



EYFS

Safe Sleeping Policy

Summer 2025



WHINLESS DOWN
ACADEMY TRUST

Statement of intent

Vale View Nursery understands the importance of sleep in a child's development and growth. Ensuring that a safe and comfortable sleeping environment is available for each child is important.

This policy underlines the nursery's approach to ensuring safe sleeping practices are maintained throughout the setting through robust staff training, regular risk assessing and open communication with parents and among colleagues.

These practices have been put in place to enhance the awareness of safer sleep and to eliminate the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) caused by a lack of awareness of safe sleep practices.

The nursery welcomes any questions parents may have about safe sleep – please contact the Trust EYFS Lead to raise any queries about safe sleep or concerns regarding the nursery's safe sleep practices.

Additionally, parents can find more information on safe sleeping practices via the following websites:

- [NHS - Safer sleep](#)
- [The Lullaby Trust](#)

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 1989
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'
- DfE (2024) 'Early years foundation stage statutory framework'

This policy also operates in conjunction with safe sleep guidelines published by The Lullaby Trust.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following nursery policies and documents:

- Nursery Children Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Nursery Safe Sleeping Risk Assessment

Roles and responsibilities

Children can join the nursery from when they are 2 years old. Although nursery provision does not provide routine sleeping, there are occasions where young children and children with SEN needs do fall asleep.

In these circumstances, the Nursery Manager/EYFS Lead will be responsible for:

- Establishing and maintaining a safe sleep culture throughout the nursery.
- Ensuring that the importance of safe sleep is fully understood by all nursery practitioners.
- Ensuring that practitioners are clear on the procedures outlined in this policy.
- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that safe sleep procedures are designed in accordance with guidance from the NHS, Lullaby Trust and EYFS statutory framework.
- Fostering a culture in which practitioners feel empowered to raise concerns about unsafe sleep practices..
- Communicating with parents regarding this.

- Working closely with parents to share good practice and ensure that safe sleeping extends beyond the nursery.
- Ensuring practitioners are trained in paediatric first aid (PFA).

All nursery practitioners will be responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with the procedures and practices outlined in this policy.
- Undertaking any relevant training to the oversight of safe sleeping in nursery.
- Monitoring children during sleep to ensure they are safe and comfortable.
- Familiarising themselves with each child's sleep needs, where necessary.
- Ensuring that they are able to act on their training and are prepared to respond to emergencies.
- Being prepared to administer first aid if they are a PFA certified.
- Being aware of any children with medical or SEND requirements and how to meet their needs.

Parents will be responsible for:

- Communicating with the nursery regarding their child's sleep patterns, routines and needs.
- Ensuring they are contactable whilst their child is at the nursery.
- Familiarising themselves with safe sleep guidelines.
- Ensuring safe sleep practices continue in their child's home.

Ensuring a safe sleep space

When considering where a child will go to sleep, practitioners will maintain an awareness of both the physical and emotional aspects that ensure a safe and comfortable sleeping environment for children.

Practitioners will ensure that sleeping spaces are clear of items such as loose bedding, toys and pillows to minimise the risk of choking or smothering.

The room temperature will be maintained between 16 and 20 degrees Celsius.

The sleeping place will be well-ventilated and have clear supervision.

To ensure that the sleeping space is safe and comfortable, practitioners will check that:

- No bibs, dummies with clips, or bottles or other objects left nearby.
- Only approved sleep mats are being used – a firm flat sleeping mat.
- Sleep mats must have an appropriate sheet on and only cellular blankets.
- Children have finished eating or drinking before sleep.
- No pillows or duvets are used.
- There are no soft toys or comforters placed with a child whilst they are sleeping.
- No weighted or bulky bedding is used.
- No products designed to keep a child in one sleeping position are used, e.g. wedges or straps.
- No pods or nests, rolled up towels or anything soft is placed on top of the mattress.

Sleeping positions

Practitioners will be clear on the correct sleeping positions for children and the association between SIDS and incorrect sleeping positions.

