

Sleep, Rest and Child Wellbeing Policy



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Approved/ Ratified:	Pat Hunt
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Document Version Control Log

Version	Modification Date	Synopsis of Changes
1.0	September 2025	
2.0	August 2026	Updated following new Early years foundation stage statutory framework For group and school-based providers Effective: 01 September 2026 Added in roles and responsibilities section to policy Added new sections for inclusion and whole school Appendix headings reviewed and updated

1. Introduction

Most people are aware that the greatest risk associated with sleeping babies is **Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)**. Although children attending our Early Years settings are aged **2–4 years** and the risk of SIDS is extremely low, understanding safer sleep guidance helps practitioners provide the safest possible environment for all children who may sleep during the academy day. By following national guidance and implementing consistent procedures, we minimise risks and promote children's health, safety and wellbeing.

This policy applies to all children attending Lighthouse Multi Academy Trust academies. While the safe sleep guidance within this policy is primarily intended for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, procedures relating to unexpected sleep, illness and emergency response apply to all pupils from Nursery to Year 6.

2. Legislation

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years foundation stage Framework for schools and providers [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) (effective **1st September 2026**) makes the following statements on **Page 40/41**:

Sleeping arrangements

3.86

- Children must be placed down on their back in their own separate sleep space on a firm flat surface such as a cot, bed or mattress on the floor
- Sleep spaces must only contain a firm, flat, waterproof mattress
- Children's heads must not be covered.
- Children must always be within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping.

Practitioners must read NHS advice on Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) – NHS:

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

More information on safer sleep guidance is available from The Lullaby Trust: <https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/>

This policy should be read alongside the statutory safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), particularly Section 3: Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy:

- **Sleep** refers to a child who has fallen asleep during the academy day.
- **Rest** refers to a child lying quietly to recover or regulate without necessarily sleeping.
- **Unexpected sleep** refers to a child falling asleep when sleep was not planned.
- **Planned sleep** refers to sleep agreed with parents and professionals as part of an identified individual need.

3. Aims and Scope

The Lighthouse Multi Academy Trust has implemented a Safe Sleep and Rest Policy across all academies to safeguard the children and comply with NHS guidance and the Early Years Statutory Framework. The sleep policy aims to provide a clear framework to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of any child who may fall asleep during the academy day/ session in Early Years.

Due to the age of the children in our Academies the vast majority of children will not need a sleep when attending, however we are aware that on occasions children may fall asleep due to a range of factors so have ensured our policy reflects this.

The Trust is committed to ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently for all children. Reasonable adjustments will be made where appropriate to meet individual medical, developmental or SEND needs in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Here is a list of the Provisions:

Barcroft Academy	Nursery Provision (15 hour and 30 hour places) for 3-4 year olds
Beacon Academy	Pre-school Provision (15 hour places) for 2-3 year olds Nursery Provision (15 hour places) for 3-4 year olds
Castlefort Academy	Nursery Provision (15 hour and 30 hour places) for 3-4 year olds
Lindens Academy	Nursery Provision (15 hour and 30 hour places) for 3-4 year olds
Meadow View Academy	Nursery Provision (15 hour and 30 hour places) for 3-4 year olds
Moorcroft Wood Academy	Treetots Provision (15 hours) for 2-3 year olds Nursery Provision (15 hour and 30 hour places) for 3-4 year olds
St James Academy	Nursery Provision (15 hour and 30 hour places) for 3-4 year olds
Sunshine Academy	Nursery Provision (15 hour and 30 hour places) for 3-4 year olds

The safety and wellbeing of every child who sleeps during the academy day is paramount. Our policy follows the advice provided by The Lullaby Trust (formerly The Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths/Cot Death Society), as is appropriate to supporting children in early years aged 2-4 years who may sleep during their academy session.

Each Academy has purchased a **minimum of 3 sleep** mats, which are stored in Early Years. All academy staff are aware of where these sleep mats are located in case they are needed.

We make sure that if a child falls to sleep during the session:

- Children are encouraged to lie on their backs to sleep, if a child has rolled onto their tummy, we turn them onto their back again, unless they are able to roll from back to front and back again, on their own, in which case we enable them to find their own position
- Toddlers are monitored visually when sleeping looking for the rise and fall of the chest and if the sleep position has changed
- Practitioners complete and record a visual welfare check at least **every 10 minutes**, confirming the child's breathing, colour, sleeping position, temperature and overall wellbeing. (Appendix 1)
- Children are never left to sleep in a separate sleep room, they are supervised at all times within the room.
- Parents and Carers will be notified if their child has been to sleep during the academy day/ session.

