

YMCA Stepping Stones Nursery

Safer Sleep Policy

Department: Early Years and Childcare

Owner: Angelina Brett

Approval Route: YSS Trustee Board

Frequency of Revision: Annual

Version	Date Approved	Reason for Update
V1	September 2026	New Policy

Statement of Intent

YMCA Stepping Stones Nursery recognises that sleep is essential for children's healthy growth, brain development, emotional wellbeing, physical health and ability to learn. We are committed to providing a safe, nurturing and responsive sleep environment where children's individual needs are respected whilst ensuring that safe sleep practices are consistently followed.

The nursery understands that every child has unique sleep patterns and routines. We work closely with parents and carers to support these needs while ensuring that all sleep arrangements reflect current safer sleep guidance and the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The safety and welfare of children will always take precedence over individual preferences where those preferences may increase risk.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote safe sleep practices for all children.
- Reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep-related incidents.
- Ensure compliance with the EYFS Statutory Framework.
- Provide clear guidance for staff, parents and carers.
- Support children's health, wellbeing and development.
- Ensure that appropriate monitoring arrangements are in place.

- Establish clear procedures for recording and reviewing sleep arrangements.
- Ensure individual risks are assessed and managed appropriately.

Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- NHS safer sleep guidance.
- The Lullaby Trust safer sleep guidance.
- YMCA Derbyshire Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The nursery recognises its statutory duty to ensure that sleeping children are adequately supervised and that suitable arrangements are in place to safeguard their welfare at all times.

Responsibilities

Head of Early Years and Childcare Development and Nursery Manager are responsible for:

- Ensuring policy implementation.
- Monitoring compliance.
- Arranging staff training.
- Reviewing risk assessments.
- Investigating incidents and concerns.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following safer sleep procedures.
- Conducting sleep checks.
- Recording observations.
- Reporting concerns immediately.
- Completing risk assessments when required.

Parents and Carers are responsible for:

- Providing accurate information.

- Updating staff regarding changes.
- Sharing medical information.
- Working in partnership with the nursery to support safe sleep practices.

Safe Sleep Arrangements

All children will sleep in a safe and suitable space appropriate to their age and stage of development.

Children under two years of age will:

- Be placed on their back to sleep.
- Have their own separate sleep space.
- Sleep on a firm, flat mattress with a fitted mattress cover and a cellular blanket if needed.
- Be monitored regularly while sleeping.

Babies aged 12 months and under will only sleep in a cot, placed in the feet to foot position.

Once a child can independently roll from back to front and back again, staff will continue to place them on their back initially but will not routinely reposition them if they move independently during sleep.

Sleeping Environment

The nursery will provide a safe, clean and comfortable sleep environment.

Staff will ensure:

- Sleep areas are clean and hygienic.
- Mattresses are firm, flat and waterproof.
- Bedding is suitable and well fitted.
- Children's heads and faces remain uncovered.
- Sleeping children do not become too hot or too cold.
- Room temperatures are monitored regularly.

The recommended room temperature for babies is between 16°C and 20°C.

Pillows, cot bumpers, sleep positioners, wedges, soft toys, cushions, loose blankets above shoulder height and duvets will not be used in infant sleep spaces.

Monitoring Sleeping Children

Sleeping children will always remain within sight or hearing of staff and will never be left unsupervised.

Children under six months of age will always have an adult present in the same room whilst sleeping.

Staff will complete and record regular sleep checks.

Checks will include breathing, skin colour, sleeping position, comfort and temperature and safety of the sleep environment.

All observations will be recorded using the Sleep Monitoring Record.

Any concerns identified during sleep checks will be reported immediately to the Room Leader and Deputy Nursery Manager.

Dummies and Comforters

Children may use a comforter or dummy provided parents have informed staff, the item does not present a safety risk or the item is clean and clearly labelled.

Staff will review the suitability of comforters regularly and may remove any item considered unsafe.

Children Falling Asleep Unexpectedly

Children who fall asleep in a buggy, pushchair, highchair or other unsuitable place will be moved to an appropriate sleep space as soon as it is safe to do so.

Children will not sleep in bouncers, pushchairs, highchairs, car seats or on beanbags or sofas for prolonged periods of time.

Partnership With Parents

Parents and carers will be asked to share information about:

- Their child's sleep routine
- Comforters and/or dummy use
- Medical needs
- Individual preferences

Parents will be informed of:

- Daily sleep patterns

- Changes in sleep behaviour
- Any concerns regarding sleep arrangements

The nursery reserves the right to refuse sleep arrangements that do not support safe sleep practice.

Individual Risk Assessments

An Individual Safer Sleep Risk Assessment will be completed where a child:

- Was born prematurely
- Has a low birth weight
- Has a diagnosed medical condition
- Has respiratory difficulties
- Has epilepsy
- Has SEND
- Requires specific sleep arrangements

Risk assessments will be completed with parents and reviewed regularly.

Staff Training

All staff will receive:

- Safer sleep guidance as part of induction
- Regular updates and refresher training
- Training relating to sleep monitoring procedures
- Paediatric first aid training

The Nursery Manager will ensure staff remain informed of changes to guidance and legislation.

Safeguarding

The welfare of children remains paramount at all times.

Any concerns identified while monitoring a sleeping child will be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and managed in accordance with the nursery safeguarding policy.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, following any significant incident, changes to legislation, updates to EYFS requirements or new safer sleep guidance.

Appendix 1: Individual Child Safer Sleep Risk Assessment

Name:

DOB:

Hazard	Potential Risk	Control Measures	Further Action

Parent consultation/input

[illegible]

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Appendix 3: Sleep Monitoring Record

[illegible]

Appendix 4: Safer Sleep Audit

Completed by: _____

Role: Room Leader / Manager / Head of Service

Date: _____

Review Period: _____

Policy and Practice

Audit Question	Compliant	Action Required	Review Date
Staff able to explain safer sleep procedures			
Safer Sleep Policy available and current			
Policy reflects current EYFS requirements			
Parents informed of safer sleep arrangements			

Environment and Equipment

Audit Question	Compliant	Action Required	Review Date
Sleep equipment in good condition			
Mattresses firm, flat and waterproof			
No pillows, bumpers, wedges or sleep nests used			

Room temperatures monitored			
Sleep areas clean and hazard free			

Monitoring and Records

Audit Question	Compliant	Action Required	Review Date
Sleep monitoring records completed correctly			
Sleep checks completed at required intervals			
Children remain within sight and hearing			
Sleep records stored securely			

Risk Assessment and Individual Needs

Audit Question	Compliant	Action Required	Review Date
Individual risk assessments in place where needed			
Medical information current			
Sleep plans reviewed regularly			
Parental preferences discussed and recorded			

Staff Knowledge and Training

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Audit Question	Compliant	Action Required	Review Date
All staff received safer sleep induction			
Training records up to date			
Staff understand emergency procedures			
Staff understand safeguarding responsibilities			

Strengths Identified

Areas for Improvement, person responsible and completion date