St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School

St. Joseph's Nursery Safer Sleep Policy

September 2026

Review: September 2027

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on an annual basis.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body September 2026

It is due for review in September 2027

Hayley Francis Date: September 2026



Head Teacher

Lindsay Wise Date: September 2026



Chair of Governors

Introduction

We recognise that adequate, good-quality sleep and rest are essential for children's health, wellbeing, learning and development. Sufficient sleep supports children's cognitive, physical, social and emotional development.

The safety of every child in our care is paramount. We follow safer-sleep recommendations, including guidance from **The Lullaby Trust**, to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep-related incidents.

We work closely with parents and carers to understand each child's individual sleep needs, routines and preferences and to ensure that these are considered alongside our safeguarding and safer-sleep responsibilities.

Sleep Restrictions and Parental Preferences

Parents and carers will be asked about their child's usual sleep routine during the settling-in process. Any specific requests regarding sleep will be discussed with the child's key person and recorded appropriately.

Where a parent or carer has requested that their child does not sleep at nursery, staff will provide suitable activities and gentle distraction where appropriate. However, staff will never physically prevent a tired child from falling asleep.

Children who need to sleep will be provided with a safe and suitable sleep environment.

Where a parent or carer has requested a maximum sleep period, staff will make reasonable efforts to support this request. Children will be woken gently and calmly rather than abruptly. Staff will not physically lift or otherwise force a sleeping child to wake. Instead, staff may gradually brighten the room, reduce sleep aids or gently remove bedding where appropriate, allowing the child time to wake naturally.

If a child does not wish to sleep, they will never be forced to do so. They will be offered suitable quiet activities during the designated rest period.

Before Sleep or Rest Time

Before a child is settled for sleep or rest, staff will ensure that:

- The child's nappy has been checked and changed where necessary.
- Any unnecessary outer clothing, particularly bulky or potentially restrictive clothing, is removed.
- The child has been offered food and an appropriate drink in accordance with their individual routine.
- Bibs and other items that could present a risk during sleep are removed.
- The room temperature is appropriate and comfortable.
- The sleep environment is calm, quiet and suitable for rest.
- White noise or quiet lullaby music may be used where appropriate, provided this does not interfere with staff supervision.
- Lighting may be reduced to create a calm environment while ensuring that staff can continue to safely supervise children.

Safe Sleeping Arrangements

During sleep periods:

- Babies will be placed **on their backs to sleep**, unless there is a specific medical reason, documented by an appropriate healthcare professional, requiring an alternative arrangement.
- Babies will sleep in a suitable cot or other appropriate sleep space.
- Babies and young children will not routinely be left to sleep in bouncy chairs, car seats or other sitting devices. If a child falls asleep in a sitting device, staff will move them to a safe, suitable sleep space as soon as practicable.
- Each child will have clean, individually allocated bedding appropriate to their age and sleep arrangements.
- Bedding will be stored hygienically and washed regularly in accordance with the nursery's infection-control procedures.
- Children will not have loose items, toys or other objects in their sleep space that could present a suffocation or overheating risk.
- Comforters will only be provided where appropriate for the individual child and in accordance with safer-sleep guidance.
- Children will be supported to settle to sleep in a calm and responsive manner. Staff may use appropriate physical reassurance, such as gentle patting or cuddling, where this is suitable and safe.
- Children will never be left unattended when they require immediate comfort or reassurance.

Sleep Monitoring and Checks

Children will be appropriately supervised throughout sleep periods.

Staff will carry out and record regular physical checks in accordance with the nursery's sleep-monitoring procedures. Please see appendix.1 for an exampke of our sleep checks.

Checks will include observing the child's:

- Breathing and general wellbeing.
- Position and sleep environment.
- Face and airway, ensuring that they are not obstructed by bedding or other items.
- Temperature and signs of overheating or distress.
- General appearance and condition.

The frequency of checks will take place every 10 minutes and recorded with the time and staff initials.

Staff will ensure that any bedding or other material is positioned safely and does not cover the child's face.

Individual Sleep Needs

Every child is different. Staff will consider each child's age, development, individual routine, sleep needs and any relevant information provided by parents or carers.

Where a child has a medical condition, additional need or specific sleep requirement, this will be discussed with the parent/carer and, where appropriate, relevant healthcare professionals. Any agreed arrangements will be documented and shared with staff who care for the child.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents and carers know their child best. We will work in partnership with families to understand children's normal sleep patterns and to support consistent routines between home and nursery wherever possible.

Parents and carers will be informed of any significant changes or concerns relating to their child's sleep, including unusual difficulty settling, excessive tiredness, breathing concerns or other changes in behaviour or wellbeing.

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that our practice remains consistent with current safer-sleep guidance and recommendations.

Appendix.1

St Joseph's Nursery Sleep Chart

Children to be checked every 10 minutes
DATE:

Name	Time asleep	Time checked & initials	Time checked & initials	Time checked & initials	Time checked & initials	Time checked & initials	Time checked & initials	Time checked & initials	Time awake

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