4.7 Safer Sleeping

Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures followed by St Mary's Nursery to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children aged over two years who sleep or rest during the preschool day.

The policy reflects the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework from September 2026 and promotes safe sleeping practices within our setting.

Principles

At St Mary's Nursery, we recognise that some children may require sleep or rest during the preschool day to support their health, wellbeing and development.

We are committed to providing a safe, comfortable and appropriately supervised environment that minimises risk while meeting each child's individual needs.

Children's sleep and rest needs will be considered on an individual basis, and we will work closely with parents and carers to ensure arrangements are appropriate.

Sleep Environment

Children who require sleep will rest in a designated quiet and comfortable area within the main nursery room. Children will not routinely sleep in a separate room.

The designated sleep area will:

- Be calm, quiet and comfortably lit.
- Allow practitioners to maintain continuous sight and hearing of sleeping children.
- Be free from hazards and excessive noise.
- Maintain a comfortable room temperature and adequate ventilation.
- Be arranged so that staff have immediate access to every sleeping child.

Each child who requires sleep will be provided with a clean sleep mat and clean bedding by St Mary's Nursery.

Bedding will be appropriate for the room temperature and will be laundered in accordance with the nursery's hygiene procedures after use.

Supervision

Sleeping children will remain under the direct supervision of practitioners at all times.

Staff will:

- Maintain continuous sight and hearing of sleeping children.
- Observe children regularly for any changes in breathing, colour, temperature, position or general wellbeing.
- Carry out and record wellbeing checks at least every 10 minutes, or more frequently where an individual risk assessment identifies additional needs.
- Respond immediately if any concerns arise.

Sleeping children will never be left unattended.

Individual Sleep Arrangements

St Mary's Nursery does not operate a scheduled sleep routine and does not routinely put children down for naps.

Children are encouraged to participate in the day's activities, with opportunities for quiet rest where required.

If a child falls asleep unexpectedly during the session, or shows clear signs that they are becoming sleepy and are unable to comfortably continue participating, a practitioner will gently support the child to the designated sleep area, where they can rest safely under supervision.

Parents and carers will be encouraged to discuss their child's usual sleep patterns and any individual needs with staff when their child starts at the nursery.

Where appropriate, we will record:

- Usual sleep patterns.
- Comfort items, where appropriate.
- Medical conditions.
- Medication.
- Any professional advice regarding sleep.
- Any additional supervision requirements.

Individual risk assessments will be completed where necessary.

Safe Sleep Practice

Staff at St Mary's Nursery will ensure that:

- Children sleep only in the designated sleep area on a firm, flat sleep mat.
- Children who fall asleep in another area of the nursery, or who are beginning to fall asleep, are carefully and safely moved to the designated sleep area whenever it is appropriate to do so.
- Clean bedding provided by the nursery is used for each child.
- Bedding is appropriate for the room temperature and does not present a suffocation or overheating risk.
- Heavy blankets, pillows, beanbags, sofas and unsuitable soft furnishings are not used for sleeping.
- Children's faces remain uncovered during sleep.
- Clothing is appropriate for the room temperature to reduce the risk of overheating.
- The sleep environment remains free from unnecessary hazards.

Staff Responsibilities

All practitioners at St Mary's Nursery will:

- Follow this policy consistently.
- Complete safer sleep training and undertake regular updates where required.
- Understand the signs of distress or illness during sleep.
- Record sleep times, 10-minute monitoring checks and waking times.
- Ensure that any concerns regarding a child's health, safety or wellbeing are reported immediately to the Nursery Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Follow any individual risk assessment or specific professional advice relating to a child's sleep arrangements.

The Nursery Manager will ensure that staff are familiar with this policy and that appropriate arrangements are in place for monitoring compliance.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

St Mary's Nursery will work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that sleep practices remain appropriate to each child's individual needs.

Parents and carers will be informed about:

- Their child's sleep or rest during the nursery session.
- Any concerns identified while their child was sleeping.
- Any significant changes to their child's usual sleep arrangements while at nursery.
- Any additional measures introduced as a result of an individual risk assessment.

Parents and carers are encouraged to share relevant information about their child's sleep patterns, comfort needs, medical conditions and any professional advice that may affect their child's sleep or rest.

Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager will monitor the implementation of this policy and ensure that staff follow the agreed safer sleep procedures.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance, EYFS requirements or recognised best practice.

References

This policy should be read alongside relevant St Mary's Nursery policies and procedures, including safeguarding, health and safety, medication, first aid, illness and infection control procedures.

Relevant guidance includes:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework – effective September 2026
- Department for Education guidance relating to changes to the EYFS Framework – September 2026
- Relevant Local Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance, where applicable.

This Policy was adopted by	St Mary's Nursery, Camberley,	*(name of provider)*
Last reviewed On	1st September 2026	*(date)*
Date to be reviewed	1st September 2027	*(date)*
Signed on behalf of the provider		
Name of signatory	Sue Dunn	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Acting Chairperson	