



Featherstone Primary Academy

Safer Sleep Policy

GREENHEART
LEARNING PARTNERSHIP 

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Creating a safer sleep policy for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is critical to ensure their well-being, comfort, and safety. The following policy contains information and guidance of how staff at Featherstone Primary Academy will ensure that safer sleep guidelines are followed.

The importance of rest and sleep

Rest and sleep are two different things. Rest is about times when the body can relax and stay fairly still but the brain remains active and continues to concentrate on what is happening. Sleep, on the other hand, allows both the body to rest and the brain to change its pattern of activity.

Not having sufficient sleep can have a significant, negative impact on children's development, for example:

- Difficulty in concentrating and learning
- Difficulties in managing feelings and emotions
- Impulsivity / difficulty in self-regulating
- Spatial awareness affected
- Difficulty in processing and remembering information
- Immune system may not be effective
- Higher chance of becoming overweight

What is SIDS?

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the sudden and unexplained death of a baby where no cause is found. The vast majority of SIDS deaths happen when babies are less than 6 months old; with the highest number happening at 2-4 months old. There is no advice that guarantees the prevention of SIDS but parents and carers should be informed that by following advice, it is possible to lower the chance of this tragedy occurring. It's important to remember that SIDS can happen at any time, not just at night, so the advice given in this procedure should be followed for all sleep periods.

Further information regarding SIDS can be found here:

[Sudden infant death syndrome \(SIDS\)- NHS](#)

Below are key elements to consider when developing such a policy in a school setting for children aged 2-5 years:

1. Environment and Supervision

- **Quiet, Calm, and Comfortable Area:** Ensure the sleep space is separate from play areas and is free from distractions. The room should be well-ventilated, warm, and quiet.
- **Adequate Supervision:** Staff must maintain a visual and auditory connection with children at all times. A designated staff member should be responsible for overseeing the sleep time.
- **Staff to Child Ratios:** Follow local regulations for adult-to-child ratios during sleep time.

2. Safe Sleeping Practices

- **Mat Use:** Ensure all children have an individual, clean mat that is safe, stable, and appropriate for their age. Mats should be firm (not soft or plush).
- **Positioning:** Encourage children to sleep on their backs. If a child needs to sleep on their side or stomach, assess this for safety concerns based on their developmental stage.
- **Bedding:** Use lightweight blankets or sheets. Avoid pillows, loose bedding, or any soft items that could cause suffocation or increase the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) for younger children.
- **Temperature Control:** Keep the room at a comfortable temperature (typically between 16°C to 18°C) and avoid overheating.

3. Health and Hygiene

- **Cleanliness of Bedding and Matting:** Clean and change bedding regularly. Children's mats or beds should be sanitised between uses, especially in a shared space.
- **Illness and Medication:** Ensure there is a clear policy for dealing with children who are ill, including determining when they are fit for sleep or when to send them home.
- **Toileting Needs:** Make sure children have access to toilet facilities before sleeping and that staff are available to assist children if needed.

4. Use of Pacifiers (dummies)

- **Consent:** Dummies may be used with parental consent.
- **Dummies:** May be used for comfort during sleep with parental consent (consent form in appendix).
- **Storage:** Dummies must be stored in individual, labelled, hygienic, ventilated dummy boxes to prevent cross-contamination. Dummy boxes will be placed in a steriliser box at the end of each day.
- **Checked daily:** Dummies handed over to staff will be checked daily for signs of wear and tear, and not used if deemed unsafe.
- **Dummy use:** Staff must ensure dummies are only offered at sleep times. Dummies should only be used outside of sleep time when there is an absolute need to soothe a child who is in distress, other strategies have been explored, and parents have already provided consent to dummy use outside of sleep time for their child.

5. Comfort Blankets or Sleep Comforters

- **Consent:** Comfort items such as blankets or soft toys may be used with parental consent.
- **Storage:** Each child's comfort item must be stored individually in their bag, must not be shared between children and should be returned home daily.
- **Pose risk:** Staff should ensure that comfort items do not cover the child's face or pose a risk of suffocation or overheating.

6. Routine and Consistency

- **Regular Sleep Times:** Establish and maintain a consistent routine for sleep and nap times. Consistency helps children feel secure and know what to expect.
- **Wind-Down Activities:** Engage in calming activities before sleep, such as reading or soft music, to help children transition from playtime to rest time.

7. Monitoring and Record Keeping

- **Sleep Logs:** Keep a record of when children fall asleep and wake up.
- **Observation:** Teachers and staff should observe the children to ensure they are sleeping comfortably and safely, and they should respond promptly to any issues that arise. Observation checks are recorded every 10 mins using the Daily Record Sheet attached.
- **Parental Communication:** Share the sleep policy with parents and ask for any special instructions or preferences their child may have for sleeping arrangements.

8. Training and Awareness

- **Staff Training:** Ensure all staff members are trained on safe sleep practices, emergency procedures (e.g., choking, illness), and the general health and safety needs of children during sleep time.
- **First Aid Certification:** At least one staff member should have up-to-date first aid and CPR training, especially for younger children, to respond quickly in case of emergencies.

9. Emergency Procedures

- **Sleep Time Emergencies:** Establish clear protocols for responding to emergencies during sleep time, such as sudden illness or a child waking up disoriented. This includes knowing where the nearest medical supplies and emergency contact details are located.

10. Parent Involvement

- **Clear Communication:** Keep parents informed of the school's sleep policy and encourage them to share any relevant information, such as their child's sleep habits or any specific comfort items they may need (e.g., a blanket or stuffed animal).

11. Monitoring and Quality Assurance

- EYFS lead and/or Senior Leaders will conduct monitoring visits to ensure all of the above is adhered to.

By implementing these guidelines, Featherstone Academy can promote a safe, comfortable, and structured sleep environment for EYFS children, supporting their health, well-being, and development.

Further information around safe sleep and wider Early Years guidance can be found at:

[Home | The Lullaby Trust](#)

[The EYFS in schools- GOV.UK](#)

[Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework- GOV.UK](#)

Featherstone Academy

Little Learners Pacifiers (dummies)/Comforter Consent Form



Child's name: _____

DOB: _____

I give consent for my child to use their own dummy during sleep time.

I give consent for the setting to provide my child with their own dummy outside of sleep time if they are upset and other strategies that have been explored are not providing comfort.

I understand that it is my responsibility as parent to check the condition of my child's dummy daily, checking for signs of wear and tear, and to be replaced if deemed unsafe.

I give consent for my child to use their own comforter during sleep time.

Parent name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

