpers, wedges or straps.
- A child's head is never covered while they sleep.
- Where a blanket is used, the child is positioned 'feet-to-foot' (feet at the bottom of the cot) with the blanket tucked in no higher than the shoulders. Alternatively, a well-fitted baby sleep bag appropriate to the child's weight and age is used, following the manufacturer's guidance.
- Babies who can roll over independently and roll back again are placed down on their back but may be allowed to find their own sleeping position.

Room temperature and overheating

Children must not become too hot or too cold while sleeping. The recommended room temperature for babies is between 16°C and 20°C. I check the temperature of the sleep room, adjust bedding and clothing accordingly, and avoid placing sleep spaces next to radiators, heaters or in direct sunlight.

Supervision and monitoring

- Babies under six months of age always have an adult in the same room with them for every sleep.
- All sleeping children are always within my sight and hearing.
- I check sleeping children frequently. Checks include making sure the child is breathing comfortably, is in a safe position, is not too hot or cold and does not have a covered head.
- I feel the child's neck, tummy or back to check their temperature during checks rather than relying on hands or feet, which can feel cool.

- If a baby monitor is used (for children over six months only), it is an aid and never a replacement for direct checks. I still ensure I can see and hear the child and continue regular physical checks.

Children who fall asleep while travelling or out on trips

A lie-flat pram or pushchair is not used as a child's main separate sleep space. If a baby aged 12 months and under falls asleep in a car seat, pram or buggy while travelling or out on an outing, they are transferred to their cot or separate sleep space as soon as we return to the setting. For children over 12 months who fall asleep while travelling, I move them to their own sleep space on return wherever possible.

Premature and low birth weight babies

If a baby was born prematurely (before 37 weeks) or weighed less than 2.5kg (5.5lb) at birth, I follow safer sleep advice based on a year from their due date rather than their date of birth, in line with NHS and Lullaby Trust guidance.

Dummies

If a child normally uses a dummy to fall asleep, I follow the parents' wishes and current Lullaby Trust advice. A dummy is offered consistently and never forced or reinserted once the child is asleep, and nothing is attached to it while the child sleeps.

Rest and sleep for children over two

Older children who no longer nap are given the opportunity to rest quietly. Where an older child sleeps, they rest on a suitable safe surface, are supervised within sight and hearing, and the same principles of a clear, safe sleep space and appropriate temperature apply.

Working in partnership with parents

I discuss each child's individual sleep routine with parents when they start and review it regularly. I share this safer sleep policy with parents so they understand the practices I must follow.

Parents cannot waive or override the safer sleep requirements. If a parent requests a sleep practice that does not meet the EYFS safer sleep requirements — for example, sleeping a baby on their front, or leaving a baby to sleep in a car seat or pram — I explain that I am not able to do this, as I must follow statutory guidance to keep their child safe. A parental permission or waiver will not be accepted by Ofsted and will not change my practice.

Illness and temperature

If a child is unwell, running a temperature or their sleep needs change, I monitor them especially closely, follow my sickness policy, and contact parents where appropriate. A child who is unwell is never left to sleep without close and frequent supervision.

My knowledge and training

I keep my knowledge of safer sleep up to date by reading current NHS advice on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and using resources from The Lullaby Trust. I review my practice whenever guidance is updated, including the EYFS changes taking effect from September 2026.

Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed at least annually, and sooner if statutory guidance, EYFS requirements or best practice change. Any updates are shared with parents.

Policy date: _____1/8/26_____ **Review date:** _____1/8/27_____

Signed: Becky Crook, Kim Davies, Emma Janes (Registered Childminder, Little Legs Childminding)