

Caring for Babies and Toddlers

EYFS: 3.1, 3.2, 3.27, 3.32, 3.48,
3.49, 3.55, 3.58, 3.60, 3.61, 3.74.

We care for babies and toddler under the age of two as well as pre-school children.

We ensure their health, safety and well-being through the following:

- Implementing the EYFS requirements at all times and caring for babies and toddlers (under the age of 2 years) in a separate base room for children on a minimum ratio of 1:3.
- Allocating each baby/toddler with a key person and working in partnership with their parent/carers to meet their individual needs and routines.
- Having well qualified staff that understand the needs of babies and toddlers, ensuring that at least half of the staff team caring for children under the age of two have undertaken specific training for working with babies.
- Ensuring babies and toddlers have opportunities to see and play with older children whilst at nursery.
- Toddlers transitioning to the older age groups/rooms when assessed as appropriate for their age/stage (see separate Transition Policy).
- Staff supervising all babies and toddlers and organising the environment to support both non-mobile babies and more mobile babies and toddlers.

Environment

- The environment, equipment and resources are risk assessed and checked daily before the children access the rooms/area. This includes checking the stability of cots and areas around, low/highchairs and ensuring restraints on these, pushchairs and prams are intact and working.
- All doors are fitted with viewing panels and door finger-guards to prevent accidents
- Outdoor shoes are removed or covered when entering the baby and toddler area(s). Staff remind parents and visitors to adhere to this procedure. Flooring is cleaned regularly.
- Sterilisers are washed out and cleaned daily.
- Large pieces of furniture are fixed to the walls to stop them falling on top of babies and young children.

Play and learning is planned in line with children's individual interests and the EYFS learning and development requirements.

Resources

- Care is taken to ensure that babies and toddlers do not have access to resources/activities containing small pieces, which may be swallowed or otherwise injure the child.
- Babies and toddlers are closely supervised during all activities
- Resources and equipment that babies and young children have placed in their mouth are cleaned/sterilised after use.
- All resources are frequently cleaned.
- Soft furnishings are frequently cleaned.

- The use of baby walkers, bumbos and jumparoos (***will only be used for limited periods of time***). If used for extended periods of time on a regular basis, these can contribute to delayed physical development. We follow NHS guidelines which recommends that if these resources are to be used then it should be for no more than 20 minutes at a time.

Intimate Care

- Babies and toddlers have their nappies changed according to their individual needs and requirements by their key person, wherever possible. Checks are documented with the time and staff initials and information is shared with parents.
- When developmentally appropriate, we work closely with parents/carers to sensitively support toilet training in a way that suits the individual needs of the child.
- Potties are washed and disinfected after every use. Changing mats are wiped with anti-bacterial cleanser before and after every nappy change.
- Staff ensure all the equipment is ready before babies and toddlers are placed on the changing mat.
- No child is ever left unattended during nappy changing time.
- Intimate care times are seen as opportunities for one-to-one interactions.
- Staff do not change nappies whilst pregnant until a risk assessment has been discussed and conducted. Students only change nappies with the support and close supervision of a qualified member of staff (see separate Students Policy).
- Cameras and mobile phones are not permitted in toilet and nappy changing areas.
- Nappy sacks and creams are not be left in reach of babies and children.
- We always systems in place to ensure there is an adequate supply of clean bedding, towels and spare clothes.

See separate Nappy changing and Respectful Intimate care policy.

Sleep

- Parents are required to provide labelled bedding for each child which is washed at least weekly and when necessary, if a child prefers to sleep in a sleeping bag we will ask parents/carers to bring one from home.
- All cot mattresses/sleep mats meet necessary safety standards.
- Safe sleep guidance is followed at all times, babies are always laid to sleep on their back, with their feet touching the foot of the cot. Children under two years are not given pillows, cot bumpers or any soft furnishings in order to prevent risk of suffocation.
- We also share safe sleep advice with parents/carers.
- We ensure that sheets or thin blankets come no higher than the baby's shoulders, to prevent them wriggling under the covers. We make sure the covers are securely tucked in so they cannot slip over the baby's head.
- Only sheets and blankets that are of good condition are used, any loose threads are removed.
- Cots are checked before use to ensure no items are within reach i.e. hanging over or beside the cot (e.g. fly nets, cables, cord blinds)

- Babies sleeping outside have cat/fly nets over their prams and we ensure we only use prams that lie flat for sleeping so babies/toddlers are supported
- Sleeping babies/children are supervised at all times and checks are completed every 10 minutes. This may increase to five minutes for younger babies and/or new babies. Checks are documented with the time and staff initials on the sleep check form and times are shared with parent/carers.

