Safe Sleep Policy and Procedure

Our commitment to Safe Sleep

At St.Nicholas Nursery , we recognise that sleep is an important part of a baby's and child's health, wellbeing, development and daily routine.

We work closely with parents and carers to understand each child's individual sleep needs while ensuring that all sleep arrangements are safe and meet the requirements of the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework**.

The safety and welfare of every child is our highest priority.

Our safe sleep arrangements are based on:

- the EYFS statutory framework 2026
- Department for Education safer-sleep guidance
- The Lullaby Trust Safer-Sleep Recommendations
- relevant health and safety requirements
- each child's individual care needs
- information provided by parents and carers
- professional or medical advice where appropriate.

We regularly review our practice to ensure that our arrangements remain safe, effective and compliant with current requirements.

What parents can expect from St.Nicholas Nurser

Parents and carers can expect us to:

- discuss their child's usual sleep routine during settling-in and ongoing care reviews
- record relevant sleep information and individual needs
- provide a safe, clean and suitable sleeping environment
- use age-appropriate sleeping equipment
- ensure children are appropriately supervised while sleeping

- follow safer-sleep guidance consistently
- respond promptly if a child falls asleep somewhere that is not an appropriate sleep space
- communicate with parents about significant changes to a child's sleep pattern
- consider medical or additional needs and put appropriate risk assessments or individual care arrangements in place where required
- ensure all staff, including agency and temporary staff, understand our safe-sleep expectations
- maintain appropriate records of sleep and sleep checks.

Parents are welcome to speak to their child's Key Person, Room Leader or Nursery Manager about their child's sleep routine at any time.

Sleeping equipment

We provide sleeping equipment that is suitable for the age and developmental stage of the child and is maintained in a safe and hygienic condition.

All equipment is checked regularly and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Babies aged 12 months and under

For babies aged **12 months and under**, St.Nicholas Nursery will only use:

- a cot

These must meet the relevant British safety standards and be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Coracles, floor beds and sleep pods are not used for babies aged 12 months and under.

This is a statutory safer-sleep requirement within the EYFS from September 2026 and is not something that can be changed by parental preference.

If a baby falls asleep in an unsuitable product or location, staff will move the baby to an appropriate safe sleeping space as soon as it is safe to do so.

. Coracles, floor beds and sleep pods

We recognise that parents may have seen or used products described as **coracles, floor beds or sleep pods**.

However, these products **must not be used for babies aged 12 months and under** at St.Nicholas Nursery Nursery.

This is because the revised EYFS safer-sleep requirements specifically require babies aged 12 months and under to sleep in a cot, carrycot, Moses basket or travel cot.

For children over 12 months, any alternative sleeping equipment would only be considered where it is:

- age and developmentally appropriate
- suitable for the individual child
- in good condition
- used according to manufacturer instructions
- appropriately risk assessed
- positioned safely
- appropriately supervised.

The use of any alternative sleep equipment remains subject to the nursery's assessment of safety and suitability.

How we position babies for sleep

Babies are placed **on their backs to sleep**.

The sleep space is kept clear of unnecessary items that could increase the risk of suffocation, overheating or obstruction.

Staff will follow current safer-sleep guidance and the child's individual care arrangements.

Where a baby is able to move independently into another position during sleep, staff will follow current safer-sleep guidance and will not unnecessarily reposition a sleeping baby unless there is a safety concern.

Sleep environment

We aim to provide a calm, comfortable and safe environment for sleep.

Staff will consider:

- room temperature
- ventilation
- appropriate clothing
- appropriate bedding
- lighting
- noise levels
- the child's individual needs
- cleanliness and hygiene
- safe positioning of cots and sleeping equipment.

Sleeping areas will be kept free from hazards and unnecessary objects.

Supervision and sleep checks

Children are always appropriately supervised while sleeping.

Babies aged under 6 months must have a member of staff present in the same room while they sleep.

For older babies and children, staff will ensure that they remain within sight and hearing and are checked frequently in accordance with the child's age, needs and the nursery's agreed monitoring procedure.

Sleep checks are recorded accurately.

Staff must never:

- pre-record a sleep check
- record a check that has not taken place
- ask another person to record a check they did not complete
- use another person's login
- retrospectively create records without clearly identifying what happened.

