

White Court School



Safe Sleep Policy

Approved by: Headteacher

Date: 1/9/2026

Last reviewed on: July 2026

Next review due by: July 2027

White Court Primary School

1. Purpose

White Court School Nursery is committed to providing a safe, comfortable and supportive sleeping environment for every child in our care. Sleep is an important part of young children's health, development and wellbeing. We recognise that children aged 2–5 years have individual sleep needs and routines and may require rest or sleep during the nursery day.

The safety and wellbeing of children during sleep is a safeguarding responsibility. This policy sets out the arrangements that White Court School Nursery follows to promote safe sleep and effective supervision.

2. Scope of this Policy

White Court School Nursery accepts children from the age of 2 years. This Safe Sleep Policy therefore applies to children aged 2–5 years attending the Nursery.

The Nursery is aware that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) contains specific safer-sleep requirements for babies and children under 2 years of age. As White Court School Nursery does not provide care for children under the age of 2, those requirements are not applicable to the children attending our setting and are not detailed within this policy.

The Nursery will continue to monitor changes to the EYFS Statutory Framework and Department for Education safer-sleep guidance. If the age range of children attending the Nursery changes, this policy will be reviewed to ensure that all relevant requirements are incorporated.

3. Legislative and Guidance Framework

This policy should be read alongside:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for group and school-based providers, September 2026
- Department for Education safer-sleep guidance
- The Lullaby Trust safer-sleep guidance
- White Court School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- White Court School First Aid Policy
- White Court School Health and Safety Policy
- Individual risk assessments and medical/care plans where applicable.

The EYFS requires providers to take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well and includes specific requirements relating to safer sleep. The Nursery will ensure that safer-sleep practice is understood by staff and implemented consistently.

4. Our Safe Sleep Principles

White Court School Nursery will ensure that:

- children have access to an appropriate and safe place to rest or sleep;
- sleep arrangements are suitable for the child's age, development and individual needs;
- children are appropriately supervised while sleeping;
- staff carry out and record regular sleep checks;
- sleep areas are clean, safe, appropriately ventilated and maintained at a comfortable temperature;
- children are not overdressed or at risk of becoming too hot or too cold;
- children's heads and faces remain uncovered while sleeping;
- sleep surfaces and bedding are appropriate and in good condition;
- unnecessary or potentially hazardous items are not placed in a child's sleep space;

- individual medical, developmental or additional needs are considered through appropriate risk assessments and care plans;
- parents and carers are consulted about their child's normal sleep and rest routines;
- staff receive appropriate safer-sleep information and training;
- unsafe sleep practices are reported and addressed immediately.

5. Sleep Environment

The Nursery will provide a designated sleep/rest area that is safe, clean, comfortable and suitable for young children.

Where children sleep, the Nursery will ensure that:

- sleep mats, mattresses or other sleep equipment are appropriate for children aged 2–5 years and are maintained in good condition;
- sleep surfaces are clean, flat and sufficiently firm to provide a safe sleeping surface;
- bedding is clean and appropriate for the child;
- sleep spaces are kept clear of items that could present a risk to the child;
- children do not sleep with pillows, thick quilts, duvets, weighted blankets or other unsuitable bedding;
- sleep equipment is positioned so that practitioners can supervise children effectively;
- access to exits and emergency routes is maintained;
- sleep equipment is cleaned in accordance with the Nursery's cleaning arrangements;
- equipment is regularly checked for damage, wear or other safety concerns.

The Nursery will use equipment that complies with applicable current safety standards and manufacturers' instructions.

6. Temperature and Clothing

The sleep environment will normally be maintained at approximately 16°C–20°C, while practitioners will also consider the individual needs of children and the actual conditions within the room.

Staff will ensure that children:

- are not overdressed for sleep;
- are not too hot or too cold;
- have their heads and faces uncovered;
- wear suitable clothing for rest or sleep;
- are monitored for signs of overheating or discomfort.

Children will not be placed to sleep wearing outdoor coats, hats or other unsuitable outdoor clothing. Weighted blankets, weighted sleep products and other weighted sleep equipment will not be used.

