Safe Sleep and Rest Policy

Policy Statement

At Rooftops Nursery, we recognise that sleep and rest are essential for children's health, wellbeing, learning and development. Every child has individual sleep needs which change as they grow, and we work closely with parents and carers to understand and respond to these needs safely and consistently while children are in our care.

The safety of all sleeping children is important, but the safe sleep for our youngest babies is paramount. Our practice is in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework (2026). This policy and practices are informed by the DfE 'Safe Sleep guidance 2026, in collaboration with the Lullaby Trust.

All staff, volunteers, students, apprentices, agency staff and anyone working on behalf of Rooftops Nursery are responsible for understanding and consistently implementing the safer sleep procedures set out within this policy.

Rationale

It is important to provide babies and children with a safer sleep environment to reduce 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 aged over 12 months.

SIDS is the sudden unexpected death of a baby where no cause is found. Whilst it is uncommon, there are some factors that can increase a baby's risk of SIDS. These include

- Being born prematurely (before 37 weeks)
- Low birthweight (less than 2.5kg or 5.5lb)
- Exposure to smoking in pregnancy
- Sleeping with babies and children on sofas or chairs.

SUDC is the sudden unexpected death of a child where no cause is found. Creating a safer sleep space can help avoid accidents, such as the risk of suffocating when sleeping from becoming entangled in soft bedding.

Safe sleep for babies and children under 12 months

Babies aged 12 months and under will only be placed to sleep in a cot of solid construction, in line with British Standard No's. BS EN 716-1 :2017, BS EN 1466:2014 or BS EN 1466:2023

Cots will contain nothing other than a firm mattress that is line with appropriate British Standard No's. BS EN 16890:2017 plus A1:2021 and mattresses: BS 7177:2008 plus A1: 2011

Only light weight bedding will be used – a fitted sheet and one small lightweight blanket.

Items such as bumpers, wedges, toys, straps, bottles (or anything that constitutes a comforter) are strictly not permitted in cots.

Babies are placed into the cot on their backs with their feet at the bottom of the cot. Babies' heads will never be covered.

Light weight blankets must be firmly tucked around the baby, no higher than shoulders to prevent head covering.

No sleeping bags will be permitted.

Dummies are permitted. There is research to suggest dummies can reduce the risk of SIDS. If a dummy arrives at nursery with a dummy clip, the clip will be removed immediately.

Room Temperatures (babies & children under 2 years)

Room temperatures will be closely monitored and every effort made to maintain the recommended room temperature (16-20c)

If the sleep area temperatures rise to between 20-28 degrees, every effort will be made to cool children using open windows, removing clothing, using no blankets, applying cold flannels, using fans and portable air con units.

If sleep room areas rise to above 28 degrees, parents will be informed by email of the room temperature and given the option to collect their children. They will be notified that the temperature in the sleep area has reached unsafe temperatures and despite all efforts to cool the room, it does pose a risk to sleeping babies. Parents will have the option to collect babies or allow them to remain at nursery.

Supervision for Sleeping Babies

Babies under 6 months of age will have an adult with them in the same area for every sleep. They will be closely checked***** by the adult frequently

All sleeping babies aged over 6 months will always be in hearing range of staff when sleeping and always visible in the room. They will be closely checked***** by an adult frequently.

Once babies can move from their back to their front and back again by themselves, they can find their own sleeping position. However, we will continue to place them on their back to sleep.

***What does a 'check' of a sleeping baby include?**

- Check breathing – is the chest moving up and down?
- Temperature – is baby too hot or too cold? Feel the chest or back of neck (hands and feet will feel cooler, which is normal). If skin is clammy or sweaty, remove one or more layers of clothing or bedding.
- Hazards – does the cot remain free of items? Is the bedding still firmly tucked in and not loose or covering head.

Checks of babies take place every 10 minutes. Checks are recorded.

Babies and children over 12 months

Children over 12 months of age are permitted to have a sleep comforter. This could be a small teddy or similar. This should not be a large item that could entirely cover their head.

All sleeping children will always be in hearing range of staff when sleeping and always visible in the same room. They will be closely checked* by an adult every 10 minutes and recorded.

Children over 12 months old may sleep in a wooden bed or on a firm, flat sleep mattress provided on the floor.

Safe Sleep Training for New Staff

All members of staff will complete safe sleep training within 1 month of starting employment at Rooftops. All staff across the nursery will read and understand this policy. Part of the monitoring of staffs continued suitability will include their ability to provide safe sleep in line with this policy. Failure to do so will be treated as a safeguarding matter and may result in disciplinary action in line with the nursery disciplinary procedures.

