



Sleep and Rest Policy

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For the purposes of this document Guildford Nursery School will be referred to as GNS. When we say “parent” we mean “parents and carers”.

Safeguarding context statement

This policy forms part of our whole-school safeguarding approach. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility, and all staff have a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. Sleep and rest times are periods when children may be particularly vulnerable, and we ensure appropriate safeguarding measures are in place at all times.

Why is sleep and rest important to a growing child?

Young children need sleep and good daily sleep routines for healthy development. The needs of children will vary enormously depending on their unique development and health needs. Young children need sleep both for relaxation and to restore their energy levels and support their holistic development. Some children will continue to have naps until they are three or four years old while others will no longer need daytime naps. Young children's bedtime and sleep routines at home will vary according to individual family circumstances and preferences. This can be impacted by the routine a child has at school and vice versa.

At GNS we approach rest and sleep routines with the following principles:

- We plan sleep routines and provision in partnership with parents, according to the child's individual needs and their routine at home. We work with families to help children embrace the routine that best matches their needs.
- Sleep provision is offered in the context of children having close relationships with their Key Person in nursery. This relationship means that staff can offer an individual plan for a child according to their developing needs during their time at nursery.
- Sleep provision, including the environment, routine and procedures, needs to be safe and promote good physical and emotional health at all times.
- Sleep provision, including cots, sleep mats, bedding, the environment and aspects such as the light and noise level and temperature, should be comfortable and appropriate for children. We aim to create an environment and a routine that is calm, free of distractions and promotes restful sleep.
- We help children to fall asleep in a respectful way that suits each child and has been agreed with parents. This may include gentle, appropriate physical comfort such as patting or rubbing a child's

back, provided this has been discussed and agreed with parents and the child is comfortable with this contact. Only staff members who have an established, trusted relationship with a child should support them in this way. All physical contact must be appropriate, proportionate and in the child's best interests. Staff should be mindful of children with SEND who may have particular sensitivities or communication needs around physical contact.

- Staff are aware that children are often emotionally vulnerable when they wake up. We gently support children to make the transition from sleeping to waking, dressing (if appropriate) and re-joining learning and play activities.
- Sleep routines will be reviewed termly during parent meetings or on request by the parent or Key Person.

How we offer provision for children to rest and sleep

We begin our conversation with families regarding their child's sleep routines at the home visit. We continually discuss and review our original plan for the child as their needs change during their time at nursery.

Children may sleep at any time of the day, according to their need. We offer sleep spaces with cots and/or sleep mats and bedding. Older children may sleep on a sofa or in a similar comfortable space, as long as they can be adequately supervised.

We support children to take off their outer clothes to sleep (shoes and socks) and to dress again when they wake.

Children who usually sleep in nursery have an individual blanket and sheet assigned to them. Bedding is washed weekly unless it gets at all dirty while in use, in which case it is washed and changed straight away.

According to individual needs, children are allowed to have a comfort object with them when they sleep. Examples of these include a toy, a blanket or a dummy (these will be only used as a sleep aid in nursery). Staff and families will judge what is appropriate for each child. Comfort objects must not compromise children's safety when sleeping (e.g. a very large soft toy with a baby).

Staff will check that the temperature in the sleep areas is appropriate for restful sleep at least once each day.

Areas where children sleep will be kept clean and generally uncluttered, the noise level should be as low as possible and the light level should be lower than the rest of the nursery.

When children are asleep, staff will monitor them at least every 10 minutes and keep a record of doing so. Staff will ensure that there is the correct ratio of staff to children at all times, including when children sleep.

Staff will inform parents of how long their children have slept each day and their general behaviour around sleep. This will be recorded and displayed daily. Any concerns about a child's sleep patterns, behaviour or wellbeing will be discussed sensitively with parents and, where appropriate, with the designated safeguarding lead. Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare.

Any staff member who has any concerns about a child's welfare should follow the processes set out in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.

When monitoring sleeping children, staff will:

- Ensure children are sleeping safely (correct position, appropriate temperature, no hazards)
- Be alert to any signs of distress, injury, or unusual behaviour

- Have professional curiosity and speak to the designated safeguarding lead if they have concerns about a child, recording any concerns immediately
- Monitor them at least every 10 minutes and keep a record of doing so
- Ensure that there is the correct ratio of staff to children at all times
- Maintain a safe environment and be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times
- Never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

Supporting children with additional needs

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. We recognise that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group of children, including assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration.

We will:

- Work closely with parents and, where appropriate, external professionals to understand each child's specific needs around sleep and rest
- Make reasonable adjustments to our sleep provision and routines
- Ensure staff supporting children with SEND have appropriate training and support
- Be particularly alert to changes in sleep patterns or behaviour that might indicate a safeguarding concern.

Any concerns involving children with SEND will require close liaison with the designated safeguarding lead and our SENCO. We consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.

Staff training and awareness

All staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction, which is regularly updated. Staff receive safeguarding updates at least annually to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

Staff involved in sleep and rest provision understand:

- How to recognise signs of abuse or neglect
- What to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality.
- The identity of our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and how to raise concerns.

Information sharing

We work in partnership with parents regarding their child's sleep routines. However, where there are safeguarding concerns, fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

Links to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Intimate Care Policy
- Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- SEND Policy

All staff are made aware of these policies at induction and they are explained as part of our safeguarding systems.