Safer Sleep Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

Bradpole Preschool recognises that some children may require sleep or periods of rest during the preschool day due to their age, stage of development, individual needs, disability, medical condition or other circumstances.

Our primary aim is to ensure that all children are safe, secure, comfortable and protected from harm while sleeping or resting. We provide appropriate opportunities for children to rest and, where necessary, sleep in a calm, safe and supportive environment.

This policy sets out Bradpole Preschool's approach to sleep and rest in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, effective from 1 September 2026, together with relevant safer-sleep guidance from the NHS and The Lullaby Trust.

Aims

- The preschool does not have a dedicated sleep room but will aim to provide a calm and restful environment that meets the physical and emotional needs of young children. We use our quiet space to place children if they need to sleep.
- To respect and accommodate individual sleep routines, cultural practices and parental preferences.
- To ensure children's safety and wellbeing during sleep.
- To promote a consistent and reassuring routine to help children feel secure.

Our Core Principles of our Safe Sleep and Rest Policy

1. Child-Centred Care

- Each child's individual sleep and rest needs, routines and preferences are respected.
- Parents are consulted about their child's sleep habits, and plans are continually adapted when necessary to meet children's changing needs.
- Children are never forced to sleep.
- Practitioners respond sensitively to children's cues, such as signs of tiredness or discomfort.

2. Safety First

- Children are always supervised while sleeping or resting, with a member of staff always in sight and sound of the sleeping child.
- Staff carry out regular checks to monitor children's breathing, position and overall wellbeing.
- Sleep environments meet safety standards, with firm, clean sleep surfaces and no loose bedding, pillows or soft toys that pose suffocation risks.
- All children are placed on their backs to sleep and are positioned at the bottom of the mat.

3. Calm Transitions

- Transitions to and from rest periods are handled calmly and predictably, with the key person taking the lead.
- Staff provide reassurance and support to help children settle and feel secure.

4. Environmentally Appropriate

- We aim to provide a quiet, calm and comfortably lit environment for rest and sleep.
- Although the preschool does not have a separate area away from the active play areas, we cordon off the quiet area when a child needs to sleep.
- Temperature, ventilation and lighting are managed as best we can to try to create a safe and soothing sleep environment.

5. Hygiene and Equipment Care

- To help prevent the spread of infection and to maintain high hygiene standards, the bedding and mats are cleaned after every use.
- Sleep mats and bedding are checked regularly to ensure they remain clean, safe and in good condition.

6. Responsive Staff

- Comfort and reassurance are given as needed to help children settle and feel secure.
- Staff are trained in safe sleep practices and understand how to implement them effectively.
- Staff remain attentive to children's needs throughout the sleep or rest period.

7. Communication with Families

- Parents will be consulted about their child's sleep routines and preferences as part of the induction process.
- Any specific sleep requirements or routines will be documented in the child's personal care plan (see Appendix B).
- Parents will be informed if their child has slept during the day, including the duration and time of sleep.
- Parents will be informed of any concerns regarding their child's sleep or wellbeing while sleeping.

8. Compliance with Guidance

- Sleep practices align with the current statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework and trusted guidance, including the NHS and The Lullaby Trust.
- The preschool will review its sleep and rest procedures when relevant statutory requirements or professional guidance are updated.

9. Individual and Medical Needs

- Where a child has a disability, medical condition or developmental need that affects their sleep or rest, the preschool will work with parents/carers to agree appropriate arrangements.
- Where necessary, an individual care plan will be put in place detailing the child's specific sleep or rest requirements, including any advice provided by parents, health professionals or other relevant professionals.

10. Risk Assessment

The preschool will ensure that the area used for sleep and rest is appropriately risk assessed.

The risk assessment will consider:

- the suitability of the sleep area;
- the safety and condition of sleep mats and bedding;
- supervision and visibility;
- temperature and ventilation;
- lighting;
- potential hazards;
- individual children's needs; and
- emergency and safeguarding arrangements.

The risk assessment will be reviewed where there is a change in circumstances, following an incident or where a concern is identified.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the requirements set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, effective from September 2026, together with relevant safer-sleep guidance from the NHS and The Lullaby Trust.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of: The Committee of Bradpole Preschool

Held during the Autumn 2027.

Date to be reviewed: Summer 2027