



# Safe Sleep Policy

## 2026 - 2027

**Policy Date:** February 2026

Approved by: Full Governing Body Summer 2026

Next review date: September 2026

At Acorn Nursery (Part of Holsworthy CofE Primary School) our vision is **working together, growing together, all to flourish**. Based on the bible verse from John 15:5, we believe that God is the vine; God is love. Our Christian vision and values help us foster positive relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils.

## 1. Policy Statement

At Acorn Nursery, we recognise the critical role of sleep in supporting children's emotional well-being, cognitive development, and physical growth. Quality rest is essential to children's overall health and development.

We are committed to creating a safe, nurturing, and responsive sleep environment, in partnership with parents and carers, and in line with guidance from:

- The Lullaby Trust
- NHS Safer Sleep Advice
- EYFS Statutory Framework (Revised September 2026)
- School safeguarding procedures

The safety of every baby and child is paramount during sleep and rest periods.

## 2. Safe Sleep Practice

To reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep-related risks, we adhere to the following evidence-based practices recommended by The Lullaby Trust/NHS safer sleep guidance:

### Before sleep/rest:

Staff ensure that:

- The child has had a fresh nappy and is clean and comfortable.
- Outer clothing (thick coats, cardigans, hoods, etc.) is removed to avoid overheating.
- The child has had a drink or feed, as appropriate.
- Bibs and hoods are removed prior to sleep.
- The room temperature is appropriate (ideally 16–20°C), with thermometers used to monitor this.
- The room is well ventilated with good air flow
- Soft lighting, white noise, or gentle lullabies may be used to create a calm environment.

### During sleep:

- Children are provided with individual, clean bedding.

- Babies are always placed on their back to sleep (any child/baby who only sleeps on their front will be supervised thoroughly and when in a deep sleep will be gently turned on to their back for a safer sleep position in line with the latest government safety guidance).
- Children/babies will be placed in the “feet to foot position” with their feet touching the end of the cot/sleep pod
- Sleep mats or approved cots are used—bouncy chairs and car seats are not used for sleep.
- Babies ages 1 year and under must only be placed to sleep in a cot
- Sleep spaces should only contain a firm, flat, waterproof mattress and lightweight bedding which is firmly tucked in and around the child below their shoulders to prevent head covering.
- Comforters, such as dummies or soft toys, may be used if agreed with parents to help settle babies/children to sleep
- Cots must not contain extra items such as toys, pillows, extra blankets, bumpers, wedges or straps.
- Children are not left to cry alone—staff respond promptly to soothe and comfort.
- Babies and children are regularly monitored and checked visually every 5 to 10 minutes, or more frequently if needed, which is recorded on a sleep record form.
- Staff ensure no blankets, muslins, or items cover a child’s face or head at any time.
- Monitoring includes checking for normal breathing, colour, position, temperature and overall well-being
- Children are always within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping and are observed through a monitor.

### **3. Parental Preferences & Sleep Restrictions**

We value working in partnership with parents and will always discuss sleep routines during settling-in sessions and ongoing key-person meetings. All parents of babies cared for in this Nursery will be asked to sign to confirm that they have received, read and understood the Nursery Safe Sleep and that their child’s Key Person, Room Supervisor or Nursery Manager has discussed the policy with them.

- If parents request no sleep, we will distract and gently discourage the child from sleeping but will never physically prevent sleep (e.g. by waking or keeping the child upright).
- If a child falls asleep despite efforts, we will allow a minimum of 45 minutes rest, supporting the child’s natural rhythm.
- Children who do not wish to sleep will never be forced to. Instead, they will be offered quiet and calm activities during rest time.

### **4. Waking Children Gently**

If parents request a maximum sleep time, we will attempt to wake the child gradually and respectfully:

- Lights may be gently brightened.
- Blankets may be lightly removed.
- Soft verbal prompts or the child's name may be used.
- Children are never physically woken by lifting or shaking.

We aim to allow children to wake naturally, where possible, to prevent distress and ensure emotional security.

### **5. Additional Safeguarding Measures**

- Staff are trained in safe sleep practice during induction and updated as part of regular safeguarding and health & safety training.
- Sleep areas are regularly inspected for hazards
- All sleep equipment is BS EN compliant (British Standards) and in good condition.
- A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is notified of any incidents, injuries, or concerns during sleep.

### **6. Monitoring and Review**

This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if:

- There is a change in national guidance.
- A serious sleep-related incident occurs.
- Parent/staff feedback indicates the need for review.

## Safer Sleep Policy

I, the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ (child's name) do

hereby state that I have read and received a copy of the Nursery Safe Sleep Policy and that my child's key person (or Manager) has discussed the Policy with me.

Child's Date of Admission: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_