

WOODLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL, HEDGEHOGS NURSERY & SUNBEAMS CLUB



Safe Sleep Policy HEDGEHOGS & SQUIRRELS



Updated: September 2026
Review Date: September 2027

Introduction

The safety and wellbeing of babies and young children while sleeping is of the highest importance. This policy follows the **EYFS Statutory Framework**, Department for Education safer-sleep guidance, NHS advice and guidance from **The Lullaby Trust**.

The setting will provide a safe, suitable and calm sleeping environment for all children and will work in partnership with parents and carers to support individual sleep routines while always meeting statutory safety requirements.

Safer Sleep Principles

- All babies and children under 2 years will be **placed on their back to sleep** in their own separate sleep space.
- Babies aged **12 months and under must only be placed to sleep in a cot**, including a suitable carrycot, Moses basket or travel cot. The cot must meet relevant British Standards and be used according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- **Floor beds, sleep pods and coracles must not be used for babies aged 12 months and under.**
- Children over 12 months may sleep in a suitable cot, bed or clear, flat and firm mattress on the floor, where appropriate and risk assessed.
- Sleeping surfaces must be **firm, flat, waterproof and clear of unnecessary items**.
- Cots must not contain pillows, duvets, quilts, cot bumpers, wedges, straps, soft toys or loose bedding.
- In Hedgehogs, children will only be provided with a **cellular blanket or a suitably fitting sleeping bag**.
- Sleeping bags must be a **suitable tog for the room temperature and individual needs of the child**, following the manufacturer's guidance.
- Cellular blankets must be lightweight and securely tucked in below shoulder level, with the child's feet positioned at the bottom of the cot where appropriate.
- Children's **heads and faces must remain uncovered**.
- Staff will ensure children do not become too hot or too cold and will use their professional judgement, particularly during extreme temperatures.
- The recommended room temperature for babies aged 12 months and under is **16–20°C**.
- Hoods, hats, outdoor coats, shoes and bibs should be removed before sleep where appropriate.
- Children must **never be put to sleep with a bottle**.
- Dummy clips must not be used during sleep.
- Children should not sleep in car seats or other unsuitable equipment. If a child falls asleep in a car seat, they must be transferred to their separate appropriate sleep space as soon as they return to the setting.
- All sleeping children must remain **within the sight and hearing of staff**.
- Children will be **frequently checked, at least every 10 minutes**, while sleeping.
- **Babies under six months must always have an adult with them in the same room for every sleep.**
- Children will never be left without appropriate supervision while sleeping.
- A baby monitor may be used for children over six months where appropriate, but it **does not replace staff supervision or frequent checks**. Children must still be able to be seen and heard by staff at all times.

Clothing Before Sleep

Before a child is put down to sleep:

- **Shoes must be removed.**
- **Bibs must be removed.**
- **Hooded clothing should be removed where possible.**
- **Excess clothing must be removed to help prevent overheating.**
- Children should be dressed appropriately for the **room temperature and their individual needs.**
- Children's heads and faces must remain uncovered during sleep.
- Staff will monitor children for signs of overheating or being too cold and take appropriate action.

Staff will check the child's chest or the back of their neck if they are concerned that the child may be too hot or cold. If the child's skin feels clammy or sweaty, staff will remove an appropriate layer of clothing or bedding.

Sleep Routines

Parents/carers will provide information about their child's usual sleep routine, settling methods and comfort items when the child starts at the setting.

Staff will work in partnership with parents/carers to support individual routines, but **parental preferences cannot override EYFS safer-sleep requirements.**

- Children will not be forced to sleep or prevented from resting when tired.
- Children who do not sleep will be offered suitable quiet activities and appropriate supervision.
- Significant or persistent changes in a child's sleep pattern will be discussed with parents/carers.
- Sleep times and any relevant concerns will be communicated to parents/carers.

Sleep Checks and Recording

Staff will ensure that sleeping children are **frequently checked, at least every 10 minutes**, and remain within sight and hearing of staff.

Checks will include observing:

- breathing;
- colour;
- sleeping position;
- temperature and signs of overheating or being too cold; and
- general wellbeing.

Checks will be carried out **at least every 10 minutes**, with more frequent checks undertaken where required by the setting's risk assessment, the individual needs of the child or if staff have any concerns about the child's wellbeing.

Sleep checks will be recorded on the **Sleep Check** grid (see appendix A)

Any concerns identified during a sleep check will be acted upon immediately and recorded appropriately. Parents/carers will be informed where there is a significant concern about their child's sleep or wellbeing.

Bedding and Hygiene

- Each child will have clean, appropriate bedding.

- In Hedgehogs, only **cellular blankets or suitably fitting sleeping bags** will be used.
- Bedding will be appropriate for the child's age, the room temperature and individual needs.
- Bedding and comfort items will be kept separate for each child.
- Comforters may only be used for children **over 12 months**, in line with safer-sleep guidance.
- Bedding will be sent home regularly for washing where provided by parents/carers.
- Cots, mattresses and sleep mats will be cleaned regularly and whenever soiled, following the manufacturer's instructions.
- Sleeping areas will be kept clean, uncluttered and free from hazards.

Individual Medical Needs

Where a child has a medical condition or specific sleep advice from a healthcare professional, this will be recorded in the child's individual care plan and followed by staff.

Any arrangements that differ from normal safer-sleep practice must be supported by appropriate professional advice and documented within the child's care plan.

Sleeping While Travelling

If a baby aged 12 months or under falls asleep while travelling, they must be transferred to their appropriate cot when they return to the setting.

Children over 12 months who fall asleep while travelling should, where possible, be transferred to their own separate sleep space on a **clear, flat and firm surface** such as a cot, bed or suitable mattress on the floor.

If a baby or child of any age falls asleep while travelling in a car seat, they must be transferred to their separate appropriate sleep space as soon as they return to the setting.

Coats, hats and blankets will be adjusted or removed as appropriate to prevent overheating.

Risk Assessment and Staff Responsibilities

The setting will risk assess sleeping arrangements, including:

- the sleep environment;
- cots, mattresses and other sleep equipment;
- bedding and clothing;
- room temperature;
- supervision and staffing;
- individual children's needs; and
- any identified medical or safeguarding risks.

All staff responsible for children who sleep will be familiar with this policy and current safer-sleep guidance.

Staff must ensure that:

- The child's sleep space is safe, clear and suitable before the child is put down.
- Children are placed on their backs to sleep.
- Babies aged 12 months and under are placed to sleep in a suitable cot.
- Appropriate bedding and clothing are used according to the room temperature and individual needs.
- Children's heads and faces remain uncovered.

- ## Staff Knowledge and Training

Staff will remain familiar with current Department for Education, NHS and safer-sleep guidance.

Policy Review

Appendix A: Sleep Check Sheet

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