Sleep Provision Provided at Rooftops

Children under 12 months old

Babies under the age of 12 months strictly sleep in a cot that meets the criteria laid out in the DfE safe sleep guidelines. Mamas and Papas space saver cots are used, with compliant mattress in place.



the Mamas & Papas Petite Cot meets all relevant British Safety Standards (including BS EN 716) and is used with the manufacturer-approved mattress.
When used with a firm, flat, well-fitting mattress and a clear sleep space, it meets the DfE safer sleep requirements for babies aged under 12 months.

Under current safety frameworks, cots in childcare settings should not have a side that fully drops down. Mamas and Papas Petite cots feature fixed, fully open slatted sides

Children over 12 months old

Children over 12 months mostly sleep on mill-house wall hung sleep mats or TTS folding sleep mats, which are compliant with the DfE Safe Sleep Guidelines (check provided below)

TTS Folding Sleep Mats meet early years safe sleep criteria for children aged 12 months and over when used correctly. The mats provide a firm, flat sleep surface, are used in a clear and hazard-free area, and support safe supervised sleep in accordance with DfE safer sleep expectations for toddlers and older children.

Milhouse Wall-Hung Sleep Mats meet early years safe sleep criteria for children aged 12 months and over when used correctly. The mats provide a firm, flat sleep surface, are stored hygienically, and are used in a clear, hazard-free area on the floor to support safe, supervised sleep in accordance with DfE safer sleep expectations for toddlers and older children.

Some children between the ages of 12 months and 24 months may sleep in a little wooden sleep bed with compliant mattress.



Safety and Standards

- **Bed Standard:** Tested and compliant with BS 8509.
- **Mattress Standards:** Conforms to BS EN 16890 and BS 7177, providing a firm, flat, waterproof surface aligned with NHS and The Lullaby Trust safer sleep guidelines. [1, 2, 3]

Sleep Routines and Parent Requests

Where possible, we will work together with parents and carers to ensure each child's individual sleep routines and wellbeing continuing to be met. However, staff will not force a child to sleep or keep them awake against his or her will. They will also not wake children from their sleep unless prior parental consent has been granted.

Individual sleep routines are followed wherever possible and with babies under 12 months. 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 and changes in sleep routines at the end of the day and share observations and information about children's behaviours if they do not receive enough sleep.

Sleeping Twins

We follow the advice from The Lullaby Trust regarding sleeping twins while working with parents to maintain sleep routines and well-being

Further information can be found at http://www.lullabytrust.org.uk

Most children up until the age of 3 will require some form of rest or sleep during the day, especially during a nursery day when they can be more active and stimulated than during a day at home.

We recognise that babies and toddlers sleep can be a topic of challenge and even despair for many parents. Having a child who doesn't sleep well during the night is challenging for parents. A common misconception is that reducing daytime sleep will improve nighttime sleep. In fact, this usually has the opposite effect.

The nursery team will observe children and make a judgement as to whether children require sleep during the day. No child will be forced to sleep and if staff are content that children can get throughout the day maintaining emotional regulation then children will not sleep.

Sarah Okwell-Smith 'Gentle Sleep' book guiding principles and policies around sleep. This suggests the average daytime nap periods for babies, toddlers and pre-school children		
Age of child	Required nap duration (hours)	Total sleep required in 24 hours
4-6 months	3	14
7-9 months	2.7	13.6
10-12 months	2.5	13.4
13-24 months	2.4	13.4
2 years	1	11.9
3 years	0.8	11.7
4 years	0.3	11.2

Review
This policy is reviewed annually, following changes to statutory guidance or sooner if required to reflect best practice in safer sleep.

Policy date reviewed	Reviewed by	Date for further review
8th July 2026		**July 2027**

Further information can be found at:

www.lullabytrust.org.uk

www.nhs.uk/baby/caring-for-a-newborn/reduce-the-risk-of-sudden-infant-death-syndrome/

https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/sudden-infant-death-syndrome-sids/

https://www.nhs.uk/best-start-in-life/baby/baby-basics/newborn-and-baby-sleeping-advice-for-parents/safe-sleep-advice-for-babies/

https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Safer-sleep-in-emergency-situations.pdf

https://www.wscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/baby_sleeping_guidance.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a5f8e4fb00f3323bf1a23a1/EYFS_group_and_school_based_from_September_2026.pdf