



Safe Sleep Policy

September 2025

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Please note that a record of the changes made to the original issue of this document can be found at Schedule 1 after any Appendices to the Policy/Procedure.

Version Number:	Publication Date:	Nature of, and Reason for, Change(s)
1	September 2025	Reviewed and updated

Safe sleep/ Rest Policy

1. Policy Statement

At *Howgill Family Centre Nurseries*, we recognise the critical role of sleep in supporting children's **emotional well-being, cognitive development, and physical growth.**

Quality rest is essential to children's overall health and development.

We are committed to creating a **safe, nurturing, and responsive sleep environment**, in partnership with parents and carers, and in line with guidance from:

- The Lullaby Trust
- NHS Safer Sleep Advice
- EYFS Statutory Framework (Revised September 2026)
- Local safeguarding procedures

The safety of every baby and child is paramount during sleep and rest periods.

2. Safe Sleep Practice

To reduce the risk of **Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)** and other sleep-related risks, we adhere to the following evidence-based practices recommended by The Lullaby Trust /NHS safer sleep guidance:

Before sleep/rest:

Staff ensure that:

- The child has had a **fresh nappy** and is clean and comfortable.
- Outer clothing (thick coats, cardigans, hoods, etc.) is **removed** to avoid overheating.
- The child has had a **drink or feed**, as appropriate.
- **Bibs and hoods** are removed prior to sleep.
- The **room temperature** is appropriate (ideally 16–20°C), with thermometers used to monitor this.
- The room is well ventilated with good air flow
- **Soft lighting, white noise**, or gentle lullabies may be used to create a calm environment.

During sleep:

- Children are provided with **individual, clean bedding.**
- Babies are always placed **on their back** to sleep (any child/baby who only sleeps on their front will be supervised thoroughly).

- Children/babies will be placed in the “feet to foot position” with their feet touching the end of the cot/sleep pod.
- **Sleep mats** or **approved cots** are used—**bouncy chairs and car seats are never used** for sleep.
- Babies ages 1 year and under **must only be placed to sleep in a cot.**
- Sleep spaces should only contain a firm, flat, waterproof mattress and lightweight bedding which is firmly tucked in and around the child below their shoulders to prevent head covering.
- **Comforters**, such as dummies or soft toys, may be used if agreed with parents to help settle babies/children to sleep and then removed once children are asleep.
- Cots must not contain extra items such as toys, pillows, extra blankets, bumpers, wedges or straps.
- Children are **not left to cry alone**—staff respond promptly to soothe and comfort.
- Babies and children are **regularly monitored and checked visually** every 10 minutes, or more frequently if needed, which is recorded on a sleep record form.
- Staff ensure **no blankets, muslins, or items** cover a child’s face or head at any time.
- Monitoring includes checking for normal breathing, colour, position, temperature and overall well-being.
- Children are always within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping.

3. Parental Preferences & Sleep Restrictions

We value working in partnership with parents and will always discuss sleep routines during **settling-in sessions** and ongoing key-person meetings.

- If parents **request no sleep**, we will **distract and gently discourage** the child from sleeping but will never **physically prevent sleep** (e.g., by waking or keeping the child upright).
- If a child **falls asleep despite efforts**, we will allow a **minimum of 45 minutes rest**, supporting the child’s natural rhythm.
- Children who do not wish to sleep will never be forced to. Instead, they will be offered **quiet and calm activities** during rest time.

4. Waking Children Gently

If parents request a **maximum sleep time**, we will attempt to wake the child **gradually and respectfully**:

- **Lights may be gently brightened.**

- **Blankets may be lightly removed.**
- Soft verbal prompts or the child's name may be used.
- Children are **never physically woken by lifting or shaking.**

We aim to allow children to **wake naturally**, where possible, to prevent distress and ensure emotional security.

5. Additional Safeguarding Measures

- Staff are trained in **safe sleep practice** during induction and updated as part of regular safeguarding and health & safety training.
- Sleep areas are regularly cleaned and inspected for hazards.
- All sleep equipment is **BS EN compliant** (British Standards) and in good condition.
- A **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** is notified of any incidents, injuries, or concerns during sleep.

6. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if:

- There is a **change in national guidance.**
- A serious sleep-related incident occurs.
- Parent/staff feedback indicates the need for review.