

Safer sleep audit tool for early years settings

the
lullaby
trust



Safer sleep audit tool for early years settings



You can use this audit checklist as a way of ensuring that you are providing a safer sleep space for the babies in your care. We recommend using this audit tool regularly to make sure you are continually following safer sleep guidance in your setting.

While sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) is rare, it can still happen. Whether you are caring for a baby or child in a child-minding, nannying, or in a nursery setting, it is important that you are aware of the risks of SIDS and the steps you can take to help reduce those risks in line with The Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework.

Our safer sleep advice is for every sleep, day and night, including daytime naps.

The Lullaby Trust's evidence-based **guidance to reduce SIDS risk is designed for infants up to 12 months or 12 months corrected for babies born prematurely**, based on research covering this age group. However, aspects of safer sleep advice can also help protect toddlers and older children, especially in preventing accidents. For example, toddlers and young children should continue to sleep on a firm, flat mattress in early years settings, as this reduces the risk of suffocation, restricted airways, and other accidental harm. All queries relating to best practice for children over 12 months should be directed to the Department for Education (DfE): [gov.uk/contact-dfe](https://www.gov.uk/contact-dfe)

There may be an occasion when parents/carers do something that goes against safer sleep guidance. For example, they may ask that their baby is slept in a pod/nest, or that they want their baby to sleep on their front rather than their back. You need to consider what to do in those circumstances. You would need to explain why you can't follow this in your setting. Having something written down in a policy and procedure document may help.



	Check	Information	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
1	You have an up-to-date safer sleep policy which all staff are aware of.		Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐
Sleep place and position								
2	All babies are placed on their backs for every sleep, day and night.	Once babies can move from their back to their front and back again by themselves, they can find their own sleeping position. However, continue to place them on their backs to sleep.	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐
3	All babies are slept in the feet-to-foot position .	Babies should be placed down to sleep with their feet at the bottom of the cot.	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐
4	All babies are placed to sleep in a Moses basket, cot, travel cot or carry cot .		Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐
5	Babies do not sleep in an inclined position , such as in pushchairs/buggies.	Buggies, pushchairs and prams should not be used as a baby's main sleep space. Babies under 12 months who fall asleep while travelling should be moved to a cot on return.	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐

6	All babies are removed from car seats when they arrive at the setting. Car seats are used for traveling only, and not as an alternative sleep space.	It's OK for babies to fall asleep in a car seat when travelling in a vehicle, but they should be taken out as soon as they get to your early years setting, and placed onto a firm, flat surface to sleep.	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐
7	Staff never share a sleep surface with a baby.		Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐
Mattresses and equipment								
8	All mattresses are firm and flat.	Beanbags, sofas, bouncy chairs, pods/nests, cushions, pushchairs/buggies and car seats are not suitable sleep surfaces for babies and significantly increase the risk of SIDS. If a baby falls asleep in a product like this, or when propped in a seated position, you should move them onto a clear, firm, flat surface.	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐
9	Each piece of equipment used for babies' sleep space	Read more about which British Safety Standards to	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐

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	has passed necessary safety checks , and you have access to and follow the manufacturers' guidance that comes with the products used.	look out for: lullabytrust.org.uk/baby-sleeping-products						
10	The equipment used for babies' sleep spaces is regularly checked to make sure it's in good working order with no missing parts.		Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐
11	Each mattress is protected by a waterproof cover , wiped down with anti-bacterial spray, and a new, freshly washed sheet is used.		Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐
Temperature								
12	A room thermometer is used in the room where babies sleep and regular checks are made to	Recording and documenting room temperature during infant sleeps helps ensure babies are being cared for	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐

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	ensure the room temperature is between 16 - 20°C .	within the recommended limits. It can be difficult to judge the temperature in the room, so use a room thermometer in the rooms where the babies sleep. Read more on what to do in hot weather: lullabytrust.org.uk/hot-weather						
13	All sleep spaces are positioned away from a radiator, or a window/ direct sunlight .		Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐
14	All outdoor wear such as snow suits/winter coats, hats etc. are removed when indoors and before babies are placed down to sleep.		Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐
Bedding								
15	Bedding used is either: firmly tucked in sheets (not above shoulder height) or a baby sleep bag .	Avoid using soft or bulky bedding such as quilts, pillows and duvets or cot bumpers. Weighted swaddles,	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐

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	weighted blankets, and weighted sleeping bags are also not recommended for babies under one year due to risk of overheating.						
Clear cot							
16	All cots are completely clear.	- No pillows or duvets - No cot bumpers - No soft toys - No loose bedding - No pods/nests - No products (such as wedges or straps) that will keep the baby in one sleeping position.	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐
Sleep supervision							
17	A member of staff is always present in the same room as any baby being slept who is under six months of age.	For babies older than six months, sleep supervision could be a member of staff being present in a dedicated sleep room whilst the babies sleep, or frequent monitoring by members of staff. Children	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐

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		should always be within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping.							
General									
18	Babies and children are always kept smoke free as per EYFS guidance.	gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐
19	All staff follow The Lullaby Trust's T.H.A.N.K.S advice for infection prevention.	Think Hands And No Kisses lullabytrust.org.uk/preventing-infection	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐
20	If a baby uses a dummy, it is offered at every sleep period.		Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐
21	Anyone responsible for placing babies to sleep has up to date SIDS & Safer sleep training such as that provided by The Lullaby Trust.	Completed in the last two years.	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐	Initial: ☐

Audit date	Staff member	Notes

Supporting safer sleep in your setting

If you're responsible for placing babies down to sleep, you should have a good understanding of safer sleep guidance.

At The Lullaby Trust, we offer expert safer sleep and SIDS training specifically for early years professionals. The training provides practical guidance on creating safer sleep environments in your setting, and improves your knowledge and confidence.

The course includes videos, written content and downloadable resources. It can be completed online in your own time.

Find out more and book online
<https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/professionals-hub/training/sids-and-safer-sleep-training/for-early-years-professionals/>



If you have any questions on training for yourself or for your team contact us at: training@lullabytrust.org.uk



Notes

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



**Trusted advice on keeping
babies safe, backed by
research.**

Thank you to Early Years Alliance for their feedback into this resource
This information was developed by The Lullaby Trust and was last reviewed in June 2026.
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