7. Bedding and Comforters

Bedding provided by the Nursery must be clean, suitable for the child and appropriate to the sleeping environment.

The following must not be used for sleeping:

- weighted blankets;
- weighted sleep products;
- thick quilts or duvets;
- unsuitable pillows;
- outdoor coats;
- hooded outdoor clothing;
- any item that could cover a child's face or obstruct breathing.

Where a child uses a comforter, practitioners must consider whether it is safe and appropriate for that individual child.

A comforter must:

- be clean;
- be suitable for the child's age and developmental stage;
- not cover the child's face;
- not obstruct breathing;
- be removed if it presents a safety risk.

Parental preference or consent does not override the Nursery's responsibility to maintain a safe sleeping environment.

8. Supervision and Sleep Checks

Sleeping children will remain within the active supervision of practitioners.

Practitioners will carry out regular visual safety checks at least every 10 minutes, or more frequently where this is identified as necessary through an individual risk assessment.

Checks will include consideration of:

- the child's position;
- breathing;
- skin colour;
- temperature and signs of overheating or being too cold;
- whether the child's face and head remain uncovered;
- whether the sleep space remains safe and clear;
- whether the child appears comfortable and well.

Staff must respond immediately if they have any concern about a sleeping child's condition or environment.

Children will not be left sleeping in an area where staff cannot safely supervise them.

Sleep checks will not be treated as a purely administrative task. Practitioners must actively observe the child and the sleeping environment.

9. Recording Sleep

Practitioners will record sleep and rest periods in accordance with the Nursery's agreed recording arrangements.

Records will include, where applicable:

- the time the child went to sleep;
- the time the child woke;
- the length of the sleep;
- the child's sleeping position where relevant;
- regular safety checks;
- any concerns identified during a check;
- any action taken.

Records must be completed accurately and contemporaneously. Any significant change in a child's usual sleep pattern or behaviour should be discussed with the child's key person and/or Early Years Lead and, where appropriate, shared with parents or carers.

10. Individual Needs and Risk Assessments

The Nursery recognises that some children may have individual needs that affect their sleep or rest arrangements. An individual risk assessment and/or care plan will be considered where appropriate, including where a child:

- has a medical condition affecting sleep;
- has additional or special educational needs that may affect sleep or supervision;
- requires prescribed equipment or a specific sleeping arrangement;
- regularly experiences difficulty settling or remaining asleep;
- has a significant change in sleep behaviour;
- presents an identified risk during sleep;
- requires arrangements that differ from the Nursery's usual practice.

Any medical or specialist advice will be considered alongside the Nursery's safeguarding and health and safety responsibilities. Staff must not introduce an unusual or potentially unsafe sleeping arrangement solely on the basis of parental request.

11. Children Who Fall Asleep During the Day

Children may occasionally fall asleep during activities, quiet time, in a pushchair or in another location. Where a child falls asleep outside the designated sleep area, practitioners will assess the circumstances and, where appropriate and safe to do so, move the child to the Nursery's appropriate sleep/rest space. Children should not routinely sleep in pushchairs or other equipment that is not intended to provide their normal sleep environment. If moving a sleeping child would create an immediate risk, practitioners will maintain close supervision while making appropriate arrangements to ensure the child can sleep safely.

12. Staff Responsibilities

All practitioners working with children in the Nursery are responsible for following this policy.

Staff must:

- understand the Nursery's safer-sleep procedures;
- follow the agreed supervision arrangements;
- complete sleep checks accurately;
- ensure sleep spaces remain safe and clear;
- respond immediately to concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing;
- report damaged or unsuitable sleep equipment;
- report unsafe sleep practices to the Early Years Lead or Designated Safeguarding Lead where appropriate;
- maintain appropriate safeguarding and confidentiality;
- complete relevant training and familiarise themselves with any updates to this policy.

No practitioner should assume that another member of staff has completed a required sleep check without confirming this through the agreed recording system.

13. Parents and Carers

Parents and carers will be informed about the Nursery's safer-sleep arrangements.

Where appropriate, parents and carers will be consulted about:

- their child's normal sleep and rest routine;
- the child's usual sleep patterns;
- any relevant changes in sleep;
- individual needs that may affect sleep;
- relevant medical or care information.

