SLEEP/REST

Purpose

We aim to ensure that all children have enough sleep to support their development and natural sleeping rhythms in a safe environment. The safety of babies sleeping is paramount. Our policy follows the advice provided by The Cot Death Society to minimise the risk of Sudden Infant Death.

Policy

- Babies are placed on their backs to sleep, but when babies can easily turn over from the back to the stomach, they are allowed to adopt whatever position they prefer to sleep
- Babies/toddlers are never put down to sleep with a bottle to self-feed
- Babies/toddlers are monitored visually when sleeping. Checks are recorded every 10 minutes Sleep Check form
- When monitoring, the staff member looks for the rise and fall of the chest and if the sleep position has changed
- As good practice we monitor babies under six months or a new baby sleeping during the first few weeks every five minutes until we are familiar with the child and their sleeping routines, to offer reassurance to them and their families.
- Each child must have his/her own bedding which is washed at least weekly and when necessary
- Cot mattresses must meet safety standards
- Children under two years are not be given pillows, cot bumpers or any soft furnishings in order to prevent the risk of suffocation
- We follow all cot death prevention/safety guidelines and advise parents of this information. Babies are always laid to sleep on their back, with their feet touching the foot of the cot
- Sheets or thin blankets will come no higher than the baby's shoulders, to prevent them from wriggling under the covers. We make sure the covers are securely tucked in so they cannot slip over the baby's head
- Children's individual sleeping bags may be used in consultation with parents. These are washed at least weekly and when necessary
- Cots are checked before use to ensure no items are within reach i.e. hanging over or beside the cot (e.g. fly nets, cables)

We provide a safe sleeping environment by:

- Monitoring the room temperature
- Using clean, light bedding/blankets and ensuring all babies/toddlers are appropriately dressed for sleep to avoid overheating
- Only using safety-approved cots or other suitable sleeping equipment (i.e., pods or mats) that are compliant with British Standard regulations
- Only letting babies sleep in prams if they lie flat and we have parents' written permission

- Not using cot bumpers or cluttering cots with soft toys, although comforters will be given where required
- Keeping all spaces around cots and beds clear from hanging objects i.e. hanging cords, blind cords, drawstring bags
- Transferring any baby who falls asleep while being nursed by a practitioner to a safe sleeping surface to complete their rest
- Cot mattresses to be replaced every 12 months

We ask parents to complete sheets on their child's sleeping routine (part of Child Registration process) with the child's key carer when the child starts at nursery, and these are reviewed and updated at timely intervals. If a baby has an unusual sleeping routine or a position that we do not use in the nursery i.e. babies sleeping on their tummies, we will explain our policy to the parents and ask them to sign to say they have requested we adopt a different position or pattern on the Children's Sleep Requirements form

We recognise parents' knowledge of their child with regard to sleep routines and will, where possible, work together to ensure each child's individual sleep routines and well-being continues to be met. However, staff will not force a child to sleep or keep them awake against his or her will. They will also not usually wake children from their sleep unless a parent has specifically requested it. If this is the case it will be done gently and sensitively.

Staff will discuss any changes in sleep routines at the end of the day and share observations and information about children's behaviour when they do not receive enough sleep.

Associated Documents

- Sleep Check form
- Health & Safety policy
- Children's Sleep Requirements form
- Room Temperature check - part of the Daily Room checklist
- Sleep and Rest Time guidance