

SAFER SLEEP GUIDANCE

What's changed for schools and settings caring for children aged 2 and above?



From September 2026, safer sleep expectations are made explicit in the EYFS.



1. The key change

- Safer sleep expectations are now written directly into the EYFS statutory framework.
- Schools and settings will be expected to show how safer sleep is understood, risk assessed and consistently put into practice.



2. What this means for children aged 2+

1



Use a separate sleep space on a clear, flat, firm surface — for example a sleep mat, bed or suitable floor mattress.

2



Do not use sofas, beanbags or soft cushioned furniture for sleep.

3



Sleeping children must be within sight and hearing of staff and checked frequently.

4



Use light bedding, keep heads uncovered and avoid overheating.

5



If a child falls asleep in a buggy, pram or car seat, move them to a proper sleep space as soon as practicable.

6



Any comforter or bedding must be age-appropriate and must not create a suffocation or entanglement risk.



3. Actions for schools and nursery teams



Review your sleep policy and sleep-space risk assessment.



Make sure staff know the routine for supervision and recorded checks.



Discuss individual sleep needs with parents and carers.



Check beds, mats and bedding are safe, clean and suitable for the child's age.



Train staff so practice is consistent across the setting.



Remember

Safer sleep is not just for babies. Older toddlers and young children also need a safe sleep environment.



Based on Department for Education safer sleep guidance and EYFS changes from September 2026.

Always follow your school policy and individual risk assessments.

