

Sleep

At Little Learners Nursery and Preschool, 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 children while sleeping is paramount. Our policy follows the advice provided by The Lullaby Trust and current NHS safer sleep guidance to minimise the risk of Sudden Infant Death. We make sure that:

- Babies are placed on their backs to sleep. If a baby has rolled onto their tummy, they should be turned onto their back again. 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
- Babies/toddlers are never put down to sleep with a bottle to self-feed. We encourage independence and children feeding themselves, but this is closely monitored by staff in the room and bottle removed immediately after the child has finished
- Babies and toddlers are monitored visually while sleeping. Breathing checks are recorded every 10 minutes and include observing the rise and fall of the child's chest and, where appropriate, gently placing a hand on the child's back to confirm regular breathing.
- When monitoring babies/toddlers, the staff member looks for the rise and fall of the chest, and if the sleep position has changed.
- Staff also ensure to monitor the position of blankets.
- As good practice we monitor babies under six months, or a baby new to the nursery, sleeping during the first few weeks every five minutes until we are familiar with the child and their sleeping routines, to offer reassurance to them and families.

We provide a safe sleeping environment by:

- Ensuring every child has their own separate sleep space which is appropriate for their age and stage of development.
- Monitoring room temperature and maintaining it within the recommended range of 16-20°C to reduce the risk of overheating.
- Using clean, lightweight cellular blankets and ensuring babies are appropriately dressed for sleep to avoid overheating.
- Babies aged 12 months and under will only be placed to sleep in a cot that meets current safety standards.
- All children under two years of age are placed on their back to sleep in line with safer sleep guidance. Once a child can independently roll from back to front and back again, they may be left to find their own sleeping position.
- Before sleep, staff remove items that may pose a risk or contribute to overheating, including socks, loose hair accessories, hooded clothing and bibs.
- Lightweight cellular blankets are positioned below the child's shoulders and securely tucked under the arms to reduce the risk of the blanket moving over the child's face.
- Babies under 12 months of age do not sleep with comforters, soft toys or other loose items in their sleep space. Children who require a comforter may be settled to sleep with it; however, staff will remove the comforter once the child has fallen asleep, where it is safe and practical to do so, in order to maintain a safe sleep environment.



- For babies under 12 months, staff ensure the child's feet are positioned at the foot of the cot ("feet to foot" position) to minimise the risk of slipping underneath bedding.
- No child is left sleeping unattended. Sleeping children are continuously supervised by staff and regular welfare checks are carried out and recorded in accordance with nursery procedures. Babies under six months of age will always sleep in a room where a member of staff is continuously present.
- Using cots, beds or firm flat sleep mats with firm waterproof sleep surfaces that are appropriate to the child's age and stage of development and compliant with current British Standard regulations. Clean fitted sheets are used on all sleep spaces, and waterproof mattress protectors are used on cots to maintain a safe and hygienic sleep environment.
- Staff ensure that children's heads remain uncovered during sleep and that bedding cannot move over the child's face.
- Not using pillows, cushions or cluttering sleep areas with soft toys.
- Keeping all spaces around beds clear of hanging objects, including cords, blind cords and drawstring bags.
- Ensuring every baby and toddler is provided with their own bedding or freshly laundered bedding each day.
- Transferring any baby who falls asleep while being nursed by a practitioner to a safe sleeping surface to complete their rest.
- Having a no-smoking policy.
- All staff receive safer sleep training during induction and regular refresher training in line with current NHS and Lullaby Trust guidance.

We ask parents to provide us with information on their child's sleeping routine when the child starts at nursery and these are reviewed and updated at timely intervals. If a baby has an unusual sleeping routine, or a position that we do not use in the nursery i.e. babies sleeping on their tummies, we will explain our policy to the parents and not usually offer this unless the baby's doctor has advised the

parent of a medical reason to do so. In which case we would ask parents to sign to say they have requested we adopt a different position or routine.

We recognise parents' knowledge of their child with regard to sleep routines and will, where possible, work in partnership with parents to ensure each child's individual sleep routines and well-being continue to be met. However, staff will not force a child to sleep or keep them awake against their will. Staff will not routinely wake children from their sleep. Where exceptional circumstances require staff to attempt to wake a child, they will do so gently and monitor the child's wellbeing. If the child does not naturally wake, they will be allowed to continue sleeping and parents will be informed accordingly.

Staff will discuss any changes in sleep routines with parents at the end of the day and share observations and information about children's behaviour when they do not receive enough sleep.

The nursery follows current NHS safer sleep guidance and guidance issued by The Lullaby Trust and will review practice whenever national guidance changes.

Sleeping twins

We follow the advice from The Lullaby Trust regarding sleeping twins.

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

This policy meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework, effective from 1 September 2026.

Date policy last reviewed/updated	1 st September 2026	Reviewed by	Terri Noone - Interim Regional Nursery Manager Charlie Walton – Nursery Manager Jodie Richards – Nursery Manager
Date of next review/update	September 2027		