

WOODLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL, HEDGEHOGS NURSERY & SUNBEAMS CLUB



Safe Sleep Policy HEDGEHOGS & SQUIRRELS (9 months - 36 months)



Updated: July 2025
Review Date: July 2026

Introduction

The safety of sleeping babies and toddlers is of the highest importance. In Woodlands Primary School, Hedgehogs Nursery and Sunbeams Club (the school), our policy follows the guidance from the Cot Death Society and The Lullaby Trust to minimise the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). For more information, please visit [Safer Sleep Advice | The Lullaby Trust](#).

We are committed to ensuring a safe and calm sleep environment for all children in our care.

Key Principles of Safe Sleep

- Babies are always placed on their **backs to sleep**. If a baby rolls onto their tummy, they should be gently turned back. Once a baby can roll from back to front and front to back, they can be allowed to find their own sleeping position.
- **Newborns to 12 months:** Always placed on their backs to sleep, with feet at the bottom of the cot. **12–24 months:** May roll during sleep; this is considered safe if they can move themselves. They should still be placed on their back to start.
- **Babies and toddlers are never put down to sleep with a bottle** to self-feed.
- **Children are visually monitored while sleeping.** Staff will observe chest movements and may use a finger under the nose to check for breathing.
- **Sleep checks are carried out every 10 minutes** and recorded on a sleep chart, which is then signed by another staff member.
- **Children will never be left in a separate sleep room** without supervision. A staff member will always be present.
- During checks, staff observe the **rise and fall of the chest** and any changes in the child's sleep position.
- As part of good practice, children are monitored **every five minutes** during their settling-in period, until staff are familiar with their sleep routines. This also helps to reassure parents and carers.
- **Cots and sleep mats must remain clear of loose items.** Only dummies or comforters are allowed, where appropriate. No cot bumpers or soft toys are permitted. Staff will assess the safety of any comfort items and may remove them once the child is asleep if they are deemed hazardous.
- **The sleep room/area temperature will ideally be maintained between 16–20°C.**
- Children's **hoods, shoes, jeans and bibs** must be removed before sleep to prevent overheating.
- **Dummy clips are not to be used** during sleep or at any point during the day.
- **Children must not sleep in prams, car seats, or baby bouncers.** If they fall asleep during an outing, they will be safely transferred to a cot, bed, or sleep mat on return.
- Only **clean, light bedding or blankets** are used. Parents are responsible for providing their child's own comforter blanket, which is sent home regularly for washing.
- **Blankets must not be placed over the top of cots or beds**, to ensure staff can always see the child and that the blanket does not pose a suffocation risk.
- Parents are asked to **share their child's sleep routine** when the child starts in hedgehogs. These routines are reviewed and updated regularly, particularly when a child transitions to a new age group or their sleep habits change.
- During settling-in, staff will explain the safe sleep policy to parents,
- We value and respect **parents' knowledge of their child's needs** and work together to support individual routines. However, staff will not force a child to sleep or keep a child awake against their will.
- Staff will share any changes in sleep patterns or concerns at the end of the day and discuss behaviour that may result from insufficient sleep.

Safe Sleep Procedure

1. **Sleep routines** are discussed with parents/carers during the settling-in period and recorded
2. **Each child's own bedding**, provided by parents, is placed on their cot or sleep mat and returned home regularly for washing. **Hoods, jeans, shoes and bibs** are removed before placing a child down to sleep.
3. Babies are placed at the **bottom of the cot or mat** with feet touching the end, in line with safer sleep guidance.
4. **Light bedding** is used and secured appropriately to prevent it from being pulled over the child's head.
5. Staff will **settle the child to sleep**, considering their usual routine at home and working in partnership with parents.
6. Staff will **check the child every 10 minutes**, record the check on the sleep chart, and have it signed by another member of staff.
7. Once the child wakes up, bedding will be folded ready to go home, and the sleep mat will be **cleaned with antibacterial spray** before being stored. Squirrels children will have a bag with sleeping items in it that can be left on their pegs, due to them not having regular sleeps, these will be sent home for washing when needed.
8. The child's **sleep times are shared with parents** on the daily handover sheets.
9. **Under no circumstances will a sleeping child ever be left unsupervised.**