Practitioners will ensure that:

- Children are placed to sleep on their back – unless the parent has been advised otherwise by a medical professional. However older children may move position during their sleep.
- Children are never placed to sleep on their side or front.
- Airways are kept open.
- Children keep their chins off of their chest and sleep in a position that allows for an open airway.
- Sleep surfaces are kept flat and are not inclined, tilted or propped.

If a child falls asleep in a sitting position, a practitioner will ensure that they are moved onto a flat, firm surface to sleep on their back with a clear airway.

Practitioners will be aware that children will be at different developmental stages and that some children will possess the ability to move around in their sleep. Where children are able to move or roll independently whilst sleeping, they will not be repositioned unless they have done so in a way that is disrupting their ability to breathe or is otherwise potentially harmful. Staff will understand that moving and rolling during sleep is an important part of a child's development and that repositioning may disturb their sleep and/or comfort.

Medical needs

Practitioners will be familiar with children's individual health care plans and the associated hazards applicable to each child's medical condition.

Practitioners will be able to use their training in responding to signs of distress or breathing difficulties that may arise during a child's sleep.

Practitioners will be aware of any children taking medication and how this may impact their sleep or create additional risks..

Practitioners will be aware of any children who may be at higher risk of SIDS, e.g. if the child was premature or of low birth weight.

SEND considerations

Practitioners will be aware of the additional sleep support that may be required for children with SEND.

The nursery will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that a safe and comfortable sleeping environment is available for children with SEND, this may include:

- Using specialist equipment or bedding or children with mobility issues.
- Providing additional supervision for children with breathing difficulties or sensory issues that may affect their sleep.
- Implementing sleep times that cater to the individual needs of children with SEND.

Practitioners will receive training on the use of any specialist equipment required for use by children with mobility issues, if necessary.

Communication

The nursery will work with parents in order to raise awareness of the importance of safe sleeping practices for small children and to promote safe sleep practices that extend beyond the nursery.

The nursery will involve parents in discussions about their child's sleep environment and ensure that the specific needs of their child are met and understood. The nursery manager will gain a comprehensive understanding of each child's specific sleeping routines, needs and requirements and will assess the specific risks associated with any of these arrangements.

When interacting with parents about safe sleep, practitioners will focus on:

- Ensuring that they have a strong understanding of each child's sleep
- Acting on any communication received from parents.

- Providing support and guidance about safe sleep practices where any questions have been raised.

Staff with enhanced seniority or experience will be expected to provide guidance and support to newer colleagues, ensuring that they are well-aligned with the nursery's approach to safe sleeping by offering advice on aspects such as sleep checks and handling the specific needs of each child.

The nursery will encourage open communication regarding safe sleeping practices; any staff member or parent should feel confident in asking questions or raising concerns about the nursery's practices.

Colleagues will support each other and provide feedback and guidance on safe sleep practices whilst promoting a supportive culture in which all practitioners feel confident in their responsibilities.

Supervision

Sleeping children will be frequently checked to ensure that they are safe.

Children will never be left in the room alone whilst they are sleeping. The nursery will ensure that the correct adult-to-child ratios are used.

Supervision will not involve children being continuously watched whilst they are sleeping; however, practitioners will remain in close proximity at all times to check up on each child and respond to any basic needs or emergencies.

Practitioners will regularly check each child's breathing and ensure that they are comfortable.

Sleep checks will take place at least every 10 minutes and will be recorded on the nursery sleep check log. Each child will have an individual log, which will be kept in a folder.

When a child awakes from their sleep, a practitioner will swiftly come to attend to them.

Emergencies

In the unlikely event that an emergency event unfolds whilst a child is sleeping, practitioners will utilise their training to take prompt action.

All practitioners will be able to recognise a situation in which emergency procedures need to be followed and will be trained to recognise signs of distress or breathing difficulties. In the event of an emergency occurring during children's sleep, practitioners will take a rapid response and follow the nursery's emergency procedures.

At least one PFA certified practitioner will be present at all times to deal with emergency situations when they unfold..

Only PFA certified practitioners will be permitted to provide first aid, including sleep related first aid such as breathing difficulties and seizures.

The emergency services will be contacted as part of the nursery's emergency response.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

