

Safer Sleep Policy

Policy Statement

At The Square Nursery School, we are committed to providing a safe, secure and nurturing sleep environment for all children in our care. We recognise that sleep and rest are essential for children's wellbeing, growth and development. We follow current guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), NHS and The Lullaby Trust to promote safer sleep practices for young children.

This policy applies to all children attending the nursery.

Aims

We aim to:

- Provide a safe sleep environment for every child.
- Ensure all staff understand and follow safer sleep guidance.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers regarding children's sleep routines and individual needs
- Reduce risks associated with unsafe sleeping arrangements.
- Ensure sleeping children are supervised appropriately at all times.

Sleep Arrangements

The nursery recognises that adequate sleep supports children's emotional wellbeing, learning and development. Staff will never force a child to sleep or keep them awake against their will.

We create a calm and restful sleep environment for children who require sleep, for example by dimming lights or using soft music where appropriate. Children who do not require sleep will continue to have opportunities to play, learn and develop in a suitable environment.

Sleep Spaces

Children will sleep in a clean, safe and age-appropriate sleep space.

- Children may sleep on low-level sleep mats suitable for their age and stage of development.
- Sleep spaces will remain clear and supervised.

The following will NOT be used:

- Pillows
- Sleep positioners or wedges
- Duvets
- Heavy blankets
- Any other items that have not been deemed safe by parents and nursery management & key person
- Children are placed down on their back in their own separate sleep space on a clear, flat, firm surface such as a cot, bed or suitable mattress on the floor.

Bedding and Clothing

- Lightweight, clean bedding only will be used.
- Every child will be provided with clean bedding labelled for them where applicable.
- Bedding will be cleaned regularly.
- Sleep mats and sleep equipment used by the nursery will comply with current British Safety Standards.
- Sleep spaces will be kept clear of hanging cords, blind cords, drawstring bags or other potential hazards.
- Children's heads must remain uncovered during sleep.
- Staff will check children regularly to ensure they are breathing comfortably, not too hot or too cold.
- Room temperature in sleep areas will be maintained at a comfortable level where possible.

Supervision

- Sleeping children will be checked visually every 10 minutes whilst sleeping, and checks will be recorded in line with nursery procedures.
- Room temperature in sleep areas will be monitored and maintained at a comfortable level, ideally between 16°C and 20°C, to avoid children becoming too hot or too cold.
- Staff will regularly check children during sleep to ensure they are comfortable and appropriately dressed for the temperature.
- Staff will remain aware of sleeping children at all times and sleep areas will be regularly supervised.
- During sleep checks, staff will monitor children's breathing, colour, temperature, the rise and fall of the chest, and any changes in sleeping position.
- Children will never be put down to sleep with a bottle to self-feed.
- The nursery operates a strict no smoking and no vaping policy.

Individual Sleep Needs

We recognise that every child has individual sleep routines and comfort needs. Parents and carers will complete information about their child's sleep routine during the settling-in process with the child's key person, and this information will be reviewed regularly.

Parents and carers will be asked to share:

- Home sleep routines
- Comfort items used
- Medical needs or professional advice
- Preferred settling methods

Any agreed variations from this policy due to medical or additional needs must:

- Be supported by written professional advice where appropriate
- Be risk assessed
- Be shared with all relevant staff

To check if a baby or child is too hot or cold, feel their chest or the back of their neck (hands and feet will usually be cooler, which is normal). If their skin feels clammy or sweaty, remove one or more layers of clothing or bedding. You should use your professional judgement during extreme temperatures.

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

Comforters and Dummies

- Dummies may be used in accordance with parental wishes.
 - Comforters may be used where appropriate and safe.
 - Staff will assess whether comfort items present a risk during sleep.
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Sleeping in Pushchairs or Car Seats

Pushchairs, buggies and car seats are not suitable as a main sleep space.

If a child falls asleep while travelling:

- They will be moved to a safe sleep space as soon as practical.
 - Staff will ensure the child's airway remains clear and unobstructed until moved.
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Staff Responsibilities

All staff will:

- Read and follow this policy.
 - Follow current safer sleep guidance from the DfE, NHS and The Lullaby Trust.
 - Record sleep checks appropriately.
 - Report any concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
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Partnership with Parents

The nursery will:

- Share this policy with families.
 - Discuss sleep arrangements during settling-in sessions.
 - Work collaboratively with parents to support children's sleep needs safely.
 - Inform parents of any significant changes to sleep patterns or concerns.
 - Discuss any changes in sleep routines with parents at the end of the day and share observations where lack of sleep may be affecting behaviour or wellbeing.
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Safeguarding

Safer sleep forms part of our safeguarding responsibilities. Failure to follow safer sleep procedures may place children at risk of harm and will be addressed in line with safeguarding and disciplinary procedures.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if guidance changes.

Useful Guidance

- DfE Safer Sleep Guidance
- NHS Guidance on Sleep Safety
- The Lullaby Trust

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
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15 th May 2026	Zoey Gordon	May 2027
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This policy has been read and understood by the following staff members:
