SAFER SLEEP POLICY

Sleep and rest time

At St Michael's Pre-School we recognise that sleep and rest times are key times in the day for being close and promoting security and are an important part of a child's unique and individual care. Younger children will need to sleep but older children do not usually need to. No child is made to sleep. Our sleep and rest procedures at St Michael's Pre-School comply with the EYFS and the latest available safety guidance.

Partnership with families

As part of a child's settling in we will ask about their usual sleep and rest preferences and routines. As far as possible we will follow their usual routine, however, children's routines may change once they are in the setting, and we will respond flexibly. Children's sleep and rest preferences are recorded, and parents/carers are informed of any significant changes to a child's sleep routine.

If a child is not ready to sleep, they are never forced to. If we feel a child is ready to sleep or it is their usual sleep time, we will settle a child to sleep and soothe them, if after 15 minutes they are not sleeping they will be encouraged to rest or go and play as appropriate. Under no circumstances is a child ever physically restrained whilst trying to settle them to sleep. We allow children to sleep for a cycle appropriate to their age and stage as this promotes their development and wellbeing needs.

Staff training

All staff at St Michael's Pre-School complete a comprehensive induction which includes safer sleep training. All staff are required to read Lullaby Trust Guidance on Safer Sleep and the NHS advice on sudden infant death syndrome.

Children asleep on arrival at the setting

If a child arrives at the setting asleep, they are sensitively woken whilst the parent/carers are still present. Outdoor clothes are removed, and the child is then settled in a cot or on a flat, clean sleeping mat (age dependent), if they are still sleepy, but otherwise well.

If a child does not show signs of going back to sleep after being woken, they are welcomed and settled into the session at their own pace.

The sleep environment

The manager ensures a risk assessment is completed for the sleep area to ensure that it is safe and meets the requirements set out in the EYFS and British Safety Standards. This is reviewed each time a change to the environment is made and at least annually. A daily check of this environment takes place before any children arrive and periodically throughout the day.

An emergency plan is displayed, showing what action to take if a child stops breathing whilst asleep. There is a room thermometer in the sleep area that is checked when settling a child to sleep and the temperature recorded.

In the event a child is found unresponsive or in distress during a sleep check, staff will follow the preschool's emergency and first aid procedure immediately, including calling emergency services and informing management and the child's guardian.

The sleeping environment must be:

- Be clean and uncluttered.
- There must be no shelves or objects above where the child is sleeping.
- The room temperature should be between 16–20C monitored by a thermometer in the sleep area. This must be recorded on the sleep checklist when children go to sleep
- The room should be well ventilated.
- Children must be placed down on their back in their own separate sleep space on a clear, flat, firm surface such as a cot, bed or suitable mattress on the floor.
- A sleeping child will be given clean bedding, consisting of a fitted bottom sheet and cotton cellular blanket in good clean condition.
- Pillows, cot bumpers and duvets, are not used
- Children will sleep or rest in a designated Cosy Corner, which is a quiet, calm, and comfortable area separate from high-traffic zones.
- The Cosy Corner is supervised and kept free from hazards such as loose bedding, toys, or soft furnishings that may pose a suffocation risk.

Supervision of sleeping children

- A sleeping or resting child is always within sight and hearing of staff.
- A minimum of two staff members, will be responsible for supervising children during sleep and rest periods.
- Staff will conduct visual and physical checks of each sleeping child at 10-minute intervals.
- If a child is unwell or has been identified as requiring closer monitoring, checks will be carried out at 5-minute intervals.
- All checks will be documented using the Sleep Check Log, including time, observations, and staff initials.

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An 'active' sleeping check on a child involves:

- Placing a hand on the child's chest or near their mouth to check they are breathing.
- Visual check: do they look different to usual? Check the colour of their lips and if you gently press their fingernail does blood rush back? For children with dark skin does their palm look yellow?
- Temperature check: ensure the child is not too hot or too cold. This must be done by putting your hand on the skin on their chest or at the back of their neck.
- Check that sheets or blankets are not wrapped around the child or covering their face.

Children aged over 12 months

- Children sleep on rest mats and will be provided with clean bedding.
- Children have a suitable place or bag to store clothes, shoes and a special toy, book or comforter for sleep.
- Nappies are changed and heavier clothing removed.
- Hair accessories that may come lose or detach are removed before sleep/rest time.
- Children are settled by a known familiar member of staff and comforted to sleep. Staff may gently stroke or pat children.
- If children fall asleep in-situ it will be necessary to move or wake them to make sure they are comfortable, they are not left to sleep in a buggy and are transitioned to their sleeping mat. Sleeping children are regularly checked at least every ten minutes and are within sight and/or hearing of staff. Hats and extra clothing are removed as soon as they are indoors or enter a vehicle.

Young children

- Young children sleep on rest mats and have clean bedding.
- Young children each have a place to put their clothes and shoes in, and in which they keep any special toy, book, or comforter that they need for sleep.
- Nappies are changed and heavier clothing is removed.
- Hair accessories with parts that may come lose or detached and pose a choking hazard are removed before sleep/rest time.
- A separate area of the room is made as quiet as possible, perhaps with some soft music playing and curtains drawn.
- Young children are settled by a familiar member of staff. They are soothed to sleep. Staff may stroke or very gently pat children.
- Sleeping children are always supervised within sight and hearing of staff.

Products used

https://www.gompels.co.uk/good-baby-folding-sleep-mat-blue-120cm-x-60cm.html

https://www.gompels.co.uk/good-baby-cellular-blanket-70x90cm-5-pack.html

Further guidance

Safer sleep – help for early years providers

Safer Sleep for Babies (Lullaby Trust) www.lullabytrust.org.uk/safer-sleep-advice

NHS safer sleeping information https://www.nhs.uk/best-start-in-life/baby/baby-basics/newborn-and-baby-sleeping-advice-for-parents/safe-sleep-advice-for-babies/
Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) NHS guidance
https://www.nhs.uk/baby/caring-for-a-newborn/sudden-infant-death-syndrome-sids/
Ofsted staff deployment guidance
Safer Sleep Awareness: A guide for Childminders, Foster Carers, Nannies and Nursery Settings (The Lullaby Trust)