Bottles

- Feeding times are seen as an opportunity for bonding between practitioner and child and where possible babies are fed by their key person.
- Food/milk for babies is prepared in a separate pantry area which is specifically designated for this preparation. Handwashing is completed before preparation is undertaken
- Bottles of formula milk are only made up as and when the child needs them. Following the Department of Health guidelines, we only use recently boiled water to make formula bottles (left for no longer than 30 minutes to cool). We do not use cooled boiled water that is reheated. They are then cooled to body temperature, which means they should feel warm or cool, but not hot. Bottles are tested with a sterilised thermometer to ensure they are an appropriate temperature for the child to drink safely
- Bottles are only made following the instructions on the formula, if during the making process there are discrepancies, a new bottle will be made
- All new staff will be shown the procedure, and only when competent and confident will they make them on their own. Students are fully supervised.
- Nursery bottles and teats are thoroughly cleaned with hot soapy water and sterilised after use (they are not washed in the dishwasher). They are replaced as and when required.
- Unwanted/leftover contents of bottles are disposed of after two hours
- Babies are never left propped up or laid in a cot with bottles as it is both dangerous and inappropriate
- A designated area is available for mothers who wish to breastfeed their babies or express milk
- Labelled mothers' breast milk is stored in the fridge.

Mealtimes

- All low/highchairs used for feeding are fitted with restraints and these are used at all times. Children are never left unattended when eating or when in high chairs. Restraints are removed and washed weekly or as needed
- Mealtimes are seen as social occasions and promote interactions. Staff always sit with babies and young children; interacting, promoting communication and social skills
- All children are closely supervised whilst eating and if any choking incidents occur paediatric first aid will be administered
- Babies and young children are encouraged to feed themselves with support, as required
- We work together with parents regarding weaning and offer any support, as required.

Comforter and dummies

We recognise that a dummy can be a source of comfort for a child who is settling and/or upset, and that it may often form part of a child's sleep routine.

We also recognise that overuse of dummies may affect a child's language development as it may restrict the mouth movements needed for speech. As babies get older they need to learn to move their mouths in different ways, to smile, to blow bubbles, to make sounds, to chew food and eventually to talk. As babies move their mouths and experiment with babbling sounds they are learning to make the quick mouth movements needed for speech. The more practice they get the better their awareness of their mouths and the better their speech will be.

Our nursery will:

- Discuss the use of dummies with parents as part of babies' individual care plans
- Only allow dummies for comfort if a child is really upset (for example, if they are new to the setting or going through a transition) and/or as part of their sleep routine
- Store dummies in individual hygienic dummy boxes labelled with the child's name to prevent cross-contamination with other children
- Immediately clean or sterilise any dummy or bottle that falls on the floor or is picked up by another child.
- Dummies will be disposed of if they become damaged and/or when they are required to be disposed of.

When discouraging the dummy staff will:

- Make each child aware of a designated place where the dummy is stored
- Comfort the child and, if age/stage appropriate, explain in a sensitive and appropriate manner why they do not need their dummy
- Distract the child with other activities and ensure they are settled before leaving them to play
- Offer other methods of comfort such as a toy, teddy or blanket
- Explain to the child they can have their dummy when they go home or at sleep time.

We will also offer support and advice to parents to discourage dummy use during waking hours at home and suggest ways in which the child can be weaned off their dummy through books and stories (when appropriate).

- If dummies are used, they are cleaned and sterilised. This also applies to dummies which have been dropped on the floor (see separate dummy policy)
- All dummies are stored in separate labelled containers to ensure no cross-contamination occurs.
- Dummies are disposed of if they become damaged.
- Comforters including teddies and blankets are kept safe and provided at sleep times, or if the child becomes unsettled.