



Forfar Education Rest & Sleep Policy

The aim of this Rest & Sleep Policy is to provide a clear framework to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all children who require support to sleep or rest while attending Park School and Nursery.

Legislation

This policy is based on the requirements set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework effective from September 2026, including the safer sleep requirements, and all associated guidance issued to support child welfare and safety.

Principles

At Park School and Nursery, we promote healthy and safe practices that support children to sleep and rest in a way that protects their safety, dignity and wellbeing. Supporting children's sleep is the responsibility of approved staff caring for children, and each child's individual needs should be understood and met appropriately.

The nursery recognises that sleep routines may be influenced by a child's age, stage of development, family practice and cultural preferences. Wherever possible, staff will work in partnership with parents and carers to provide consistency of care and to make rest and sleep at nursery a positive and reassuring experience for children and families. Where families need additional support with sleep or bedtime routines, the nursery may provide information or signpost them to appropriate sources of advice.

Nursery Setting Responsibilities

The nursery will ensure that any staff member supporting children with sleep or rest has undergone the appropriate safeguarding checks and understands the procedures for settling, supervising and checking sleeping children. Staff will handle personal and sensitive information with confidentiality and will only share information with those who need it in order to keep children safe and meet their needs.

The nursery will provide suitable facilities and equipment for sleep and rest and will work with parents to support routines that are consistent between home and the setting, where this is safe and appropriate. Children's sleep routines will be recorded and reviewed regularly with parents as children's development progresses. If there are concerns about a child's welfare, staff will act in accordance with the settings Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures.

Safer Sleep Guidance and Training

All practitioners involved in settling, supervising or checking sleeping children must have read and understood current NHS safer sleep guidance and be familiar with guidance published by The Lullaby Trust. Safer sleep practice will form part of induction and ongoing professional development, with refresher training provided at regular intervals and whenever guidance is updated.

Any deviation from safer sleep requirements must be supported by written advice from an appropriate healthcare professional. This advice must be recorded within the child's individual care plan and risk assessment so that staff understand the agreed arrangements and any additional controls required.

Sleep Monitoring and Recording

Sleeping children must be monitored every 10 minutes. Staff must record the time the child is put down to sleep, each check completed, the name or initials of the practitioner completing the check, any observations made during sleep and the time the child wakes. Checks must include visual confirmation of breathing or chest movement, sleeping position, body temperature, and confirmation that the child's face remains uncovered and the sleep environment remains safe.

Parents will be given access to sleep monitoring information on request. Parents' wishes will be taken into account when sleep arrangements are agreed, but any request that may compromise safer sleep practice or a child's wellbeing must be discussed with management. Sleep duration will be agreed in partnership with parents, taking account of the child's age, developmental stage, individual needs and wellbeing. Children will not be woken or restricted to a fixed sleep period unless this has been agreed with parents and is appropriate for the child's needs.

Providing a Safe Sleeping Environment

The setting will provide a safe and supportive environment for sleeping children. For children under two years old, staff will follow safer sleep guidance carefully and consistently. Babies aged one year and under must only be placed to sleep in a cot. Unless written advice from an appropriate healthcare professional states otherwise, children should be placed 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 should contain only a firm, flat, waterproof mattress and suitable lightweight bedding. Where bedding is used, it must be tucked in firmly around the child below their shoulders to reduce the risk of head covering. A well-fitted baby sleep bag may be used if the manufacturer's recommendations have been checked and followed. Where blankets are used, the child should be placed feet-to-foot at the bottom of the cot, with blankets tucked in securely.

Cots must not contain extra items such as toys, pillows, additional blankets, bumpers, wedges or straps. Children's heads must remain uncovered, and children should not become too hot or too cold. The recommended room temperature for babies is 16 to 20°C. Children under six months of age must always have an adult in the same room for every sleep, and all sleeping children must be checked frequently and remain within sight and hearing of staff.

If a child falls asleep in equipment that is not intended for routine sleep, including a pushchair, bouncer, swing, car seat or on a practitioner, the child will be moved to an appropriate sleep space as soon as it is safe to do so.

Parent Partnership

The nursery recognises that some parents may find it challenging to establish effective sleep routines. Staff will provide a supportive environment in which parents can discuss sleep-related concerns or difficulties and, where appropriate, will offer advice or signpost families to relevant sources of support, such as health visitors or sleep specialists.

Staff Responsibilities in Promoting Positive Sleep Habits

Staff will support children to develop positive sleep habits with sensitivity, calmness and respect for their individual needs. Practitioners should be alert to signs of tiredness, respond appropriately and approach

children quietly and calmly when supporting them to settle. Staff should encourage children to follow familiar routines and, where appropriate, promote independence through reassurance, praise and consistent care.

Children should feel secure and comfortable when settling for sleep. Staff must remain calm and attentive and should ensure that sleep routines are managed in a way that supports children’s wellbeing and does not unnecessarily interrupt their engagement in play.

Parent and Carer Responsibilities

Parents and carers are responsible for providing accurate and up-to-date information about their child’s sleep needs when the child starts at the nursery and whenever those needs change. This includes information about how long the child usually sleeps, usual routines for going to sleep or waking, any comforters used, any sleep-related difficulties and any written medical advice that affects safer sleep arrangements.

Where healthcare professionals are involved in supporting a child’s sleep, parents should share relevant information with the nursery so that this can be reflected in the child’s care plan and risk assessment. Comforters should be provided in sealed bags and clearly labelled with the child’s name. Parents are expected to work with the child’s Key Person to create and maintain a shared care plan for sleep support and to keep emergency contact details up to date.

Conclusion

Park School and Nursery is committed to providing a safe, supportive and positive environment for children to sleep and rest. By working closely with families and maintaining high standards of care, communication and safer sleep practice, the nursery aims to ensure that every child’s needs are met with dignity, respect and safety.

Policy Owner	Director of Education
Last Reviewed	August 2026
Date of Next Review	August 2027