# Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School

# Early Years Foundation Safe Sleep and Rest Policy

# September 2026

## 1. Purpose

The school recognises that some children aged 3–5 may require a period of rest or sleep during the EYFS day. We have a duty to provide a **safe, suitable and closely supervised environment** for children who need to sleep.

The current EYFS Statutory Framework, effective from **1 September 2026**, includes explicit safer-sleep requirements within the statutory framework. The DfE also provides specific safer-sleep guidance developed with The Lullaby Trust.

Although the greatest risk of SIDS is in babies, the DfE guidance recognises that children over 12 months can still face risks associated with unsafe sleep, including suffocation, entanglement and becoming trapped in soft furniture.

## 2. Aims

We aim to:

- Provide children with opportunities to rest and sleep when they need to.
- Ensure sleep takes place in a **safe, comfortable and appropriate environment**.
- Ensure children are appropriately supervised while sleeping.
- Identify and manage individual sleep-related risks.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers regarding children's sleep needs.
- Ensure staff understand their responsibilities and follow consistent procedures.

## 3. Sleep and Rest Arrangements

- Sleep will **not be routinely expected or required** of children aged 3–5.
- Children will be supported to recognise when they are tired and may access an appropriate quiet/rest area.
- Staff will respond sensitively to individual children's needs.
- Children who fall asleep during the EYFS day will be allowed to rest where this is appropriate and safe.
- Children will not be deliberately kept awake if they are tired and require sleep.
- Sleep arrangements will take account of the child's age, individual needs, medical conditions and information provided by parents/carers.

## 4. Safe Sleep Environment

For children aged 3–5:

- Children should sleep on an **appropriate, firm and flat sleep surface**, rather than on sofas, armchairs or other soft furniture.
- The sleep area will be kept free from hazards that could result in entrapment, suffocation or overheating.
- Children will have appropriate, lightweight bedding where required.
- Bedding will be appropriate for the child's age and size.
- Children should not have their face or head covered while sleeping.
- The environment will be appropriately ventilated and maintained at a comfortable temperature.
- Children will be positioned safely and staff will avoid arrangements where a child could become trapped or fall.
- The sleep area will be kept clean and hygienic.

## 5. Supervision and Monitoring

- Children will be **appropriately supervised while sleeping**.
- Staff will remain aware of which children are sleeping and where they are sleeping.
- Staff will check children regularly and ensure that they remain in a safe position and environment.
- Any concern about a child's breathing, colour, temperature, responsiveness or general wellbeing will be treated seriously.
- Staff will follow emergency procedures if a child appears unwell or unresponsive.
- Sleep checks will be recorded where required by the school's procedures or an individual healthcare plan.

The level and frequency of monitoring will be proportionate to the child's age, individual needs and identified risks.

## 6. Individual Healthcare Needs

Some children may have medical, developmental or additional needs that affect their sleep.
Where appropriate:

- Parents/carers will provide relevant information.
- An **Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP)** will be developed where necessary.
- Advice from relevant health professionals will be incorporated into the child's plan.
- Staff caring for the child will understand the agreed arrangements.
- Risk assessments will be completed where appropriate.

## 7. Sleepwear and Personal Items

Children should be appropriately dressed for the temperature of the environment.
Staff will ensure that:

- Children are not overdressed or allowed to become overheated.
- Coats, outdoor clothing and other unsuitable items are removed before sleeping.
- Items that could present a risk during sleep are removed where appropriate.
- Comfort items are only permitted where they are safe and appropriate for the individual child.

## 8. Sleep Equipment

Any sleep mats, mattresses, bedding or other equipment used will:

- Be suitable for the age and size of the children.
- Be clean and maintained appropriately.
- Be checked regularly for damage.
- Be stored hygienically.
- Be positioned so that children cannot become trapped between equipment or furniture.

## 9. Sleeping During Trips and Outings

Where a child may sleep during an outing, staff will consider safer-sleep arrangements as part of the visit risk assessment.
Staff will ensure that:

- Appropriate supervision is maintained.
- Individual medication or healthcare requirements are available.
- Children are not left sleeping in an unsafe location.
- Appropriate action is taken if a child falls asleep while travelling.

## 10. Safeguarding and Emergency Procedures

If a child appears unwell, has difficulty breathing, becomes unresponsive or there are concerns about their wellbeing while sleeping:

- A member of staff will immediately assess the situation.
- A paediatric first aider will be called where appropriate.
- **999 will be contacted immediately where there is a medical emergency.**
- The child's individual healthcare plan will be followed where applicable.
- Parents/carers will be contacted as soon as appropriate.
- The incident will be recorded and reviewed.

## 11. Parent Partnership

Parents/carers will be encouraged to share information about:

- The child's usual sleep patterns.
- Sleep routines and preferences.
- Medical conditions affecting sleep.
- Comfort items.
- Any concerns regarding sleep.

Parents/carers will be informed if their child regularly falls asleep during the EYFS day or if staff have concerns about their sleep or wellbeing.

## 12. Staff Responsibilities

All EYFS staff will:

- Understand and follow this policy.
- Know which children may require sleep or additional monitoring.
- Maintain appropriate supervision.
- Identify and report hazards.
- Follow individual healthcare plans.
- Know how to respond to an emergency.

Leaders will ensure that staff are appropriately trained, understand safer-sleep expectations and that sleep arrangements are regularly reviewed.

## 13. Links to Statutory Requirements

This policy should be read alongside:

- EYFS Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers – September 2026.
- DfE Safer Sleep guidance for early years providers.
- School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- First Aid Policy.
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions/Medication Policy.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Risk Assessment Policy.
- SEND Policy, where relevant.

The EYFS safeguarding requirements explicitly require providers to ensure safer sleep practices, and Ofsted's updated 2026 inspection approach includes safer sleeping within its consideration of children's welfare and wellbeing.

## Key Principle

**Every child has the right to rest when they need it. We will provide a safe, comfortable and appropriately supervised environment for children aged 3–5 who sleep during the EYFS day, while recognising and responding to each child's individual needs.**