



The Hall School Nursery

SAFE SLEEP POLICY

Written by	S Mackintosh
Date of policy	April 2026
Next review date	April 2029

Purpose and Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all children in our care are provided with a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate sleep environment. This policy is rooted in statutory requirements under the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, which mandates that all early years providers take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well, including during sleep.

We recognise our safeguarding obligations under the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Childcare Act 2006, and the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. Our commitment is to prevent harm, reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), and promote the wellbeing of every child by implementing evidence-based safe sleep practices. We are dedicated to working in partnership with parents, carers, and external agencies to ensure that our approach reflects both statutory guidance and the latest research.

Policy Aims

Our aims are to:

- Prevent harm and reduce risks associated with sleep for young children.
- Comply fully with the EYFS statutory framework and all relevant legislation.
- Implement and maintain best practice in safe sleep as recommended by The Lullaby Trust, NHS, and Public Health England.
- Ensure all staff are trained, competent, and confident in safe sleep procedures.
- Review and update our policy and practice in line with new evidence, incidents, or regulatory changes.

Safe Sleep Procedures

All sleep spaces for our children meet the following standards:

- **Cots, Cribs, and Mattresses:** Only cots, cribs, or sleep mats that comply with British Safety Standards (BS EN 716) are used. Mattresses must be firm, flat, waterproof, and fit snugly within the cot or crib, with no gaps at the sides. All equipment is checked regularly for damage and cleanliness, and replaced if necessary.
- **Bedding:** No pillows, duvets, loose bedding, cot bumpers, or soft toys are permitted in sleep spaces for children under 12 months. For children over 12 months, any additional bedding or comforters should only be used in accordance with this policy and parental agreement.
- **Temperature and Ventilation:** The sleep environment is kept at a comfortable temperature, ideally between 16–20°C. Overheating is avoided by ensuring children are not overdressed and that blankets, if used, are lightweight and securely tucked in.
- **Cleanliness and Hygiene:** Sleep equipment is cleaned regularly. Each child has their own designated bedding, supplied by the parents, which is not shared.

Sleep Position and Practice

The following evidence-based practices are implemented for all children unless there is a documented medical reason to do otherwise:

- **Back to Sleep:** Babies are always placed on their backs for every sleep, unless a medical professional has provided written advice stating otherwise.
- **Feet to Foot:** Babies are positioned with their feet at the foot of the cot or crib to prevent them from wriggling under blankets.
- **Clear Cot:** Cots and cribs are kept clear of all items except a securely fitted sheet and, if required, a lightweight blanket tucked in no higher than the shoulders.
- **No Soft Toys or Pillows:** No soft toys, pillows, or duvets are placed in the sleep space for children under 12 months.
- **Medical Exceptions:** If a child has a medical condition requiring a different sleep position or arrangement, this is documented in their individual health care plan, agreed with parents, and supported by written medical advice. Staff are briefed on any exceptions and the rationale.
- **Transitional Objects:** For children over 12 months, transitional objects (such as a comforter) may be permitted if agreed with parents.
- **Safe Sleep Routine:** Staff follow consistent routines to help children settle safely, including gentle reassurance and age-appropriate comfort.

Supervision and Monitoring

- **Adult Supervision:** We keep an adult in the room when the children are sleeping, to ensure the safety of the children. In exceptional circumstances, if an adult has to leave the room, visual checks are made at least every 10 minutes. Checks include observing breathing, colour, and position.
- **Immediate Response:** Staff are trained to respond promptly to any signs of distress, abnormal breathing, or unresponsiveness. All staff are trained in paediatric first aid.

Policy Sharing

- **Policy Access:** The Safe Sleep Policy is shared with parents and carers via the school website and in hard copy on request.