Safer Sleep Policy for Children Aged 4 Years and Over

Purpose
To ensure all children over the age of 4 years are supported to sleep safely, comfortably, and consistently, reducing risk and promoting wellbeing.

1. **General Principles**
   Every child must have a safe, clean, and age-appropriate sleep environment. Staff must remain vigilant at all times while children are sleeping. Children's individual needs, routines, and medical requirements must be respected and documented.

2. **Sleep Environment**
   Children should sleep on appropriate bedding (e.g., sleep mats suitable for age and size). In the eventuality a child needs a nap spare bedding is used, this must be washed between children. The sleep area must be: Well-ventilated maintained at a comfortable temperature (typically 16–20°C) Free from hazards and clutter soft toys, pillows, and loose bedding should be minimized unless age-appropriate and safe and comforters and toys removed once child is asleep. No loose cords or hangers must be left nearby.

3. **Positioning Children** may adopt their own comfortable sleep position. Staff should ensure the child is settled safely and not in a position that may obstruct breathing.

4. **Head Safety** (No Head Covering Rule) Children's heads must not be covered at any time during sleep. Blankets must be kept below shoulders once child is asleep. Hats, hoods, blankets, or clothing must not obstruct the face or head. Staff must check regularly to ensure the child's face remains uncovered and airway unobstructed.

5. **Supervision and Monitoring Sleeping children** must be checked at regular intervals (every 10 minutes) by an allocated adult and record on the sleep sheet. Visual checks must confirm: Breathing is normal skin colour is healthy sleeping position is safe any concerns must be escalated immediately according to safeguarding procedures.

6. **Wake on Handover Requirement** - All children must be awake prior to being handed over to a parent or caregiver. Or when being accepted into the setting staff must gently wake the child in sufficient time before collection. The child's condition (alertness, mood, any concerns) must be communicated clearly to the parent or caregiver at handover.

7. **Individual Needs Any medical conditions**, additional needs, or sleep requirements must be recorded and followed (e.g., asthma, epilepsy, sensory needs). Care plans must be accessible to all staff and reviewed annually or more frequently with any update.

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8. **Staff Responsibilities Staff must**: Follow this policy consistently to ensure staff know who allocated person is at all times. Children must always be within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping record sleep times and checks where required on the sleep sheet every 10 minutes. Ensure all safety procedures are adhered to. Training on safe sleep practices should be completed and refreshed regularly.

9. **Incident Response** - If a child shows signs of distress, difficulty breathing, or unusual behaviour during sleep: Act immediately follow emergency procedures - call 999, inform a member of the SLT and parents as soon as possible.

10. **Review this policy** annually or following any incident, updated guidance, or regulatory change. This policy was adopted by the Sacred Heart LGB on **24th November 2026**.