

Sleep Policy

Statement of intent

The safety of all sleeping children at **Once upon a time** nursery is paramount. Our policy follows the statutory guidance from the Early Years Foundation Stage and guidance provided by the Department of Education in collaboration with The Lullaby Trust to minimise the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Further details can be found at:

<https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/safer-sleep>

Aim

We aim to ensure that all children have enough sleep to support their development and natural sleeping rhythms in a safe environment.

Procedures

All parents/carers are asked to complete the safer sleeping declaration on their child's emergency contact forms when their child first joins **Once upon a time**.

Details of children's sleep routines are documented by parents and discussed with the child's Key person as they fill out the child's Nursery Passport. These routines are reviewed and updated at timely intervals.

Staff will discuss with parents any changes in sleep routines during a nursery session at the end of the day and share observations and information about children's behaviour if they do not receive enough sleep.

For babies:

- ★ Sleep rooms must be checked each morning and before each use, to ensure nothing has been placed in reach of a cot before it is used. This includes windowsills, radiator covers or draws.
- ★ Window blind cords must always be out of reach.
- ★ Sleep room temperatures are monitored and recorded and should be at the recommended temperature between 16-20°.
- ★ Blankets must not be hung over the cot edge.
- ★ Check suitability of cot for each individual child e.g. they can climb out! If this is the case, use floor mattresses or snugs instead.
- ★ Cot sides are always in the fully up position.
- ★ Mattresses are fitted with waterproof mattress protectors and regularly checked for condition and cleanliness.
- ★ Sleep bags provided by parents should be clean, safe and the correct tog.
- ★ Hair bobble, teething necklaces, teething bracelets, dribble bibbs or any loose accessories must be removed and placed out of reach. Parents will be asked to sign a disclaimer for any hair accessories that cannot be removed.
- ★ Disclaimers must be signed for children wearing earrings.
- ★ Layers of clothing must be checked to ensure the baby does not become over heated during sleep.
- ★ For children over 6 months old, video baby monitors should be switched on when the sleep room is occupied. Video monitors ensure all children are in sight and hearing of staff when sleeping. However, these are never used instead of manual checks.

- ★ Babies under 6 months old must always have an adult in the same room for every sleep.
- ★ Sleep records must be kept up to date, noting down times that babies are checked while sleeping.
- ★ Each child will have their own clean cot sheet and blanket if needed.
- ★ When providing children with a blanket from nursery, staff will assess the size, weight and appropriateness of the blanket, as well as checking the temperature of the room and the child throughout their sleep. Blankets will be carefully removed if staff feel the child is too hot.
- ★ Babies are placed on their backs to sleep. If a baby has rolled over onto their tummy, we turn them onto their backs again unless they are able to turn from back to front and back again on their own, in which case we enable them to find their own position.
- ★ Babies are never put down to sleep with a bottle to self- feed.
- ★ If baby needs a dummy to sleep keyworkers will discuss this with parents/carers. If the dummy falls out of baby's mouth, it will be taken out of the cot but reoffered when awake if needed.
- ★ Babies are monitored by the member of staff placing their hand gently on the child's stomach to check their breathing and their temperature every 10 minutes, and to check if the sleep position has changed.
- ★ Checks are recorded every 10 minutes.
- ★ Baby's feet must be placed at the bottom of the cot.
- ★ Blankets, if used, must be firmly tucked in, below shoulder height.
- ★ No toys should be placed in cot with baby. Sleep comforters (anything other than a dummy) may only be used for babies and children over 12 months old.
- ★ Where possible, children will be sensitively transferred to a cot, coracle or floor bed depending on their age if they fall asleep on an adult. If a child falls asleep while out for a walk in a pushchair, they will be sensitively transferred as soon as they are back to nursery.
- ★ All babies under the age of 12 months must only be placed to sleep in a cot.
- ★ Children's nappies must be checked before being laid down to rest/sleep.

For toddlers:

- ★ Each child will have a clean sheet and blanket (For children attending multiple days these will be saved and washed at the end of the week)
- ★ Rest mattresses must be regularly checked for cleanliness and condition.
- ★ Remove any hair accessories, teething bracelets, or loose accessories. These must be placed in the child's nursery bag. Parents/carers will be asked to sign a disclaimer for any hair accessories that cannot be removed.
- ★ A disclaimer must be signed for children wearing earrings.
- ★ In our Toddler rooms, children usually sleep after lunch. However, we will not stop a child from sleeping earlier if they need to.
- ★ Key workers and parents will discuss the different cues their child may display when they are ready for a sleep.
- ★ If a child needs an early sleep an area will be made away from the busiest areas of the room so that the child can rest in relative peace. Toys will be moved away and a rest mattress or sung will be provided for the child.
- ★ An adult will stay by the child until they are sleeping.
- ★ The child will be monitored every 15 minutes as they sleep.

- ★ At general sleep time, carpet areas will be cleared of toys and furniture and mattresses with sheets will be placed out for the children to rest on.
- ★ Children's nappies must be checked before he/she lays down to rest.
- ★ Children will be offered help removing any clothing which could cause them to over-heat, any items will be folded and placed with their shoes at the end of their mattress.
- ★ Key workers will discuss any sleep comforters, including dummies, with parents.
- ★ If a child has a dummy or comforter, this will usually only be offered at sleep time. If the dummy falls out of their mouths once asleep then it will be removed and put in the child's nursery bag.
- ★ Only appropriate comforters should be taken to bed. When the child awakes, comforters should usually go back in their bags.
- ★ Children will be encouraged to lay down on the mattress; however they are most comfortable. Their feet must always be towards the bottom of the mattress. All children under 2 will be placed on their back to sleep, although we understand some children may move themselves to a different sleeping position. If they can get in and out of this position on their own, and their face is not covered, they will not be moved by staff.
- ★ A blanket will be placed on the child, below shoulder height, if needed.
- ★ A member of staff must remain in the room while children are sleeping.
- ★ Children must be checked every 15 minutes.
- ★ We will maintain the needs of the children that do not require a sleep and ensure they can continue to play, learn and develop. This may involve taking children outdoors, finding quieter indoor activities or linking with other rooms or groups of children.
- ★ We will limit children's sleep times, on a parent's request, only where we feel it is appropriate for the child. Children will always be woken in a gentle and sympathetic way. They will be given time to wake and adjust to their busy playroom. We recommend a minimum sleep time of 45 minutes, as this is one full sleep cycle.

For pre-school children:

- ★ Occasionally our older children may need a nap during the day to recharge their batteries.
- ★ If this is the case, staff will provide a safe area within the room for a child to sleep.
- ★ This will be in a quiet corner, in a pod or on a rest mattress.
- ★ Toys and equipment should be removed from the direct sleep area the child chooses.
- ★ Our older children will still be monitored as they sleep, every 15 minutes. This will be recorded on a sleep chart.
- ★ A qualified adult must always be on duty in a room while a child sleeps.
- ★ We will maintain the needs of the children that do not require a sleep and ensure they can continue to play, learn and develop. This may involve taking children outdoors, finding quieter indoor activities or linking with other rooms or groups of children.

This policy was adopted by Once upon a time nursery school

Date: 1 September 2025

Amended on: 26 August 2026

Signed on behalf of the nursery

To be reviewed: Annually or sooner if any matters arise