



Finally, have a

4 safe sleep Policy

The benefit of having a safe sleep policy is that it:

- gives clear guidance to new or trainee staff, emergency cover staff or those on work experience
- acts as a reminder and helps maintain consistency by the regular staff members
- helps to inform as well as reassure parents that the pre-school facility will only implement what is in best practice guidelines.

All staff should receive induction on sleep policy. This should include precautions to be taken to prevent SIDS and a step-by-step guide to resuscitation of a child who is not breathing and guidelines on what to do in the event of a cot death. Parents should also be aware of the sleep policy and be involved as the individual needs of children should be met.

Remember

*safe place, safe bed,
safe practice*

Further Information:

- ISIDA's National Sudden Infant Death Register, George's Hall, The Children's University Hospital, Temple St., Dublin 1.
Helpline No. 01 8788455
- Your local Pre-School Services HSE Offices 34 Queen Street, Clonmel, County Tipperary 052 70931
- Your local County Childcare Committee

South Tipperary County Childcare Committee

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References are available upon request

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safe sleep
for under 2's

**BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES
FOR CHILDCARE FACILITIES**

County Childcare Committee

Your service should facilitate each child's individual need for sleep/rest

It is important to liaise with parents in relation to their child's sleep patterns/needs. Where a parent requests a sleep routine for their child that does not meet with good practice guidelines (e.g. requesting that their child be denied sleep for the day; be put to sleep with a feeding bottle; requesting child only be put to sleep in buggy or travel seat); remember, your facility is responsible for its own practice.

As a general guide you should be able to answer two questions satisfactorily - **Is this safe? - Does this cause distress to the child?** If you are unable to answer these questions satisfactorily, then your duty is to inform parent that you cannot comply with their request or seek guidance from a qualified professional.

The Law

Article 28 of the Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 1996 states that:

- "A person carrying on a pre-school service shall ensure that adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day are provided."
- You are advised to consult with the local fire officer regarding placement of sleep facilities in your premises.



1 safe place

A separate sleep room of adequate size should be provided for all children under 2 years of age. This room should be in close proximity to the playroom and a viewing panel that permits staff to monitor the children should be provided. The provision of viewing panels promotes child and staff protection. Consideration should be given to the following:

- **Ventilation** - natural ventilation is recommended to achieve 3 air changes per hour. This may be supplemented by mechanical ventilation.
- **Temperature** - the sleep area should be maintained at 16°C-20°C. A wall mounted thermometer should be provided to monitor the temperature.
- **Lighting** - blinds or curtains should be used to control incoming light through windows. Lampshades should be inverted or lights should be fitted with shatterproof diffusers.
- **Safety** – care should be taken when positioning the cots, so that no cot is directly adjacent to a heater, curtains or anything that might help the baby to climb out, or near blinds whose cords could cause strangulation.
- **Space** – it is recommended that 1.4m₂ be allowed per cot. This is to allow adults to have unhindered access to each sleeping child.

2 safe Bed

Children attending a childcare facility should only sleep in a standard cot.

It is recommended that all under 2's attending the service have access to their own cot.

Only Standard cots are recommended.

They should be:

- in good condition,

- of good design,
- solid and stable
- have a recognised safety standard.

The bars should be less than 6cm apart (round) or less than 7.5cm apart (flat). Otherwise the baby may trap his head, arms or legs. There should be at least 50cm between the top of the mattress and the top of the cot with no footholds in the sides, or cut outs in the ends, which could help the baby climb out.

The mattresses used should be:

- well fitting
- firm
- covered with waterproof material
- easy to clean and disinfect.
- well aired and dry.
- gap between the mattress and the sides of the cot should be less than 2.5cm.

The following are not recommended as a sleep facility in a childcare setting:

- **Travel cots/portable cribs** – these are intended for occasional use only and the mesh sides are difficult to adequately launder.
- **Pillow, cushion, beanbag or waterbed** - their surface is too soft and is associated with a significantly higher risk of cot death.
- **Sofa or Settee** – young toddlers can roll and fall off sustaining an injury
- **Rocking cradles** – a tilt of more than 5 degrees can create a potential trapping hazard.
- **Car seats/Buggies/ Bouncinettes** – restraining harnesses can slip and cause hanging.

However, where alternatives are used in accordance with manufacture instructions and comply with safety and hygiene standards, a copy of the manufacturer's instructions should be kept on the premises.

3 safe Practice

YES

- ✓ Baby on back
- ✓ Feet at foot of cot
- ✓ Tuck bedclothes in securely (below shoulders)
- ✓ Babies' clothes should be loose and light
- ✓ 1 child per cot

NO

- ✗ Bibs, bottles, toys
- ✗ Quilts, pillows, cot bumpers
- ✗ Covering of babies' heads

Linen should be available for each child - it should be hygienic, easily accessed and labelled for each child. Each child's bed linen should be laundered weekly or when soiled.

Children in a sleep room should be within sight or hearing of staff at all times.

A sleep log should be maintained and stored within the sleep area. This should record when physical checks are made of sleeping babies. It should record the time, baby's position and who checked - checks should be made every 10 mins.

Camera/CCTV monitoring is only useful in detecting a child crying or for security. It should not be used a substitute for physically monitoring sleeping children as it will not be able to identify a child whose colour has changed or has stopped breathing.

This policy on monitoring should be displayed beside the sleep area. At all times the relevant adult /child ratio outlined in the Regulations must be adhered to.