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NURSERY SLEEP AND REST POLICY

Adopted MARCH 2026

At Toad Hall Nursery, we believe that it is vital for children to get the sleep they need to develop their cognitive, emotional and physical skills. We recognise that each child's sleep routine will be unique and we will work closely with parents/carers to ensure there is consistency between home and our setting.

Parents/carers will be asked to provide details of their children's routines before their first day, including the usual duration and time(s) of their nap(s), as well as settling techniques used at home. If there are any changes to the child's routines, this should be communicated to the setting straight away. Parents/carers will be notified of their child's sleep times at the end of each session.

We follow NHS guidance on safer sleep and have thorough risk assessments in place regarding sleep and nap time. Our risk assessment includes necessary precautions to help minimise the risks associated with SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome). Our setting is smoke-free, so babies and children will not be exposed to smoke while sleeping.

At Toad Hall Nursery, we give careful thought to the safest location for sleep, considering the bed/travel cot itself, room temperature potential hazards that need to be out of reach and how we monitor each child.

Babies sleep in Tiddlers quiet room, while the older children in the baby unit sleep in Tadpoles quiet area. Children in the nursery unit are also provided with a safe sleeping area.

As per the Early Years Foundations Stage Statutory Framework (EYFS), childcare settings must ensure that babies are kept safe, which includes following NHS guidelines on SIDS. Our Sleep policy and procedures take into account NHS guidance from their publication, 'Reduce the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)'.

Safer sleep guidance applies to all babies under 12 months of age (or until 13 months from their due date for premature babies).

Sleeping babies will have their own clear, flat sleep space without toys, bumpers, cushions, sleep positioners, wedges or loose bedding. Nests, hammocks and beanbags are also discouraged for sleep, as they can create potential choking hazards.

All babies will sleep in age-appropriate travel cots or beds. All mattresses will be flat, firm, waterproof and kept in good condition.

Travel cots and beds are located in a suitable, safe position. Any strangulation hazards, such as blind cords and plastic bags, will also be kept out of reach of children. Children who are known to climb out of cots may be given a sleeping mat instead.

It is recommended that babies are not left sleeping in an inclined or seated position. If a child falls asleep during travel, they will be reclined where possible and moved to a more suitable cot or bed immediately on return to the setting. If babies fall asleep within the setting while seated (e.g. in a bouncy chair, highchair or swing) they will be moved to a flatbed or travel cot straight away.

Babies will be laid down on their backs for naptimes with their feet at the bottom of the cot, in line with NHS guidance. Once a baby is old enough to roll over, they will be allowed to roll onto their side or stomach while sleeping and will not be returned to laying on their backs.

A recommended room temperature of between 16 and 20 degrees is maintained wherever possible, avoiding heat sources, direct sunlight and draughts. Thermometers will be used to monitor temperature.

Age-appropriate, well-fitting sleeping bags or lightweight sheets may be used for babies when necessary. Any sheets will be tucked in securely, no higher than their shoulders. Precautions will be taken to ensure babies and children do not overheat. They will not sleep in outdoor clothing/coats, or be given hot water bottles/electric blankets during naptimes.

Children will not have hats, slings, or muslins covering their heads/faces while asleep. Where necessary their body temperature will be checked using a hand on their chest or upper back.

All children and babies are monitored regularly whilst asleep and are in sight/or hearing at all times. They are also regularly checked on individually in person while asleep every 10 minutes which is recorded on our daily sleep sheet.

After sleep, the mattresses will be wiped down and the bedding changed, and all laundry is carried out on-site.

All staff know to call 999 if a child will not wake up, stops or has difficulty breathing, appears overly confused or has a seizure.

Settling procedures

At Toad Hall Nursery, we recognise that each child's routine is unique and we will work closely with parents/carers to ensure there is consistency between home and the setting, while still maintaining safe practices and meeting our duty of care.

For children who require dummies and/or comforters, these should be provided by parents/ carers and they will be stored with the child's personal belongings. If a dummy falls out of a child's mouth while sleeping, it will not be put back unless the child wakes. Dummies must not have cords if being used by sleeping babies as these can pose a strangulation risk.

All children will either self-settle or be settled by us, following parent's/carers wishes wherever possible. We will also take into account safety requirements at all times, as well as the wellbeing needs of other children in our care.

Drinks are not permitted in children's cots, as these can present a choking hazard.

Following Ofsted's guidelines, Toad Hall Nursery allows children to sleep whenever they wish. The welfare requirements state that the provider must always meet the needs of the child, meaning that if a child is tired, we allow him/her to rest/have a nap. We recognise that getting good quality sleep and rest are crucial components for development.

Rest time

Children who are not sleeping will be encouraged to engage in rest or quiet times. This allows toddlers and older children to recover their energy. The activities during this time could include circle time, story time or small group games.