

# Sleeping Babies and Young Children *including safe sleeping*

Sleep is important for young children, and it directly impacts on their wellbeing and development. Safe sleep is important for all children. All children are provided with clean, safe and comfortable rest and/or sleep facilities as individually needed. We work in partnership with parents/guardians in relation to their child's sleep needs and patterns as much as possible. All children are provided with their own clean blankets and sheets which are stored in the laundry cupboard or their individual sleep bag and used for the sessions they are with us. Sleep times differ from each class with babies as part of their routines and toddlers after lunch around 12:30-13:30.

In babies and toddlers, the sleep times of a child is recorded on their home care diary on Tapestry. In the preschool room, staff will record these on a whiteboard in the room and inform parent/carers verbally on collection.

Where a parent/guardian requests a sleep routine for their child that does not meet with good practice guidelines (for example, requesting that their child be denied sleep for the day; that they be put to sleep with a feeding bottle; requesting that the baby/child be put to sleep in a buggy or travel seat), the service remains responsible for our own practice and we will be happy to discuss with parents/guardians why any such practice cannot be implemented. In all decision-making the child's best interests come first.

On the odd occasion that a child who wouldn't usually sleep does fall asleep, staff would first call the parents to check if the child is allowed a sleep and check any time limits or restrictions. If we cannot make contact with a parent/carer we will use our professional judgement to decide on this. This differs from arrival procedures. Children must be awake at the point of handover to ensure safeguarding checks can take place.

Staff: child ratios can sometimes adjust during sleep periods. This can allow staff to take their lunch breaks or complete admin tasks. There are always at least two staff members left in the room and a trained first aider available at all times.

## **Arrival of Children (Awake Handover Requirement)**

For safeguarding and welfare reasons, children must be handed over awake to a member of staff.

The nursery will not accept responsibility for a child who arrives asleep in a car seat, pushchair or carrier. Parents/carers must wake the child prior to handover so a clear welfare exchange can take place.

This ensures staff can:

- visually check the child's wellbeing
- confirm the child's condition with the parent/carer

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- safely transition the child into the nursery environment

If a child arrives asleep, parents/carers will be asked to wake their child before staff accept the handover.

## **Room Sleep Procedures**

### **Baby Room**

Although there's no guaranteed way to prevent Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, research tells us that a safe sleep environment can help reduce your baby's of SIDS. The following procedures are put in place to reduce this risk.

The staff members in the baby room ensure the routine of the child is documented with parental consent. This is written down and accessible to the staff members caring for the child. Any changes to routine must be discussed with the parent/carer. Each staff member obtains information from parent/carers as to how they usually sleep and where they usually sleep. The babies have access to a sleep room, furnished suitably with a thermostat to regulate the temperature of the room.

### ***Sleeping Position***

Ensuring babies can sleep safely and comfortably is one of our main priorities. Babies up to 12 months will always be put sleeping 'feet to foot of cot, head uncovered and on their backs in their cot. If a registered medical practitioner has recommended a different sleep position, then this must be clearly evidenced in a written note from that practitioner.

When a baby is older and able to roll from back to front and back again, let them find their own position to sleep. However, you should still place them on their back at the start of sleep time. Place babies near the foot of the cot with the covers below the shoulders. See below:



### ***Bedding/Sleeping Area***

The safest place for babies to sleep is in a moses basket, cot, travel cot or carrycot on a firm, flat mattress with a waterproof, wipeable cover. Beanbags, sofas, bouncy chairs, pods/nests, cushions and car seats are not suitable sleep surfaces for babies and significantly increase the risk of SIDS. All babies will sleep in a cot or an approved bed/mattress. Babies may not sleep in a nesting ring, car seat, bouncy chair etc. Cot bumpers will not be used as they pose a risk to babies once they begin to roll and move in

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the cot. Cot mattresses will be checked regularly to ensure they are still firm, flat and in good condition with no rips, tears or sagging.

Firmly tucked in sheets and blankets (not above shoulder height) or a baby sleep bag are safe for a baby to sleep in. There is no need to use any additional bedding when using a baby sleep bag. We will use lightweight blankets tucked into the cot mattress for babies over 6 months, babies under 6 months will be provided with their own sleeping bag with the appropriate tog for the weather.

### **Sleep Duration and Quality**

- Sleep and rest are essential for children's development, behaviour regulation, learning, and health (including enabling REM and deep sleep phases).
- To ensure a nap is meaningful, we aim for sleep sessions of at least **45 minutes**, unless a child naturally wakes earlier or resists sleep. This helps children enter REM/deep sleep, which is important for wellbeing.
- Parents may request limits to their child's sleep, but these requests must be balanced against the child's developmental needs. The nursery reserves the right to act in the child's best interests and may override requests that are not in line with safe or healthy practice.
- If a child resists sleep, staff will not force them to rest; instead, they will be offered quiet activities or reflection time. If a child is particularly tired, staff may allow extended rest after discussion with management and parents.

### **Soothers and Comforters**

Soothers must not have any string, cord or clips attached. They must be stored in separate clean containers labelled with each child's name when not in use. Comforters may be used for settling but are always removed once the baby is asleep. Babies **WILL NOT** be left with comforters in the cot. Children on sleeps mat may be left with comforter under constant supervision.



### **Supervision**

Babies are checked at 10-minute intervals when they are asleep and are checked regularly for their breathing levels. This is done by the staff member watching the stomach rise and fall and placing their ear to the child's mouth. There is a 10-minute timer located on the wall of the nappy changing area which is reset after every check.

### **Toddler and Preschool Room**

The staff members in the toddler room ensure they have good communication between parents/carers as to the child's sleeping patterns, how and when they normally go to sleep. The toddlers will settle for nap time around 12:30-13:30 for about an hour. Toddlers have access to pull out sleep mats which are covered with a clean sheet and blanket. Sleep mats will be checked regularly to ensure they are in good condition with no rips, tears or sagging.

