



Forest Alliance
of Nursery Schools

Safe Sleep & Rest Policy

Status:	non-statutory
Responsible governors:	CLD Committee
Last review date:	Summer 2026
Date of next review:	Summer 2027
The policy is available for staff at:	School offices and shared drive
And for parents/carers at:	School offices

Version, revision date, who revised, section revised

V1, September 2024, Helen Currie, Pauline France. Adapted from Suffolk NHS Guidance for nurseries.

V2, Autumn 2025, Alison Emmett, Helen Currie. Accessibility improved: no tables, logo description, language level decreased; 2.9 added protocol for iPads

V3, Autumn 2026, Alison Emmett used Gemini AI to align with values and simplify

Scope and Review

Scope: All staff, practitioners, and key persons working across nursery provisions.

Review Schedule: Monitored continuously and reviewed annually (or immediately following updated NHS/SIDS or EYFS guidance).

Our Philosophy & Values

Sleep and rest are essential for young children's development, health, and emotional well-being. We partner closely with families to mirror home routines wherever possible, while maintaining strict health and safety standards.

All Children First & A Warm Welcome: Ensuring every child rests safely in a calm, nurturing environment that meets their individual physical and emotional needs.

All Families Matter & Experts Working Together: Communicating openly with parents to align home and nursery routines, working alongside health professionals where additional needs exist.

Kindness, Respect & Safety: Maintaining rigorous physical safety checks, NHS SIDS guidance compliance, and respectful comforting practices.

1. Preparing for Sleep & Partnering with Families

Home Routines & Individual Needs

All About Me Form: Before a child starts, key people review the *All About Me form* with parents to understand the child's sleep habits, needs, likes, and dislikes.

Mirroring Home Life: Staff aim to align nursery rest routines with home life where possible, while balancing nursery ratios and physical space.

Medical & High-Need Monitoring: For children with specific medical conditions, emotional needs, or sleep-training programmes, staff provide closer monitoring. Key people, senior teachers, or the assistant headteacher agree these plans directly with families.

Comforting & Settling Rules

Settling Support: Depending on family preferences, staff may sit close by while children self-settle, or offer gentle touch (such as stroking/patting a back, stomach, or side of face). Staff regularly

review appropriate comforting boundaries in annual safeguarding training.

Comfort Items: Families may send in labelled comforters, muslins, dummies, or soft toys. Staff keep these with the child's personal belongings.

Dummies: If a dummy falls out while a child sleeps, staff do not reinsert it unless the child wakes.

Bottles Banned for Settling: Staff do not give children bottles of milk to help them settle.

Environment: Staff may play soothing music to create a restful atmosphere.

2. Environment & Equipment Safety

Room Conditions & Equipment Checks

Temperature: Staff monitor playroom thermometers to maintain room temperatures between 16°C and 22°C (NHS guidelines), using electric fans in summer, and reporting temperature concerns to the School Business Manager.

Ventilation: Staff ensure all playrooms remain well-ventilated.

Bedding & Mattresses: Staff inspect mattresses regularly for damage, turning and airing them routinely. Bedding is individually labelled per child and washed weekly. Extra bedding is available for immediate changes if soiled.

Prohibited Sleeping Equipment: Staff discourage regular sleeping in pushchairs and never place a child to sleep in a car seat.

Strict Mobile Device Ban

NO CAMERA DEVICES: Staff must not bring any phone, tablet, or device capable of taking photographs into the sleep room under any circumstances.

3. Active Sleep Checks & Monitoring

Mouth & Position Checks

Pre-Sleep Check: Staff check all children's mouths before putting them down to sleep.

Safe Position: Staff place babies and children to sleep on their backs in line with [NHS SIDS guidance](#), ensuring cots, bedding, and positions suit the child's age and that they are not tangled in sheets/blankets.

Staffing Presence & Sleep Logs

Continuous Presence: A member of staff remains present in the room at all times when children are sleeping or resting.

10–15 Minute Sleep Chart: Staff check young toddlers every 10 to 15 minutes, signing the official 'Sleep Chart' log at every check.

Older Children: When older children sleep, staff inform parents/carers if the child has had a sleep. They sleep in full view of an adult who will check their breathing and temperature.

Physical Health & Breathing Checks

During checks every 10–15 minutes, staff verify breathing and body temperature by:

- Placing a gentle hand on the child's chest to feel for movement, OR

- Placing the back of their hand near the child's mouth to feel for breath.

They check that the child is neither overheating nor too cold.

4. Daily Rest Routines (Over 2s & 3s)

Rest Window (12 noon–1pm): Following lunch, children engage in low-energy activities or rest. Children may sleep longer than an hour if agreed with their family.

Cosy Corners: All playrooms feature a 'cosy corner' where children can snuggle up and listen to their bodies when they feel tired.

Over 3s Rest Options: For 3-year-olds who still require an afternoon sleep, staff arrange space either in the main nursery room or alongside sleepers in the 2-year-old room.

Compliance & Statutory Guidance

SIDS Guidance: Fully aligned with [NHS Sudden Infant Death Syndrome \(SIDS\) prevention guidelines](#).

Safeguarding: Complies with EYFS statutory frameworks and internal safeguarding protocols regarding supervision, device restrictions, and physical contact.

end
