

Group Policy: Safe Sleep and Rest

Policy Header:	Safe Sleep and Rest
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Owner:	Quality & SLT
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1. Policy Statement

Flower Pots Nursery Group is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and supervised environment for children to rest and sleep. We adhere to the highest standards of safety to prevent Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), choking, and other sleep-related accidents. We recognise that sleep is a fundamental right of the child and must be managed with mindfulness and dignity.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure all staff understand the statutory requirements for supervising sleeping children, the physical monitoring protocols required, and the environmental standards necessary to maintain a safe sleep space.

3. Objective

- To ensure **100% compliance** with EYFS, KCSIE and regulatory sleep guidance.
- To standardise sleep procedures across the entire nursery group.
- To provide staff with clear, actionable steps for settling, monitoring, and waking children.

4. Scope



This policy applies to all practitioners, students, volunteers, and agency staff working within any setting belonging to the Nursery Group. It covers all age groups from birth to five years.

5. Definitions

- **Active Monitoring:** The act of physically touching a child's back to verify breathing, rather than just observing from a distance.
- **Feet-to-Foot:** Placing a baby at the bottom of the cot so they cannot wriggle down under blankets.
- **Qualified Staff:** An individual holding at least a Level 2 or 3 Early Years qualification and a valid Paediatric First Aid (PFA) certificate.

6. Procedures

6.1 Supervision & Staffing

- **Unattended Children:** Children must **never** be left unattended while sleeping.
- **Under 6 Months:** A staff member must be physically present in the room at all times.
- **Over 6 Months:** A staff member may be in an adjoining room if they are within hearing distance and hold a valid PFA certificate.

6.2 The Monitoring Cycle

- **Frequency:** All sleeping babies and children must be checked every **5 minutes**.
- **Method:** Use a physical timer. Staff must gently touch the child's back to confirm breathing.
- **Documentation:** All checks must be initialed on the physical Sleep Chart and recorded digitally on the Family app (including sleep/wake times).

6.3 Environment & Health

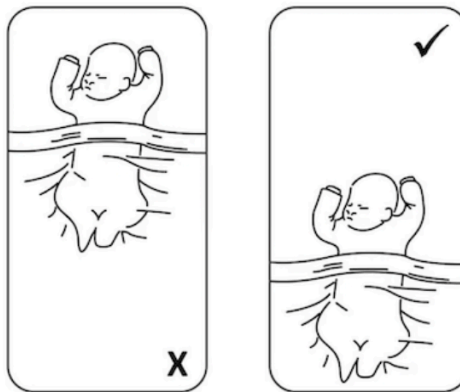
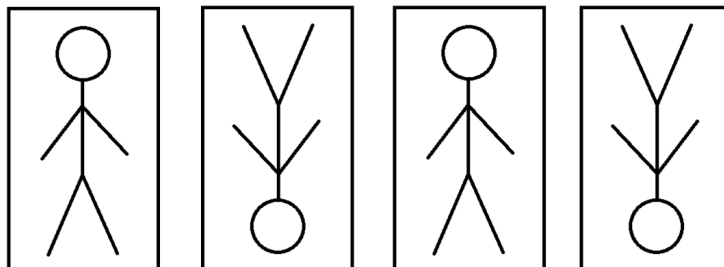
- **Temperature:** Rooms must be maintained between **16–20°C**.
- **Safety Sweep:** Remove all shoes, bibs, necklaces, hair clips, dummy clips, and hooded tops before sleep. Ensure no toys or food are in the child's hands or mouth.

- **Hygiene:** Sleep mats must be sanitised daily. Bedding must be stored in labeled bags and washed weekly (or immediately in cases of illness/lice).

6.4 Positioning & Equipment

- **Cots:** Mandatory for all children under 12 months. Babies must be placed on their backs in the "feet-to-foot" position.
- **Mats:** Mobile children may transition to mats, arranged in a "head-to-toe" configuration to prevent the spread of infection.

- **Hazards:** Comforters for babies under 12 months must be removed once they are asleep. Bottles must never be left with a sleeping child.



7. Roles & Responsibilities



- **Quality Lead / SLT:** Responsible for auditing sleep logs and conducting "Spot Checks" (Tier 1 & 2) to ensure the 5-minute timer and physical touch protocols are being followed.
- **Nursery Manager:** Responsible for ensuring all sleep areas are equipped with working timers, NHS/Lullaby Trust posters, and that staff rotas allow for continuous supervision.
- **Practitioners:** Responsible for the direct care, settling, and active monitoring of children. They must ensure Sleep Charts are accurate and that the safe sleep environment is maintained.

8. Management of Non-Sleeping Children

Flower Pots recognises that children have varying needs for rest. While we provide the opportunity for sleep, we respect the individual biological rhythms of each child.

8.1 Separation of Activity Zones

To protect the quality of sleep for resting children and to provide an ambitious environment for those awake, the nursery will maintain clear physical separation where possible:

- **Dedicated Sleep Zones:** Areas designated for sleep must remain "low-stimulation" zones (dimmed lighting, quiet background noise, and minimal foot traffic).
- **Active Zones:** Children who are not sleeping or have woken up early must be transitioned to a separate area of the room or an adjoining room. This ensures they can engage in "Learning through Play" without the restriction of having to remain quiet or still.

8.2 Supervision and Ratios

- **Split Supervision:** When a room is split between sleeping and non-sleeping children, the Manager must ensure that statutory ratios are maintained in both "zones."

- **Safe Transition:** Staff must transition children between zones with minimal disruption. For example, if a child wakes up, they should be gently moved to the active zone to begin their play, rather than being required to stay on their mat.

8.3 Curriculum for Non-Sleepers

Children who do not sleep must not be "waiting" for the routine to end.

- **Ambitious Provision:** Staff must ensure that the "In-the-moment" planning continues for non-sleepers. Sensory play, outdoor access, or creative activities should be available so that their learning momentum is not lost during the rest period.
- **Respecting Choice:** No child will be forced to stay in the sleep area if they are clearly awake and alert. Staff will follow the child's lead and transition them to an active learning space.

8.4 Communication with Parents

- If a child's sleep patterns change (e.g., they stop needing a midday nap), the Key Person will discuss this with the parents to ensure the nursery routine aligns
- with the child's home routine and developmental stage. This will be reflected on the child's daily record in **Family**.

9. Compliance

Failure to adhere to the monitoring intervals or leaving a child under 6 months alone in a room constitutes a **significant breach of safeguarding**. Such incidents will be investigated under the disciplinary and whistleblowing procedures and may be reportable to Ofsted/Local Authority Safeguarding Partners.

9. References

- **Statutory Framework for the EYFS (2024)**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)**
- **The Lullaby Trust:** Evidence-based SIDS prevention.



- Working Together to Safeguard Children (WTTSC)
- NHS Safe Sleep Guidance

https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/baby-safety/baby-product-information/?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=22419978868&gbraid=OAAAAAD7rd4N4CuMGvhlkYLSihrE1So8-C&gclid=CjwKCAjwtcHPBhADEiwAWo3sJnCwcQsEP3OL8c2eEb0TFIOChUK_NqYiSS7nQ1wiP4kiOw8E3ps6BhoCQ34QAvD_BwE

Policy Authorised By: Nikki McNulty

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