St James' Catholic Primary School

Safe Sleep and Rest Policy
Policy date: November 2026
Review date: November 2027
Responsible staff: Headteacher, EYFS Lead and EYFS Practitioners

1. Policy Statement

At St James' Catholic Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that all children are provided with a safe, comfortable and appropriately supervised environment for sleep and rest.

We recognise that sleep and rest are essential for children's health, wellbeing and development. Our procedures reflect the individual needs of children attending our Two-Year-Old Provision, Nursery and Reception.

This policy follows the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, effective September 2026, and safer-sleep guidance from the Early Years Alliance, NHS and The Lullaby Trust.

2. Sleep and Rest Arrangements

Children's individual sleep and rest needs will be discussed with parents and carers and supported sensitively.

- **Two-Year-Old Provision:** Children requiring daytime sleep will be provided with an individual, appropriate sleep space, such as a suitable low bed or firm, flat mattress.
- **Nursery:** Children who require daytime sleep will be supported to rest in a designated, supervised area. Quiet activities will be available for children who do not need to sleep.
- **Reception:** Children will generally not have scheduled daytime sleeps. However, opportunities for quiet rest will be provided when necessary, taking account of individual needs, illness and wellbeing.

Children will not be forced to sleep or prevented from resting when they are tired.

3. Safe Sleeping Environment

All children requiring sleep will be provided with a safe and appropriate sleeping environment.

Staff will ensure that:

- Each child has their own separate sleep space.
- Sleeping surfaces are firm, flat, clean and suitable for the child's age and development.
- Children are placed on their backs when being settled to sleep.
- Sleeping areas are free from unnecessary objects, loose bedding and potential hazards.

- Children's heads and faces remain uncovered.
- Bedding is lightweight, appropriate and securely positioned.
- Sleep spaces are positioned safely, away from hazards such as trailing cords, heaters and direct sources of excessive heat.
- Sleep equipment is checked regularly, cleaned appropriately and maintained in good condition.

Children must not routinely sleep in pushchairs, car seats, sofas or other unsuitable sleeping spaces.

4. Supervision and Monitoring

Children must remain within sight and hearing of staff while sleeping.

Staff will:

- Maintain appropriate supervision throughout sleep periods.
- Carry out frequent physical checks of sleeping children.
- Observe children's breathing, sleeping position, colour and general wellbeing.
- Ensure children are not too hot or cold.
- Respond immediately to signs of discomfort, distress or unusual breathing.
- Maintain appropriate staff-to-child ratios and safeguarding arrangements.

As an additional school safety procedure, **physical sleep checks will be completed and recorded at least every 10 minutes**, with continuous supervision maintained between checks.

Each check will record the child's name, time of observation, staff member's initials and any concerns or actions taken.

A sleep monitor may provide additional reassurance but must not replace appropriate supervision or physical checks.

5. Temperature and Bedding

Staff will ensure sleeping environments are comfortable and appropriately ventilated.

The recommended room temperature for babies is 16–20°C. For children aged two and above, staff will use professional judgement to maintain a comfortable environment, taking account of room conditions, clothing and individual needs.

Children will not be allowed to become excessively hot or cold. Hats and outdoor clothing will be removed before sleeping.

Bedding will be clean, lightweight and appropriate for the child's age. Children's heads and faces must remain uncovered.

6. Individual Sleep Needs

Staff will work in partnership with parents and carers to understand children's individual sleep requirements.

Information may include:

- Usual sleep and rest routines.
- Approximate sleep duration.
- Settling preferences and comfort needs.
- Medical conditions, allergies or additional needs.
- Any specific advice from healthcare professionals.

Where children have SEND, medical conditions or additional sleep-related needs, an individual care plan and risk assessment will be developed in consultation with parents and relevant professionals.

Any alternative sleeping arrangements required for medical reasons must be supported by appropriate professional advice and documented clearly.

7. Premature Birth and Additional Medical Needs

Although our school provision begins at two years of age, staff recognise the importance of understanding children's medical histories where these may affect their care.

Children born prematurely, with a low birth weight or with ongoing respiratory or medical conditions may require additional consideration.

Where necessary, staff will seek advice from parents, carers and relevant healthcare professionals to ensure appropriate sleeping arrangements and monitoring.

8. Hygiene and Maintenance

All sleep equipment will be maintained to appropriate hygiene and safety standards.

Staff will:

- Clean and inspect sleep surfaces regularly.
- Ensure bedding is clean and stored hygienically.
- Change bedding whenever soiled.
- Follow the school's infection prevention and control procedures.
- Report and remove damaged or unsuitable equipment immediately.

9. Emergency Procedures

If a child appears unresponsive, is not breathing normally or displays signs of serious illness, staff will:

1. Call for immediate assistance and dial 999.
2. Begin appropriate emergency first aid or paediatric CPR in accordance with current training and emergency service instructions.
3. Inform the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

4. Contact the child's parents or carers as soon as possible without delaying emergency treatment.
5. Record the incident and follow the school's safeguarding, accident reporting and statutory notification procedures.

Staff must be familiar with the location of emergency equipment and the school's emergency response procedures.

10. Working with Parents and Carers

We recognise that positive communication with parents and carers is essential to supporting children's individual sleep and rest needs.

Staff will:

- Discuss children's routines and preferences when they join the setting.
- Inform parents of significant changes to their child's sleep patterns or wellbeing.
- Share relevant information about daytime sleep when appropriate.
- Review arrangements as children grow and develop.

Parents will be made aware of the school's safe sleep procedures.

11. Staff Responsibilities and Training

All EYFS staff are responsible for implementing this policy consistently.

Staff will be familiar with current safer-sleep guidance, supervision expectations, emergency procedures and the school's safeguarding arrangements.

The EYFS Lead will ensure that staff understand the policy and that sleeping arrangements are reviewed as part of ongoing safeguarding and welfare monitoring.

12. Monitoring and Review

The EYFS Lead will monitor the implementation of this policy through regular checks of sleeping environments, staff practice and relevant documentation.

The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner following changes to statutory guidance, identified safeguarding concerns or changes to provision.

Our aim is to ensure that every child feels safe, secure and comfortable, with their individual sleep and rest needs met in a caring and appropriately supervised environment.