

Safer Sleep Policy

June 2026

To be renewed June 2029

This policy contains updated wording provided by the DfE (released March 2026) and refers to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): Safer sleep requirements – Frequently Asked Questions (released April 2026). The DfE plans to update the EYFS wording in September 2026, subject to parliamentary and legislative process. This links to the NHS safer sleep guidance (1) which providers should already be following.

At Christ Church Cathedral School we aim to ensure that all EYFS children, notably the ones in the Nursery, have enough sleep to support their development and natural sleeping rhythms in a safe environment.

The safety of children sleeping is paramount. Our policy follows the advice provided by the DfE, the Lullaby Trust and NHS to minimise the risk of sudden unexpected death in childhood (SUDC) in children over 12 months of age.

We make sure that all children are placed down to sleep safely, with every practitioner reading the NHS advice on sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)(1) and being made aware of the safer sleep guidance from The Lullaby Trust (2).

Sleeping environment

We provide a safe sleeping environment for all children by:

- Ensuring every child has their own separate sleep space
- Only using suitable sleeping equipment (i.e. mats) that are compliant with British Standard regulations
- Using a firm flat surface such as a mattress on the floor.
- Using a firm, flat waterproof mattress, a clean fitted sheet and lightweight bedding which is firmly tucked in around the child below their shoulders to prevent head covering
- Ensuring every child is provided with clean bedding, labelled for them, working in partnership with parents to meet any individual needs.
- Ensuring children are appropriately dressed for sleep to avoid overheating.
- Ensuring children's heads are not covered.
- Ensuring no extra items such as toys, pillows, extra blankets, bumpers, wedges or straps are used.
- Following the guidance dummies or comforters are permitted for use with children with the permission of their families. We follow The Lullaby Trust advice regarding the safe use of dummies while children are sleeping.
- Providing spaces around beds will be clear from hanging objects, i.e. hanging cords, blind cords, drawstring bags.
- Monitoring the sleep room temperature and ensuring it remains between 16-20C at all times, where possible.
- Ensuring children are always within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping, and are checked every 10 minutes. We will use a video monitor to enable the sleeping children to be seen and heard at all times.

(1) <https://www.nhs.uk/baby/caring-for-a-newborn/sudden-infant-death-syndrome-sids/>

(2) <https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk>

Further considerations

- Well-fitted baby sleep bags may be used according to the manufacturer recommendations and with written parent permission
- All bedding will be cleaned, as required and every week as a minimum.
- We will transfer any child who falls asleep sitting with a practitioner to a safe sleeping mattress to complete their rest
- In the event that any child who falls asleep in a buggy, pushchair or pram on the way to school, or in a minibus on the way back from a school visit, will be transferred to a safe sleeping surface to complete their rest on their return to School; coats, hats, extra clothing and blankets will be removed as soon as they are inside, even if this means waking them.

We ask parents to complete forms on their child's sleeping routine with their key person when starting at Christ Church Cathedral School. These are reviewed and updated termly.

If a child has an unusual sleeping routine or a position that we do not use in the nursery, i.e. sleeping on their tummies, we will explain our policy to the parents and not usually offer this unless the child's doctor has advised the parent of a medical reason to do so. In such cases, we would ask parents to provide written permission to adopt a different position or pattern for their child.

We recognise parent knowledge of their child with regard to sleep routines and will, where possible, work together to ensure individual sleep routines and well-being continue to be met. However, staff will not force a child to sleep or keep them awake against their will. They will also not usually wake children from their sleep, unless we have been advised of a sleep time limit by parents.

Individual sleep routines are followed where possible. We create an environment that helps to settle children that require a sleep, for example turning off the light, playing white noise/soft music where applicable. We will maintain the needs of the children who do not require a sleep and ensure they can continue to play, learn and develop. This may involve taking children outdoors or linking with other rooms or groups of children. Staff will discuss with parents any changes in sleep routines at the end of the session and share observations and information if they do not receive enough sleep.

(1) <https://www.nhs.uk/baby/caring-for-a-newborn/sudden-infant-death-syndrome-sids/>

(2) <https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk>