

St Anne's Infants' School

Safer Sleep Policy



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Approved by: Designated Safeguarding Team

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1. Aims

This policy sets out the procedures and responsibilities for ensuring the safety, health, and wellbeing of children who require rest or sleep during the school day. St Anne's Infants' School recognises that sleep and rest are important for children's physical development, emotional regulation, learning, and overall wellbeing.

The school is committed to providing a safe sleeping environment and following current statutory guidance, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework and NHS safer sleep guidance. All staff are expected to follow the procedures outlined in this policy to minimise risk and promote children's welfare.

Staff must also refer to the latest NHS safer sleep guidance: <https://www.nhs.uk/best-start-in-life/baby/baby-basics/newborn-and-baby-sleeping-advice-for-parents/safe-sleep-advice-for-babies/>

Reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) – NHS

<https://www.nhs.uk/baby/caring-for-a-newborn/sudden-infant-death-syndrome-sids/>

Promoting Safer Sleeping for Infants - Guidance for Practitioners

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/2025-01/Promoting%20Safe%20Sleeping%20for%20Infants%20Guidance%20-%20%28Final%20Tagged%29.pdf>

2. Safe Sleep Procedures

To provide safe and appropriate opportunities for sleep and rest, the following procedures will apply:

- Children will rest or sleep in a designated area that is safe, clean, comfortable and appropriate to their age and individual needs.
- Sleeping children will be frequently checked and appropriately monitored to ensure that they remain safe and well.
- Children who are asleep will be checked and observed at least every 10 minutes. More frequent monitoring may be required where identified through a risk assessment, healthcare plan, medical advice, or individual need.
- Sleep checks will be recorded on a written log (Appendix A)
- Sleep and rest areas will be positioned to enable staff to supervise children appropriately and respond promptly if a child requires assistance.
- Sleep areas will be maintained at a comfortable temperature and appropriately ventilated. The school will monitor the temperature and take appropriate action to prevent children becoming too hot or too cold.
- Bedding and other sleep equipment will be clean, safe, well maintained and appropriate for the child's age and developmental stage.
- Sleep and rest arrangements will be age-appropriate and will take account of the child's ability to reposition themselves independently.
- Children with SEND, medical conditions, or additional needs will have any sleep-related requirements identified within their individual healthcare plan, risk assessment, SEN Support Plan, or other relevant documentation. Staff will follow agreed procedures to ensure that individual needs are met safely.

3. Supervision and Staffing

- Adult-to-child ratios are maintained in accordance with statutory EYFS requirements.
- All sleep checks include:
 - Time child fell asleep

- Times checks were carried out
 - Observations made
 - Time child woke up
- Parents will be informed of their child's sleep patterns and duration through the school's usual communication systems, where applicable.
- If a child falls asleep in a non-designated area, staff will safely transfer the child where possible. If this is not appropriate due to the child's sleep state, staff will apply the safe sleep procedures and monitoring outlined in this policy
- Staff will respond immediately to any concerns about a child's breathing, colour, responsiveness, position or general wellbeing and will follow the school's first-aid and emergency procedures where necessary.

4. Safe Sleep Environment Requirements

Children will only sleep or rest in environments that meet the following safety requirements:

- A firm, flat and uncluttered sleeping surface.
 - Children are positioned appropriately for their age and stage of development.
 - Bedding is suitable, clean and in good condition.
 - Blankets or covers, where used, are positioned no higher than the child's shoulders.
 - Sleep areas are free from hazards, loose items, soft toys and potential suffocation risks.
 - The environment is well ventilated and maintained at a safe and comfortable temperature.
- Covers are used no higher than the child's shoulders.
- The sleep area is free from hazards, obstructions, loose items, soft toys, and overheating risks.
- Temperature is considered carefully; staff will adjust clothing or layers to maintain comfort without risk of overheating.
- Children with SEND or medical needs will have any specific sleep or positioning requirements managed in accordance with their individual healthcare plan or risk assessment.

5. Designated Sleep Areas

Nursery

Cushioned area in the reading area (checked and kept clear according to safe sleep guidance).

Reception

Designated quiet rest area (usually the reflection area)

KS1

Reflection Area

Shooting Stars:

The quiet room

Designated sleep areas will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain suitable, safe, and free from hazards.

6. Communication with Parents

- Sleep needs and preferences will be discussed with parents on admission.

- Any changes to sleep patterns, unusually long sleep periods, or concerns about a child's wellbeing will be shared with parents promptly.
- If a recurring sleep pattern impacts a child's engagement, learning, or development, staff will work with families to identify supportive strategies

7. Staff Training and Responsibilities

All staff working with children in the Nursery. Reception and Shooting Stars must be trained in the setting's Safer Sleep Policy as part of their induction. This training ensures that all practitioners understand the importance of safe sleep practices, current NHS and EYFS guidance, and their responsibilities when supervising sleeping children.

Training will include:

- Understanding relevant EYFS requirements, including Section 3.84.
- Familiarity with NHS safer sleep guidance and SIDS risk reduction.
- Safe sleep environments and equipment.
- Appropriate positioning of sleeping children.
- Sleep monitoring and recording procedures.
- Temperature management and overheating prevention.
- Recognising signs of distress or medical concern.
- Emergency response procedures.
- The setting's specific procedures, including:
 - Sleep area setup
 - Monitoring and 10-minute checks
 - Correct sleep positioning
 - Temperature and clothing considerations
- Sleep monitoring records must be completed every 10 minutes throughout the duration of the child's sleep period. Completed records should be submitted to the designated leaders responsible for safer sleep monitoring and retained in accordance with the school's record-keeping procedures.
- Recognising signs of distress, overheating, or unsafe sleep environments
- Procedures for what to do if concerns arise

To maintain consistent and up-to-date practice:

- Refresher training will be completed annually or sooner if guidance changes.
- Training records will be kept demonstrating staff competence and compliance.
- Staff will be informed promptly when national guidance (NHS, government, local safeguarding partners) is updated. Where staff show uncertainty or inconsistent practice, additional coaching will be arranged.
- All staff are responsible for following this policy consistently during the school day.
- Staff must ensure they remain within sight or hearing of sleeping children at all times.
- Staff are responsible for accurate completion of the Safer Sleep Monitoring Checklist.
- Any breach of policy, identified risk, or concern must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Leaders will monitor implementation through:
 - Regular observations and spot-checks.
 - Review of safer sleep monitoring records.
 - Staff supervision and professional discussions.
 - Feedback from staff, children and parents where appropriate.
 - Review of any incidents, concerns or near misses.

To ensure consistency between home and school and to support children's health, comfort, and emotional development, staff will:

- Share sleep-related information during parent meetings and transitions.
- Communicate any concerns about sleep patterns or wellbeing promptly.
- Work collaboratively with families to understand children's routines and needs.

8. Safeguarding Concerns

- Any concerns regarding a child's safety, health, breathing, responsiveness, unusual sleeping patterns, or wellbeing while sleeping must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

9. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if:

- National guidance or legislation is updated.
- Changes are made to EYFS requirements.
- An incident, concern, or learning review identifies the need for amendments.
- The school's operational arrangements change.

All staff must familiarise themselves with and adhere to this policy to ensure that children who sleep during the school day remain safe, supervised, and supported.