Parents and carers are encouraged to share any significant changes in their child's sleep, health or wellbeing with the Nursery. The Nursery may provide parents and carers with information about safer sleep to support consistency between home and the setting.

14. Safeguarding

Safe sleep is part of the Nursery's wider safeguarding responsibilities.

Any concern that a child's safety has been compromised during sleep must be reported immediately in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Concerns may include:

- a child being placed in an unsafe sleeping environment;
- inappropriate bedding or equipment being used;
- inadequate supervision;
- repeated failure to complete sleep checks;
- unexplained changes in a child's condition;
- unsafe practice by a member of staff;
- damage or defects to sleep equipment.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed where a concern meets the school's safeguarding procedures.

15. Emergency Procedures

If a sleeping child is found to be:

- unresponsive;
- not breathing normally;
- having difficulty breathing;
- blue, grey or unusually pale;
- showing other signs of serious illness or distress,

staff will:

- Call for assistance immediately.
- Assess the child and follow their paediatric first aid training.
- Call 999 where emergency medical assistance is required.
- Begin appropriate first aid/CPR in accordance with their training and emergency procedures.
- Inform the Headteacher or appropriate senior member of staff.
- Contact the child's parents/carers as soon as practicable and in accordance with the school's emergency procedures.
- Complete the appropriate accident, incident and safeguarding records.
- Follow up and review the circumstances where necessary.

16. Monitoring and Quality Assurance

The Early Years Lead will monitor compliance with this policy through:

- reviewing sleep records;
- checking that sleep checks are being completed appropriately;
- observing sleep and supervision practice;
- checking the condition and suitability of sleep equipment;
- reviewing relevant risk assessments;
- checking staff awareness and training;
- responding to reported concerns;
- reviewing any sleep-related incidents.

Where concerns or patterns are identified, appropriate action will be taken, which may include additional staff guidance, training, changes to the environment or review of individual risk assessments.

17. Staff Training

Staff working with children in the Nursery will receive appropriate training and guidance relevant to their responsibilities.

This will include:

- safer-sleep procedures;
- safeguarding;
- paediatric first aid, where required;
- recognition of signs of illness or distress;
- the Nursery's emergency procedures.

Training and guidance will be refreshed where necessary and following significant changes to national guidance or Nursery procedures.

18. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- annually;
- following changes to the EYFS Statutory Framework;
- following changes to Department for Education safer-sleep guidance;
- following relevant changes to The Lullaby Trust guidance;
- following a significant sleep-related incident;
- following any identified safeguarding concern;
- if the age range or nature of the Nursery provision changes.

The next scheduled review is September 2027.

19. Related Policies and Documents

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Risk Assessment procedures
- Medical Needs/Care Plans
- Attendance Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Emergency Procedures.

Advice for Early Years settings – sleeping space for babies



The safest place for babies to sleep is on a **clear, flat and separate sleep space** such as a:



Moses Basket



Cot



Crib



Travel cot



Carrycot

We advise against sleeping babies in a seated or inclined position such as in:

-  **pushchairs / buggies**
-  **car seats**
-  **bouncy chairs**
-  **swings**
-  **hammocks**

These are not suitable sleep surfaces for babies as they are not firm and flat, therefore can be associated with an increased risk of SIDS. This is because if a baby's chin is close to, or on their chest, this position can restrict their airways and become a possible contributing factor to SIDS so should be avoided.

All of our safer sleep advice is for every sleep and nap.

If a baby falls asleep in a sitting device they should be moved to a flat surface. Don't place sitting devices on a high or soft surface.

This advice should be the setting's policy to ensure safer sleep is always followed.

SLEEP SUPERVISION

In a nursery / childcare environment, sleeping babies should be closely supervised. This can be a member of staff being present in a dedicated sleep room, whilst the babies sleep or frequent monitoring by members of staff in an open plan room.

-  **Inspect cots, bedding and mattresses and ensure all are in good condition before each sleep session**
-  **To avoid overheating, babies should be dressed appropriately for the room temperature (the ideal temperature is 16-20 degrees)**

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