

Sleep Policy



At Sandcastle Nursery & Preschool Ltd, we understand that sleep is essential for children's healthy growth and development. During sleep, children's bodies rest and repair, while their brains consolidate learning and prepare for new experiences. We are committed to providing a safe, calm, and comfortable environment that supports every child's individual sleep needs.

Our Sleep Approach

We support children's well-being by:

- Allowing children to sleep when they are tired.
- Supporting children to sleep for as long as they need, allowing them to wake naturally wherever possible.
- Working in partnership with parents/carers to follow the child's home sleep routine as closely as possible.
- Creating a calm, safe space with soothing background noise or music to help settle children and reduce distractions.

Safe Sleep Practices

We follow current guidance to reduce the risk of **Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)** and to promote safe sleep for all children:

For Babies:

- Babies are always placed on their backs to sleep, unless a parent requests an alternative based on the child's medical needs. This will be discussed and risk assessed with management.
 - Babies are positioned with their feet at the foot of the cot, and any blankets are securely tucked in.
 - Once babies can independently roll from back to front, they are permitted to adopt their preferred sleep position.
 - Babies will never be placed to sleep with a bottle. If a baby falls asleep during feeding, staff will gently move them to their cot once they are settled.
 - All babies are visually checked **every 10 minutes** while sleeping. Checks are recorded and include observations of breathing, skin colour, and temperature.
 - Room temperatures are checked every 10 minutes and maintained between **16°C – 20°C**.
 - Bibs, hooded tops, and any clothing with strings or cords are removed before sleep.
 - No pillows or loose bedding are used. A sleep sack may be used instead (appropriate to season).
 - Every baby has individual clean bedding, washed every three sleeps (or after each use if they attend fewer sessions).
 - Cots are spaced at least 6.5cm apart and kept away from cords, radiators, and wires.
 - Cots and mattresses are cleaned between uses. Two designated breathable mattresses are used for babies under 1, in line with SIDS risk-reduction.
 - Mattresses are inspected daily and replaced every two years, or earlier if damaged.
 - Babies will **not sleep in car seats or nesting rings** while at nursery.
 - Children will never be forced to sleep.
-

Sleep Mats for Toddlers and Older Children

All the above safety measures also apply to children using sleep mats. In addition:

- Children are placed **top-to-toe** on mats to reduce the spread of infection.
- Children are supported to sleep in the same place each time for consistency and comfort.
- Children are welcome to bring a comfort item or soft toy to sleep with.
- Where needed, gentle, reassuring contact may be offered to help a child settle.
- Mats must never block fire exits.
- Children who do not wish to sleep can relax quietly in a designated rest area.

Additional Information

- If a child has coughs, colds or respiratory difficulties, staff are especially vigilant during sleep checks.
- In the warmer months, fans are provided to maintain a comfortable sleep environment.
- We offer **optional home visits** for babies to support settling-in, especially for those with more complex needs.

We will always work closely with families to ensure your child's individual sleep needs and routines are respected, while maintaining the highest standards of safety and comfort.