



Sleep Policy

At York Childcare Nurseries, we recognise that sleep is essential for children's growth, development and emotional wellbeing. We aim to provide a safe sleep environment that supports each child's individual sleep needs and natural sleep rhythms. The safety of babies and children sleeping is paramount. Our policy follows the advice provided by the DfE, the Lullaby Trust and NHS to minimise the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) in babies up to 12 months of age, and sudden unexpected death in childhood (SUDC) in children over 12 months of age.

We make sure that all babies and children are placed down to sleep safely, with every practitioner reading the NHS advice on sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and being made aware of the safer sleep guidance from The Lullaby Trust.

Babies/toddlers under two years old

For babies/toddlers under two years old, we ensure that:

- Babies aged 12 months and under¹ must only be placed to sleep on their back in a cot
- Babies aged over 12 months are placed down on their back in their own separate sleep space on a clear, flat, firm surface such as a cot, bed or mattress on the floor which complies with current British Safety Standards
- If a baby has rolled onto their tummy, we turn them onto their back again unless they are able to roll from back to front and back again on their own, in which case we enable them to find their own position
- Babies and toddlers are never put down to sleep with a bottle to self-feed
- Babies under six months of age must always have an adult with them in the same room for every sleep.
- Sleeping babies and toddlers are monitored visually by observing the rise and fall of their chest, checking their colour, breathing and sleep position.
- Babies/toddlers are always within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping.
- Checks are recorded every 10 minutes and as good practice we monitor babies under six months or a new baby 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.

¹ If a baby was born prematurely (before 37 weeks) or weighing less than 2.5kg or 5.5lb, you should follow the safer sleep advice for a year from their due date, rather than when they were born



Sleeping environment

We provide a safe sleeping environment for all babies and children by:

- Ensuring every child has their own separate sleep space
- Only using safety-approved cots and other suitable sleeping equipment (i.e. mats) that are compliant with British Standard regulations
- Using a firm flat surface such as a cot, bed or mattress on the floor. Babies aged 12 months and under are only placed to sleep in a cot
- Using a firm, flat waterproof mattress, a clean fitted sheet and lightweight bedding which is firmly tucked in around the child below their shoulders to prevent head covering
- Ensuring the baby/child is placed feet-to-foot at the bottom of the cot, with lightweight blankets tucked in, if used
- Ensuring every baby/child is provided with clean bedding, labelled for them, working in partnership with parents to meet any individual needs
- Ensuring babies/children are appropriately dressed for sleep to avoid overheating
- Ensuring babies'/children's heads are not covered
- Ensuring no extra items such as toys, pillows, extra blankets, bumpers, wedges or straps are used in cots; we will use sleep comforters for babies and children over 12 months only and follow The Lullaby Trust advice regarding the safe use of dummies while babies are sleeping²
- Keeping all spaces around cots and beds clear from hanging objects, i.e. hanging cords, blind cords, drawstring bags
- Monitoring the sleep room temperature maintaining the room temperature, where reasonably practicable, between 16°C and 20°C.
- Ensuring babies and children over six months of age are always within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping, and are checked every 10 minutes; we will where appropriate use a baby monitor to enable the sleeping children to be seen and heard at all times
- Ensuring babies under six months of age always have an adult with them in the same room for every sleep and are checked every five minutes
- If a baby falls asleep unexpectedly in a bouncer, swing, beanbag, car seat or other sitting device, they will be moved to a flat sleep surface as soon as it is safe to do so

We make sure that:

- All bedding will be cleaned, as required and at least weekly
- We will transfer any baby who falls asleep while being nursed by a practitioner to a safe sleeping surface to complete their rest

² <https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/baby-safety/baby-product-information/dummies/>



- We will transfer a baby/child who is brought into nursery while sleeping, such as in a sling, carrier or car seat, to a safe sleeping surface to complete their rest
- Any baby/child who falls asleep in a buggy, pushchair or pram while out on a visit will be transferred to a safe sleeping surface to complete their rest on their return to the nursery; coats, hats, extra clothing and blankets will be removed as soon as they are inside, even if this means waking them
- York Childcare operates a strict no smoking or vaping policy on all nursery premises. Staff who smoke or vape during breaks must change their outer clothing, wash their hands thoroughly and wait at least 30 minutes before holding babies or young children.

We ask parents to complete sheets on their child's sleeping routine with the child's key person when the child starts at nursery, and these are reviewed and updated at timely intervals. We recognise parents' knowledge of their child regarding sleep routines and will, where possible, work together to ensure each child's individual sleep routines and well-being continues to be met. However, staff will not force a child to sleep or keep them awake against his or her will. Staff will discuss individual sleep requirements with parents and will, where reasonably practicable, follow agreed routines. However, staff retain professional responsibility to act in the child's best interests and may wake a child where this is necessary for their welfare, health or the safe operation of the nursery

Individual sleep routines are followed rather than one set sleep time for all children. We create an environment that helps to settle children that require a sleep for example dimming the lights, using soft music, where applicable whilst ensuring that we continue to meet the needs of the children that do not require a sleep and ensure they can continue to play, learn, and develop. This may involve taking children outdoors or linking with other rooms/children.

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

Sleeping twins

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

Further information can be found on The Lullaby Trust website

This policy has been written with due regard to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2026 and current safer sleep guidance published by The Lullaby Trust and the NHS