



# Rest and Sleep at Nursery Policy

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone else working on behalf of Mulberry Corner.

At Mulberry Corner we recognise that children can become very tired during the day and that it is necessary to provide all children with the opportunity to rest or sleep during their session. We believe that every child's needs are different and this is why we aim to provide flexibility and opportunities for children to take rests and naps as they need and desire.

## **The purpose of this policy is:**

- To make parents and staff aware of our approach to sleep and rest opportunities at nursery and to ensure that all children get all the sleep they need whilst in our care.

## **Mulberry Corner recognises that:**

- The welfare of the child is paramount;
- It is very important for young children to get all the sleep they need;
- Parents' and carers' wishes should be respected with regard to their children's sleep requirements, provided that the child's welfare is not compromised; and
- Comfort blankets and soft toys bring enormous comfort and reassurance to small children, especially when they are new to nursery and during rest and sleep times.

## **In order to achieve the aim of this policy we adhere to the following:**

### Rest Areas

- Within both the nursery and the preschool there are quiet carpeted rest areas with soft cushions where children can go if they wish to rest and relax at any time of the day.

### Comforters and comfort blankets

- The nursery shall not provide dummies for children nor shall the nursery introduce a child to a dummy if they have not used one before at home. Parents are permitted to bring in a dummy from home for their child to use when at nursery and we recognise a dummy can provide great comfort for a child during rest and sleep times.
- If parents do provide dummies from home for their children to use at nursery, they shall also be asked to provide a hygienic dummy pot in which the dummy can be sealed to store when not in use.
- Dummies are usually restricted to sleep and rest times. They are not encouraged at other times as they can hamper a child's speech, interaction with others and are a major cause of speech delay.

### Staff

- Staff are fully aware of the fact that children need 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 nap or a rest after lunch each day.

### Parent's wishes

- The preferences and wishes of parents are always valued and staff work closely with them to ensure each child's individual needs are carefully met.
- Some parents prefer their children to only have a short sleep, fearing that a longer sleep will infringe on their child's night-time sleep. Any parent's wishes will be taken into account provided that these wishes are in the child's best interests.

### Sleep Records

- Records sheets are completed each day to record how long each child has slept for whilst at nursery.

### Toddlers

- Our toddlers (children aged between 18 months and 3 years) have the benefit of a separate quiet room which is used for peaceful activities and afternoon naps. In addition we also have a Cosy Corner located in our interest room which contains lots of cushions, soft toys and books.
- Our toddlers are encouraged to sleep after lunch, but the facilities are available for them to sleep at other times of the day if needed in either the Quiet Room or the Cosy Corner.
- If a child is brought in to sleep after lunch but does not fall asleep within 20 minutes, they will be asked whether they would like to join those children who are playing in the interest room, rather than remain in the sleep room.
- Some toddlers who are out of nappies need a sleep nappy during sleep time and our staff ensure any such children are changed into their sleep nappy prior to being settled for a nap.
- Familiar staff settle the toddlers (and any preschool children who require a nap after lunch) down for their naps and quiet classical music is played for them. A member of

staff remains either in the sleep room or within earshot at all times when children are sleeping.

- Toddlers who do not need (or whose parents do not wish them to) a nap after lunch enjoy “quiet time” when they have the opportunity to engage in quieter activities such as playing board games, reading or playing with small world toys or puzzles in a smaller group.

#### Preschool

- Our preschool children are able to come through to nursery for a sleep after lunch if this is still needed.
- All preschool children also have the opportunity to sleep, relax or sit quietly at any times of day in the preschool book corner, which contains a large rug, lots of cushions, soft toys, blankets and books.

#### **The importance of rest and sleep**

Mulberry Corner ensures that all children receive the rest and sleep that they need during the nursery day and regard it to be a highly important part of their personal and developmental needs.