Any missed or delayed sleep check must be reported to the Room Leader or Manager and recorded appropriately.

Individual sleep needs

Every child is different.

We work with parents to understand:

- the child's usual sleep routine
- approximate sleep times
- settling preferences
- comfort items where appropriate
- signs that the child is becoming tired
- any relevant medical or developmental needs
- changes to the child's normal sleep pattern.

Where a child has a medical condition, additional need or specific professional recommendations affecting sleep, this will be discussed with parents and appropriate risk assessments and care arrangements will be considered.

Working in partnership with parents

Parents' knowledge of their child is extremely valuable to us.

We encourage parents to tell us about changes to their child's:

- sleep routine
- health
- medication
- feeding
- development
- behaviour
- sleep environment at home.

We will listen to parental preferences wherever possible.

However, where a requested practice would conflict with statutory requirements or create an unacceptable safety risk, the nursery will explain this to the parent and follow the safer option.

If a child falls asleep unexpectedly

Children may occasionally fall asleep during play, while being comforted, during a buggy journey or in another area of the nursery.

Staff will assess the situation and ensure the child is moved to an appropriate sleeping space where required.

For babies aged 12 months and under, this means transferring them to an appropriate cot,

Staff will not knowingly allow a baby to continue sleeping in an unsuitable product or location.

Safe sleep and safeguarding

Safe sleep is part of our safeguarding responsibilities.

All staff are expected to take action if they identify an unsafe sleeping arrangement or practice.

Staff must immediately report concerns to the Room Leader or Nursery Manager.

Concerns will be:

1. acted upon promptly;
2. recorded accurately;
3. reviewed by the appropriate manager;
4. followed up where necessary; and
5. used to identify whether additional training, supervision, risk assessment or changes to practice are required.

No member of staff is expected to ignore or overlook an unsafe practice because it is a normal routine or because a parent has requested it.

Staff responsibilities

All staff, including permanent, bank, agency, students and temporary staff, must understand and follow this policy.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that:

- staff receive appropriate information and training
- sleeping equipment is safe and maintained
- sleep records are monitored
- individual sleep arrangements are reviewed
- concerns are acted upon
- practice is regularly audited.

Room Leaders are responsible for ensuring that safe-sleep procedures are followed consistently within their rooms.

Practitioners are responsible for following the agreed procedure, completing accurate records and immediately reporting concerns.

Monitoring and quality assurance

Safe-sleep practice will be monitored through:

- routine management checks
- review of sleep records
- observations of staff practice
- equipment and environmental checks
- staff supervision
- training
- parent feedback
- incident and safeguarding reviews
- internal audits.

Where practice does not meet the requirements of this policy, appropriate action will be taken.

What Ofsted and external professionals can expect to see

St.Nicholas Nursery will be able to demonstrate that:

- our safe-sleep policy reflects the current EYFS requirements
- staff understand the policy and can explain how it is implemented
- babies' individual sleep needs are known by relevant staff
- appropriate sleeping equipment is provided
- babies aged 12 months and under are provided with compliant cot-based sleeping arrangements
- Coracles/floor beds/sleep pods are not used for babies aged 12 months and under
- sleep checks are carried out and recorded accurately
- staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities
- parents are involved in discussions about their child's care
- concerns or incidents are recorded and acted upon
- management monitors the quality and consistency of safe-sleep practice.

Ofsted's current inspection approach specifically considers whether settings understand and effectively implement safer-sleep arrangements, including through evidence of children's individual care needs and sleep routines.

Our simple safe-sleep message

SAFE SLEEP AT ST.NICHOLAS NURSERY

S – Safe sleeping space
Use appropriate, safe and well-maintained equipment.

A – Always supervise
Children are appropriately supervised and checked while sleeping.

F – Follow EYFS requirements
For babies aged 12 months and under, use a cot, carrycot, Moses basket or travel cot.

E – Evidence our practice
Sleep checks, incidents and concerns are recorded accurately.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually or sooner where there are changes to:

- the EYFS statutory framework
- DfE safer-sleep guidance
- Ofsted inspection requirements
- national health guidance
- relevant legislation
- nursery practice or equipment.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
August 2026	*Anjana Shah*	*August 2027*