Caring for Babies and Toddlers Policy

At Pomfret Woodland Community Nursery we care for babies and toddlers 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 in a separate base room with a maximum number of 1:3 babies and 1:5 toddlers with a minimum ratio of 1:3.
- Allocating each baby and toddler a key person who works in partnership with their parent 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 or rooms when assessed as appropriate (see separate Transitions policy)
- Staff who are supervising all babies and toddlers are to make sure the environment is organised to support both non-mobile and mobile babies and toddlers.

Environment

- The environment, equipment and resources are risk assessed and checked daily before the children access the rooms or 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 internal doors are fitted with finger-guards to prevent accidents.
- In the baby room parents and visitors to only wear outdoor shoes on the vinyl floor area where it can easily be cleaned. Staff and children in the baby room to wear slippers.
- 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.
- Ensuring children are afforded privacy during intimate care routines whilst balancing this with the need to safeguard children and staff. No nappies will be changed or intimate routines behind closed doors.

Resources

- Care is taken to ensure that babies and toddlers do not have access to resources or 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 and/or sterilised after use.
- All resources are frequently cleaned.
- Soft furnishings are frequently cleaned.
- The use of resources that restrict babies' movement such as baby walkers, pushchairs, jumparoos, etc will not be used on a regular basis because 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. Checks are documented with the time and staff initials and information is shared with parents.
- When developmentally appropriate, we work closely with parents 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 Student policy)
- Cameras, mobile phones, and other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities are not permitted in toilet and nappy changing areas.
- Nappy sacks and creams are not left in reach of babies and children.
- We always follow systems in place to ensure there is an adequate supply of clean bedding, towels, and spare clothes.
- Children who have medical needs are to have a fully detailed care plan written and explained by parents to relevant staff and training is to be arranged where required.

Sleep

- We follow the NHS guidance to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- Each baby and toddler has labelled nursery bedding which is washed at least weekly and when necessary, this takes into account any allergies and irritation to soap powders and any individual needs. For example if a child prefers to sleep in a sleeping bag, we will ask parents to bring one from home.
- All cot mattresses and sleep mats meet necessary safety standards. We use a firm, flat and waterproof mattress.

- 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 to prevent risk of suffocation.
- We also share safe sleep advice with parents on request or via the parent app.
- We ensure that thin cellular blankets come no higher than the baby's shoulders, to prevent them wriggling under the covers. We make sure these are securely tucked in so they cannot slip over the baby's head. Babies under 12 months are not provided with a blanket but offered a sleeping bag when discussed with parents.

  Taken from the NHS safe sleep advice for babies –
  Depending on the room temperature and the tog, you can **adjust your baby's clothing as necessary**. There should be no other bedding.
  Commercial sleeping bags have the following tog ratings:
- 2.5 tog: for use all year and for standard room temperatures of 16 to 20C (61 to 69F)
- 1.0 tog: for use in warmer weather and in warmer rooms of 20 to 24C (69-to 73F)
- 0.5 tog: for use in hot weather and warm room temperatures of 24 to 27C (73 to 80F)

- Only bedding 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 (fly nets, cables, cord blinds)
- We only use prams that lie flat for sleeping so babies and toddlers are supported however this is for no longer than 20 minutes.
- Sleeping children are always supervised and checks are completed every 10 minutes. This may increase to 5 minutes for younger babies and/or new babies. Checks are documented with the time, staff initials, body temp, room temp and sleeping position on the sleep check form and duration of sleep are shared with parents and for 1 staff member to be sat down with the children supervising.
- We appreciate that children can fall to sleep on their way to nursery however in line with our safeguarding policy we do not accept sleeping children this is to protect our staff and to make sure children are safe in our care.

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 and milk for babies is prepared in a separate kitchen and 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 to make sure they're the appropriate temperature.

- Children over the age of 6 months are to be offered tap water when needed. Those children under 6 months are to have cooled boiled water as and when needed particularly on warmer days.
- 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 or left over contents of bottles are disposed of after two hours.
- Babies are never left propped up or laid in a cot or a pram with bottles as it is both dangerous and inappropriate.
- Labelled breast milk is stored in the fridge.

Mealtimes

- All low/highchairs used for feeding are fitted with restraints and these are always used. Children are never left unattended when eating or when in highchairs. 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 and recorded.
- 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.
- Staff supervising mealtimes will have ongoing discussion with parents about the stage their child is at regarding introducing solid foods, including to understand the textures the child is familiar with – Assumptions will not be made based on age.
- Meals will be prepared in a suitable way for each child's individual development needs, working consistently with parents at a pace right for the child's needs. See Weaning policy for further details.

Comforters and dummies

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

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
14.07.2026		14.07.2027