Sleep and Rest Policy

Statement of Intent

We recognise that sleep and rest are essential for children's health, wellbeing, growth and development. We are committed to providing a safe, comfortable and nurturing environment where children can rest or sleep according to their individual needs.

We work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure sleep arrangements are tailored to each child whilst following current safer sleep guidance and best practice.

The safety and welfare of children are paramount at all times.

Individual Sleep Needs

Every child is unique and has their own sleep routine, preferences and requirements.

When a child joins the setting, parents/carers will be asked to provide information about:

- Their child's usual sleep routine.
- Preferred sleep times.
- Comforters or sleep associations.
- Any medical conditions affecting sleep.
- Any advice received from health professionals.

Sleep routines are reviewed regularly with parents and updated as children's needs change.

Safer Sleep Practice

To reduce the risk of sleep-related accidents and promote safer sleep:

- Children are provided with a safe and suitable sleep space appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Sleep mats are regularly checked, maintained and compliant with British Safety Standards with immediate action taken to remove and replace any sleep mats that are unsafe to use.
- All sleep mats are waterproof and are wiped down after every use.
- A fitted sleep sheet is provided for a sleep mat.
- A child is provided with their own fitted sheet and the sheet stored in their own named box.
- Sheets are washed weekly or more if required.
- Children are never left unsupervised whilst sleeping.
- Sleeping children remain within sight or hearing of staff at all times.
- Sleep areas are kept clean, safe, calm and free from hazards.
- Comforters may be used where appropriate and agreed with parents.
- Children's heads must not be covered.

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Preparing Children for Sleep

Before a child is settled to sleep, staff will ensure:

- The child is comfortable and settled.
- Nappies have been checked and changed, where necessary.
- Appropriate clothing is worn for the room temperature.
- The child has access to their comforter if required.
- The sleep environment is calm, safe and comfortable.
- Individual routines and preferences are respected.

Children may be supported to sleep through gentle reassurance, cuddles, quiet stories or other agreed methods that meet their individual needs.

Sleep Environment

The sleep environment will:

- Be clean, safe and well maintained.
- Be adequately ventilated.
- Be maintained at a comfortable temperature.
- Be monitored closely during periods of hot weather.
- Provide a calm atmosphere that supports rest and relaxation.
- Be arranged to allow effective supervision of sleeping children.

During periods of hot weather or heatwave conditions, additional measures may be implemented to reduce the risk of overheating.

Sleep Monitoring

Children who are sleeping will be monitored regularly in accordance with the setting's safer sleep procedures. Children will be checked every 10 minutes.

Staff will:

- Observe children's breathing.
- Monitor colour and overall wellbeing.
- Check children are comfortable and not overheating.
- Ensure bedding remains safe and secure.
- Record sleep checks and sleep times.
- Take immediate action if any concerns arise.

Any concerns regarding a child's sleep, breathing, health or wellbeing will be reported immediately to the Manager, Leadership and parents informed where appropriate.

Sleep Records

A sleep record will be maintained for children who sleep at the setting.

Records may include:

- Time settled to sleep.
- Sleep checks completed.
- Time woken.

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- Duration of sleep.
- Any observations or concerns.

Sleep information will be shared with parents and carers as appropriate.

Staff Knowledge and Training

All staff receive information, training and guidance relating to safer sleep practices.

Staff understand:

- Current safer sleep guidance.
- Safe sleep positioning.
- The importance of preventing overheating.
- Appropriate supervision requirements.
- Individual sleep needs and care plans.
- How to respond to concerns regarding a child's wellbeing.

Managers and Leadership regularly monitor practice to ensure procedures are consistently followed.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are informed of the setting's safer sleep procedures upon registration.

We believe effective communication between families and practitioners is essential to ensuring children's sleep needs are met safely and consistently.

Parents are encouraged to discuss:

- Changes to routines.
- Sleep concerns.
- Medical needs.
- Developmental changes affecting sleep.

Sleep arrangements will always be discussed and reviewed in partnership with families.

Whilst parental wishes are taken into consideration, the setting will always act in the best interests of the child's health, wellbeing and developmental needs.

Rest Opportunities for Older Children

Not all children will sleep during the day; however, all children will have opportunities to rest and relax.

Quiet activities may include:

- Reading books.
- Listening to stories or calming music.
- Looking at books independently.
- Relaxing in a quiet area.

Children will never be forced to sleep or prevented from resting when they are tired.

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Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, following any significant incident, or whenever safer sleep guidance is updated.

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