



Washwood Heath  
Nursery School  
A Birmingham Children's Centre

# Sleep and Rest policy

## **Aim**

To ensure all children have enough sleep for them to develop and to promote best practice for all children in a safe environment.

## **Staff**

Our staff are fully aware of the fact that children need to rest and sleep. Staff appreciate that children have individual needs and routines which vary as they grow and develop.

Children are encouraged to indicate and say when they are tired and need to rest and are also encouraged to take a rest or nap during certain times of the day.

## **Methods**

Washwood Heath Nursery School and Children's Centre adopts a policy of practice recommended by The Cot Death Society to minimise the risk of Sudden Infant Death.

The safety of babies and toddlers sleeping is paramount in the centre and we promote good practice and ensure that we work in partnership with the parents.

Babies and toddlers should sleep:

- On their backs
- At the bottom of the cot
- In a well ventilated room
- With NO duvets or bumpers to the sides of the cots
- With sheets or blankets that cannot become tangled
- Without any large soft toys that have the potential to smother a baby
- With a comforter if they normally have one
- With hanging mobiles that are out of reach

## **Procedure**

Routines are discussed with parents when they are settling into the nursery. If a baby has an unusual sleeping routine or position that we would not use in the centre i.e. babies sleeping on their tummies we will explain our policy to the parents and inform them that we will encourage children to adopt a safer sleeping posture and monitor them closely to ensure they are not putting themselves at risk.

Staff should be aware of individual needs of the babies and children at the centre. Sleep routines are a very intimate part of a baby's day. Babies will not be left to cry themselves to sleep or be left for long periods of time to "drop" off to sleep.

When getting a baby ready to sleep, the staff need to ensure a number of things happen:

- That they have a clean nappy

- Outer clothes are removed
- That they have been fed or had a drink
- All bibs removed
- That they have a comforter if needed
- That they are not too warm

### **Daytime Rest Policy and Procedure**

Staff should prepare the baby for bedtime by moving to a quieter part of the nursery, having a story or having a cuddle.

Some babies like to be patted to go to sleep. The staff need to pull up a chair to the side of the cot so not to strain their back or to sit on the floor while rubbing their tummy.

If the baby has not gone to sleep after 15 minutes the staff member should consider getting them up and maybe trying them later for another sleep.

The Key worker should discuss this with the parent and establish a time limit for trying to get the baby to sleep which should be communicated to all staff members.

If a baby falls asleep in the arms of a staff member they should be placed in the cot so they can continue to sleep. If they have fallen asleep unexpectedly and it has not been possible to remove their outer clothes or have their nappy changed, the baby's clothes should be loosened. Staff within the area should be made aware that the baby needs their nappy changing when they wake up.

Some parents may ask for their baby to go to sleep in a bouncy chair. When settling the baby into the nursery the key person should explain the difficulties of this to the parent.

The cots should be cleaned and maintained. Screws and bolts should be tightened periodically to ensure that the cot is safe and secure.

Evacuation cots should not be used for sleeping unless all other cots are taken up.

### **Older Children**

Children need sleep and rest periods to help development. Children develop at different rates and we must meet their needs throughout the day at the nursery. As they grow they will usually develop a routine which naturally reduces the length or the frequency of their daytime sleeps.

Children at Washwood Heath Children's Centre have the opportunity to rest or sleep if they need or want to throughout the day. The environment is equipped for the children to rest and sleep i.e. a quiet area to cuddle up with a book, cots for younger babies or sleep mats for older children.

The preferences and wishes of parents are valued and respected and taken into consideration **provided** it is also clearly in the child's best interests. Any issues or concerns will be discussed with parents. In our setting staff will not force a child to sleep or keep a child awake against his or her will. Our staff will also not usually wake children from their sleep.

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.

Parents need to make staff aware of any medicines or circumstances that may affect/disrupt a child's sleep pattern.

### How much sleep?

Everyone is an individual and therefore the following table should simply be used as a guide to how much sleep is needed:

Age	Average daytime nap	Average night-time sleep
3 months	5 hours	10 hours
12 months	2.5 hours	11.5 hours
3 years	1 hour	11 hours
6 years	None	10.5 hours
9 years	None	10 hours

### Sleep monitoring

All sleeping children must be checked at 10 minute intervals. Staff who are working in the rooms are all responsible for checking the children.

Checking a child while sleeping should involve:

- Placing a hand on their chest to check they are breathing or putting the back of their hand near to the child's mouth to feel for breath
- Ensuring that each child is well
- Ensuring that each child is not too hot or too cold
- Ensuring that all sheets or blankets are not wrapped around the child

The sleep monitoring chart is used to record the checks and is signed by the member of staff carrying out the check. A record of each child's daily sleep pattern is recorded too.