4. Unexpected Sleep

At the Lighthouse Multi Academy Trust we understand that on occasions children within academy, when unwell or due to individual circumstances may fall asleep and the same sleep procedures and protocols as above will be used.

The following factors may cause a child to fall asleep unexpectedly:

- Being unwell
- Health issues: such as allergies, diabetes, nutrition deficiency or side effects of medication
- Insufficient sleep: such as a late bedtime, sleep disorder or poor sleep quality
- Extreme heat

If a child falls asleep unexpectedly, they should be carefully transferred to a sleep mat.

Children will be moved calmly and safely without causing unnecessary disturbance.

If a child appears unusually sleepy, difficult to rouse, or is displaying signs of illness, practitioners will follow the academy's procedures for managing unwell children and seek medical advice where appropriate. Parents or carers will be informed as soon as possible.

We provide a safe sleeping environment by:

- Monitoring the room temperature
- Ensuring children are not overdressed and that clothing is appropriate for the room temperature.
- Providing a sleep mat to sleep on

- Ensuring the sleep mat is placed flat on the floor in a quieter area of the room which is visible to staff
- *Sleep mats are compliant with British Standard regulations, and wiped clean after every use.

5. Inclusion and Individual Needs

The Lighthouse Multi Academy Trust is committed to providing an inclusive environment where the individual needs of every child are recognised and respected.

Whilst most children aged 2–4 years will not require sleep during the academy day, we recognise that some children, including those with **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)** or attending an **Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP)**, **Specialist Resource Provision (SRP)**, or **Inclusion Base** may require planned periods of sleep or rest as part of their individual needs.

Sleep or rest requirements may be associated with:

- medical conditions
- neurodevelopmental differences
- physical disabilities
- sensory processing needs
- fatigue resulting from therapy or medical treatment
- prescribed medication
- advice from healthcare professionals.

Where a child has an identified need for sleep or rest during the academy day:

- the child's needs will be discussed and agreed with parents or carers;
- advice from relevant healthcare professionals will be followed where appropriate;
- arrangements will be documented within the child's Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP), SEND Support Plan or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), where applicable;
- reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure the child can rest safely and with dignity;
- the same safe sleep procedures, supervision and welfare checks outlined in this policy will always be followed.

No child will be prevented from resting where this is necessary to meet their individual health, wellbeing, medical or SEND needs.

6. Sleep or Drowsiness in the Main School (Reception to Year 6)

Children of statutory school age would not normally be expected to sleep during the school day. If a child in Reception to Year 6 falls asleep or appears unusually sleepy, this may indicate illness, injury, fatigue or an underlying medical condition.

If a child falls asleep or is difficult to keep awake, staff will:

- assess the child's immediate wellbeing;
- remain with the child and ensure they are supervised at all times;
- move the child to a quiet, comfortable area where they remain visible to staff if appropriate;
- seek advice from a qualified first aider or senior member of staff;
- check for signs of illness, injury or medical distress;
- contact parents or carers to discuss the child's condition and arrange collection where appropriate;
- follow any Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), where applicable.

Children will **not** be encouraged to continue sleeping unless this is required due to a medical condition or following advice from a healthcare professional.

Children in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 will not routinely be transferred to an Early Years sleep mat. Where a child requires rest due to illness or an identified medical need, they will be supported in an appropriate supervised medical or welfare area. The decision to move a child will be based on an assessment of their condition and it being safe to do

so. If a child is difficult to rouse or there are concerns about their health, emergency procedures will be followed immediately.

If staff have concerns that a child is difficult to rouse, has suffered a head injury, has difficulty breathing, has experienced a seizure or displays any other concerning symptoms, emergency procedures will be followed immediately.

Children with Medical Needs

Some children across the primary age range may have medical conditions or disabilities that result in fatigue or a need for planned rest.

Examples include:

- epilepsy
- diabetes
- cancer treatment
- neurological conditions
- chronic fatigue
- autism where rest is part of regulation
- medication causing drowsiness

Where a planned rest period forms part of a child's Individual Healthcare Plan, EHCP or advice from a medical professional, suitable arrangements will be made in partnership with parents and relevant professionals.

7. Safe Sleeping Environment

Children will never be permitted to sleep in:

- buggies or pushchairs
- highchairs, children's chairs or teacher chairs
- beanbags
- soft furnishings
- cushions or pillows

If a child falls asleep in any of these, they will be moved to a sleep mat as soon as it is safe to do so. This reflects current NHS and Lullaby Trust safer sleep guidance.

8. Emergency Procedures

If a child:

- cannot be roused
- has difficulty breathing
- stops breathing
- becomes unresponsive

Staff will:

- follow academy emergency procedures
- immediately call 999
- begin appropriate first aid if required
- summon the Designated Safeguarding Lead or senior leader
- contact parents immediately
- complete the appropriate accident/incident reporting procedures.

If a child has sustained a head injury and subsequently becomes sleepy or difficult to rouse, staff will follow the Trust's First Aid Policy immediately and seek urgent medical advice.

Following any medical emergency involving a sleeping child, the Headteacher will ensure appropriate reporting, debriefing and review of procedures takes place.

9. Links to other policies

Academy Policies	Trust Policies
➤ Behaviour Policy ➤ Early Years Policy (EYFS) ➤ Equality objectives and Policy ➤ First Aid Policy ➤ Health and Safety Policy ➤ Safeguarding and child protection ➤ Special Educational Needs Policy	➤ Intimate Care Policy

10. Roles and Responsibilities

Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for:

- Ensuring the Trust has an effective Sleep and Rest Policy that complies with statutory requirements.
- Ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place across all Early Years settings.
- Monitoring that academies implement the policy consistently.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The CEO will:

- Ensure academy leaders have the resources and support needed to implement this policy.
- Promote high standards of safeguarding, health, safety and wellbeing across all Early Years provisions.

Director of Early Years and Curriculum Development

The Early Years Director will:

- Develop and review the Trust Sleep and Rest Policy.
- Provide guidance, training and support to academy leaders.
- Monitor implementation through academy reviews and quality assurance visits.
- Ensure practice reflects current EYFS statutory requirements and best practice.

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is implemented consistently within the academy.
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate induction and ongoing training.
- Providing suitable sleep and rest facilities that are safe, clean, comfortable and regularly maintained.
- Ensuring sufficient staffing levels are maintained whilst children are sleeping.
- Monitoring compliance with safeguarding, health and safety procedures.
- Ensure suitable risk assessments relating to sleep arrangements are completed and reviewed.
- Ensuring parents are informed of the academy's sleep and rest procedures.

Early Years Leader

The Early Years Leader will:

- Oversee the day-to-day implementation of this policy.
- Monitor sleep records and ensure appropriate documentation is completed.
- Ensure sleep records are retained in accordance with academy record keeping procedures.
- Ensure staff understand safe sleep practices.
- Monitor the cleanliness and safety of sleep equipment.

SENDCo

The SENDCo will:

- work alongside the Early Years Leader to ensure appropriate sleep or rest arrangements are in place for children with SEND;
- ensure any agreed sleep or rest provision is reflected within the child's SEND documentation or EHCP where appropriate;

- liaise with parents and external professionals to ensure sleep arrangements meet the child's individual needs;
- support staff in implementing reasonable adjustments.

Early Years Practitioners

All practitioners are responsible for:

- Following this policy and academy procedures at all times.
- Remaining within sight or hearing of sleeping children at all times, with regular visual checks carried out and recorded in line with academy procedures.
- Ensuring children sleep in a safe environment free from hazards.
- Following safer sleep guidance, including placing children in appropriate sleep positions where applicable.
- Maintaining appropriate supervision ratios while children are sleeping.
- Recording sleep times and required welfare checks.
- Reporting any concerns regarding a child's health, breathing, wellbeing or unusual sleep patterns immediately to the Early Years Leader or Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Ensuring sleep equipment is clean before and after use.
- Supporting children to wake naturally wherever possible and helping them transition calmly back into play.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is responsible for:

- Responding to any safeguarding concerns identified during sleep or rest periods.
- Providing advice where sleep patterns or behaviours may indicate wider welfare concerns.
- Liaising with external agencies where necessary.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Share accurate information about their child's usual sleep routine, comfort items, medical needs and any known sleep difficulties.
- Discuss any concerns regarding their child's sleep with staff.
- Inform the academy of any medical conditions affecting sleep
- Notify staff if the child has had poor sleep before attending
- Inform staff of any medication that may cause drowsiness

11. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored by the Trustees and reviewed **annually**, or sooner following changes in legislation, statutory guidance, safeguarding advice or following any incident relating to sleeping arrangements.



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Sleep Monitoring Record: Sleep Log

Academy Logo



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