

# Sleep & Rest

## **Sleep and Rest Policy**

At First Steps we recognise that children will have different sleep and rest routines and needs, we are committed to supporting this with flexible opportunities for children to sleep and rest as required. This policy informs both staff and parents of our approach to sleep and rest at nursery, which ensures children's welfare.

### **This policy will cover;**

- Importance of sleep and rest
- Sleep spaces and settling children
- Sleep records

### **Importance of sleep and rest**

It is important for children's health, growth, well-being, development and overall welfare that they get the sleep that they need. As children grow they will usually develop a routine which reduces the length or the frequency of their daytime sleeps, though this is very individual to each child. In everything that we do children's welfare is paramount and of highest importance to us. Therefore, whilst parents'/carers' wishes will be respected and taken in to consideration with regard to their children's sleep requirements and routines, this will be contingent on those requirements not compromising the child's welfare. Therefore First Steps staff cannot and will not force a child to sleep, wake or keep a child awake against his or her will. We will work with parents/carers to support children's routines, such as encouraging a sleep by a certain time to promote earlier waking, but we will not impose strict limits on time children can sleep.

### **Sleep spaces and settling children**

Each of our rooms has a designated quiet area for children to rest and sleep as needed. To promote a good sleep for children create a quiet area and play relaxing music. We ensure that rooms are well ventilated, children are dressed appropriately, that mattresses are well spaced and children are placed "head to toe".

Babies under 1 year of age will be placed to sleep on their back with their feet to the end of the cot. A light blanket will be used, which will be tucked in no higher than their shoulders, and cots will be free of any other items except any essential comforts. Older children will be left to choose their preferred sleeping position, staff will ensure their blankets and comforters are appropriately placed. Staff will liaise with the parents/carers around whether children sleep in a cot or on a mattress, and will discuss transitioning to a mattress when appropriate. Pushchairs are available for use for those children who would sleep in a pushchair at home, staff will work with parents/carers to begin to transition a child to a cot/mattress when appropriate.

Clean sheets and blankets are provided for each individual child. Mattresses are wiped down before and after use. We welcome comfort items to support children to sleep well, such as comfort blankets, muslins, teddies, dummies, sleeping bags etc. Staff will settle children to sleep, liaising with parents around the child's preferred method, e.g. rubbing/patting their tummy or back, stroking their face etc.

### **Sleep records**

As children sleep in our quiet areas within the room they are always in sight or sound of the team, who are able to monitor them closely. Staff will record the time a child falls asleep and wakes up to be able to share this with parents/carers. Staff will perform sleep checks on sleeping children every 15 minutes, to ensure that children are still in safe sleeping positions and that any bedding/comforters remain appropriately positioned. These will be recorded and stored in line with document retention policies.