

TRUST POLICY

Nursery Handbook – Sleep and Rest Time Policy



Approval		
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2.0				

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1. Introduction

Practitioners must read NHS advice on sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) – NHS. More information on safer sleep guidance is available from The Lullaby Trust.

3.86 pg. 41 EYFS Statutory Framework 2026

2. Policy Statement

All parent or carers will be given an 'All About Me' booklet when their child arrives for their initial first settling visit at the nursery. Part of the introduction to nursery is to gain knowledge of your child's individual routine and their sleep and rest time periods.

Staff will discuss the individual needs and requirements of each child to ensure their rest routine where possible mirrors that of home-life.

Changes of sleep and rest time routines will be regularly updated in the nursery as an when your child's routine changes or when they transfer into a different playroom.

3. Safe Sleeping Guidance

The nursery has a 'Sleep Chart' document for babies and young toddlers. They are monitored every 10/15 minutes during their sleep time. This is signed by the member of staff at each interval. The older children's sleep is documented on their day sheet.

A member of staff is always present when children are sleeping / resting.

Children that have medical conditions, certain emotional needs or sleep training programmes, the nursery will endeavour to enhance staff supervision however the parent should discuss this with the Key Person and Nursery Manager.

Children are given time to digest their foods prior to any rest time. When appropriate children's mouths are checked before going to sleep.

All playrooms are well ventilated, with room's temperatures of 16-20c (recommended guidelines); however, this may be higher during the summer months, where fans or cooling systems will be used to try to regulate temperature. There are thermometers in playrooms to ensure temperatures are monitored and this information will be used to report temperature concerns to UHSussex NHS FT Health and Safety team.

Babies and Under 2s sleep in an area sleep in a separate area.

Babies (under 12 months) must only sleep cots. A baby that falls asleep in bouncer chairs (weight/age appropriate) will be removed and placed down on their back in a cot.

Nursery staff will remove any child or baby that has fallen asleep in a pushchair or car seat and will be placed on their back in a cot (under 12 months) or a sleep mat.

Babies and children are placed to sleep in the cot or mat bed on their back. Babies placed in with their feet towards the bottom of the cot. If a child is able to roll independently from back to front and front to back, they will be allowed to find their own sleep position.

Light bedcovers may be used if appropriate and are firmly tucked in and no higher than the baby's shoulders.

Children's heads must not be covered.

UHSussex Nurseries do not have pillows, cot bumpers or soft toys in their cots. If a personal comforter is used to settle a baby/ child, this is removed once they are asleep.

The nurseries use lightweight cotton sheets or cellular blankets to for sleep / rest time to allow air flow.

Cots are not placed by radiator or window.

The gaps between the bars of the cots are between 2.5cm - 6.5cm (SIDS guidance).

Mattresses are regularly replaced and measured to ensure they are snug with no gaps to the cot frame.

Mattresses are firm and flat and are regularly checked for any signs of damage. Mattresses are regularly turned and aired.

Children are never left unattended when sleeping / resting. Staff are always next to a child when settling a child in a 'drop sided cot'.

After each sleep the bedding is changed, unless the child will be having a second sleep and the bedding is labelled for that child.

Staff will check the sleeping children to ensure they are sleeping in a safe position and not tangled in a sheet/blanket.

The child's breathing will be checked by placing a gentle hand on the child's chest or putting the back of their hand near the child's mouth to feel for breath.

Staff will ensure they are not hot or cold

4. Safe Sleeping Checks: Whilst Sleeping

Staff will check the sleeping children to ensure they are sleeping in a safe position and not tangled in a sheet/blanket.

Staff will ensure that there are no toys, or blankets that would cover a nose or mouth.

The child's breathing will be checked by placing a gentle hand on the child's chest or putting the back of their hand near the child's mouth to feel for breath.

Staff will ensure they are not hot or cold

Sleep bags must be the correct size and appropriate tog rating for the baby's age and room temperature

Children should be dressed in safe, comfortable clothing suitable for sleep, supporting safe temperature regulation.

Hair grips, clips, and jewellery must be removed if they present any risk of harm or entanglement. This includes consideration of ethnic or cultural jewellery, which will be assessed in line with our clothing policy to ensure it does not pose a hazard.

5. Settling Sleepers

The child's sleeping routine is discussed with the parent/carers and recorded within their personal sleep routine i.e. length of sleep, position of sleep.

Comforters, muslins, dummies, soft toy where required should be provided from home and these will be stored with your child's personal belongings

If a child has a dummy and this should fall from their mouth during their sleep the member of staff will not put it back into the mouth unless the child wakes.

A child will be placed on their back on a firm, flat mattress to settle themselves. Safer sleep routine will be discussed with a parent/carer.

Staff will sit next to a child and pat/stroke their stomach or stroke side of face as requested by parent/carer.

Staffs attend annual safeguarding training and appropriate methods, or comfort is regularly reviewed.

Nursery staff will work with parents and carers at supporting a child to settle themselves for sleep time.

Where appropriate soothing music may be played.

The nursery will not allow a child to consume milk / water from a bottle in a cot or mat bed as a soother for settling to sleep.

As part of the transition from baby room to toddler room the child will begin to sleep on a mat bed from 13 months.

6. Rest Time

During the period of 12.30pm-2.30pm the nursery has a 'quiet time'. This allows children to have a rest time or engage in activities which require less physical input after their midday meal.

Staff will provide circle time groups, literacy activities such as story time, story CDs, and puppet/role play time. Small group time games like lotto, memory games.

All the playrooms have a 'cosy corner' area for children to have periods or rest when they require.

Most children by the age of the preschool room (3-5yrs) tend not to have an afternoon sleep, however if your child requires a sleep then staff will arrange for the child to either sleep in their own playroom or join the 'sleepers' in the toddler room.

Nursery staff will discuss with the parent/carer the child's sleep / rest routine and how these falls within the nursery day. There may need some adaption to sleep times to ensure suitable staffing can accommodate individual needs and that there are safe areas to sleep

Nursery staff strive to provide as many learning opportunities as possible, therefore staff will discuss with the parent/carer the balance between rest and play time whilst attending the nursery.

7. Links to other Trust policies

UHSN014 Nursery Handbook - Toileting and Intimate Care Policy
UHSN003 Nursery Handbook - Health and Safety Procedure Policy
UHSN008 Nursery Handbook - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy