

Safe Sleeping Policy

Who's responsible?

It is the overall responsibility of the SMT to ensure that all staff follow safe sleeping practices when supporting children to sleep.

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that children are safe while sleeping in the care of ECC.

How the policy will be implemented?

Babies under 2 years old

- All babies should be placed in a cot to sleep, prams with a firm base and mattress are also suitable. Reclining buggies should not be used unless they rest in a fully flat position and time spent in this should be limited.
- Beanbags, bouncy chairs, swings, sleep nests (pods) and sofas should never be used as a sleep surface as all increase the risk of cot death. If a child falls asleep whilst using one of the above, the child should be moved to a more suitable place for safe sleeping.
- Staff must ensure that the gaps between the bars of the cot are less than 6.5 cm and that the space between the mattress and the cot is no more than 4cm. Cot bumpers should never be used.
- For the first 3-4 months babies only breathe through their nose; soft toys, comforters or blankets should not be placed near/on the baby's chest or face whilst they sleep.
- Babies under 1 year old should not have pillows, duvets, soft toys or comforter blankets in their cot/pram whilst sleeping. Instead use one or more layers of light blankets (depending on the room temperature).
- Staff should ensure there are no items in the cot/pram within easy reach of the child such as blind chords, nappy sacks, soft toys etc.
- Babies should be placed on their back and blankets tucked in under the mattress. Blankets should be tucked in at the baby's chest no higher than the armpits.
- Babies who roll over on to their stomach should be gently rolled back to ensure they are sleeping in a safe position at all times.
- Babies should be placed in the feet to foot position (feet right at the bottom of the cot) to ensure they do not move down underneath bedding, reducing the risk of suffocation.
- Ensure routines such as swaddling and the use of a dummy are discussed with parents/carers during induction. This will ensure a consistent approach to sleeping is adapted at home and in the ECC. Staff should refer to Cot Death Trust guidance on safe swaddling.
- Keep the room well ventilated but do not position a cot below a window or in front of a working radiator.

Children over 2 years old

- Children should be provided with a firm, flat sleep mat.
- Children should not sleep on couches or beanbags at any time. If children fall asleep, they should be moved on to a sleeping mat using the correct manual handling procedures.

All children

- Visual supervision is required at all times. At least every 10 minutes a member of staff should visually check on the child/baby; looking for the rise and fall of the chest and if the sleep position has changed. Staff must be especially alert to monitoring a sleeping baby during the first few weeks the baby is in your care.
- Checks should be formally recorded by staff to include the time of the check and the initial of the staff member who checked on the child. Each individual child should have their check times recorded and the length of time they have slept.
- Steps should be taken to keep babies/children from becoming too warm or over heating by regulating the room temperature, avoiding excess bedding and not overdressing or over-wrapping the baby/child; room temperature should be kept between 16-20 degrees.
- If staff are concerned about a child a member of the SMT should be informed immediately.
- If staff find a child/baby unresponsive, then emergency help must be sought immediately and the child's parents contacted as soon as it is safe to do so.
- If a baby/toddler arrives at the setting in their pushchair/car seat and is sleeping, the baby/child should be transferred to an appropriate cot/mattress if parents/carers wish them to continue to sleep.
- To support the best interests of the child, parents/carers may wish to wake the child so they are aware that they are in new surroundings and can settle in to the room while their parent/carer is still present.
- If for any reason staff are transporting children in a car, the appropriate car seat must be used for the child's weight and journeys must be short. If this is not possible, staff must plan regular breaks to ensure children are not in the car seat for long periods of time and sleep checks can continue to be carried out. Staff will follow RA003 Transporting Children (Generic) at all times.

Infection control and cleaning procedures

- Cot mattresses/sleep mats should be completely covered in a waterproof fabric such as PVC.
- Mattresses should be checked, inspected and disinfected between each infant sleep.

- All mattresses should be regularly inspected for signs of damage to the waterproof fabric and if punctured, cracked or torn, the mat should be discarded and replaced immediately.
- If children are sleeping during their time in the ECC, blankets and sheets should be washed after every use and mats wiped down using antibacterial spray. All linen must be washed at the hottest temperatures specified on the fabric and staff should ensure fresh linen is kept in a clean, dry area separate from used linen at all times.
- Wash all linen at the hottest temperatures specified on the fabric.
- Keep fresh linen in a clean, dry area separate from used linen.

Guidance used to inform this policy:

- Safe Sleep Scotland. Accessed at: <http://safesleepscotland.org>
- Care Inspectorate HUB: [EarlyYears cover \(careinspectorate.com\)](http://careinspectorate.com)

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