

Tanfield Lea Community Primary School

Sleeping and Rest Policy



Opening Doors, Enriching Lives

Head Teacher: Mark Temple
Chair of Governors: Andrew Gladstone-Heighon

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Purpose

Tanfield Lea Community Primary School recognises that young children aged 2–4 years may require periods of sleep or rest during the school day. Sleep and rest support children's physical health, emotional wellbeing, development and ability to engage positively in learning.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that children who sleep or rest at school are provided with a safe, comfortable, hygienic and appropriately supervised environment.

The school will follow the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for group and school-based providers, including the safer-sleep requirements applicable from 1 September 2026.

Principles

The school will:

- Recognise that individual children have different sleep and rest needs.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers to understand each child's normal sleep routine.
- Never force a child to sleep.
- Provide opportunities for children to rest when they are tired.
- Ensure sleeping and resting arrangements are appropriate for each child's age, development and individual needs.
- Maintain appropriate supervision and safeguarding arrangements at all times.
- Ensure sleeping areas and equipment are clean, safe and suitable.
- Regularly review arrangements through risk assessment.

Individual Sleep and Rest Needs

Before a child starts at the setting, parents/carers will be asked about the child's usual sleeping pattern, including:

- Usual nap times.
- Approximate duration of sleep.
- Preferred settling routine.
- Comforter, where appropriate.
- Any medical or additional needs affecting sleep.
- Any information that may affect the child's safe sleeping arrangements.

Parents/carers should inform the school of any significant changes to the child's sleep routine or relevant medical information.

The school will take account of children's individual needs rather than expecting every child to sleep at the same time.

Sleep and Rest Arrangements

Children aged 2–4 years may be provided with a designated sleep/rest area.

The area will:

- Be quiet and suitably ventilated.
- Be maintained at a comfortable temperature.
- Be free from obvious hazards.
- Have appropriate lighting for safe supervision.
- Have clean, suitable sleep/rest equipment.
- Allow staff to supervise children effectively.
- Be kept clean and hygienic.

Children will have their own designated sleep/rest space where practicable. Bedding and sleep equipment will be cleaned regularly and whenever soiled.

Children over 12 months may use an appropriate comforter if this is part of their normal routine and does not create a safety risk. Soft toys, pillows, loose bedding and other items will not be placed in a child's sleep space where they could present a suffocation, entanglement or other safety risk.

Safe Sleeping

The school will follow the EYFS safer-sleep requirements and current Department for Education guidance.

Children must be placed down to sleep safely. Staff will consider the child's age, individual circumstances and the safety of the sleep environment.

For children aged 2–4 years, staff will continue to provide a safer sleep environment and will take particular care to prevent:

- Suffocation.
- Entanglement.
- Overheating.
- Children becoming trapped.
- Falls from inappropriate furniture.
- Sleeping on sofas, chairs or other unsuitable furniture.

Children should be moved to their designated sleep space if they fall asleep elsewhere, where this can be done safely.

If a child falls asleep in an unsuitable position, staff will transfer the child to an appropriate separate sleep space as soon as reasonably possible.

Position and Clothing

Staff will ensure that children are not excessively covered or dressed in a way that could cause overheating.

Children's heads and faces must remain uncovered while sleeping.

Staff will check children for signs that they are too hot or cold. If a child appears clammy, sweaty or unusually hot, staff will remove an appropriate layer and reassess the child.

Supervision and Checks

Sleeping children must be **frequently checked** to ensure that they remain safe.

Children must remain within sight and hearing of staff while sleeping, unless an alternative arrangement is specifically permitted by current statutory guidance and the school's risk assessment.

Staff checks will consider:

- The child's breathing and general appearance.
- Their sleeping position.
- Whether their face and head are uncovered.

- Whether they are too hot or cold.
- Whether bedding or other items have moved into an unsafe position.
- Whether they are trapped, entangled or otherwise at risk.

Staff will record sleep checks where this is required by the school's procedures or the child's individual plan.

Any concern identified during a sleep check will be dealt with immediately and reported to the appropriate member of staff.

Staffing

A suitable member of staff will remain responsible for supervising children during sleep/rest periods.

Staff must not leave sleeping children unsupervised.

Staff responsible for sleep supervision must understand:

- This policy.
- The EYFS safer-sleep requirements.
- The individual sleep needs of the children in their care.
- Relevant safeguarding procedures.
- Emergency procedures.

Staff must never use sleep time as an opportunity to carry out unrelated duties that prevent effective supervision.

Safeguarding

Sleeping children remain subject to the school's full safeguarding procedures.

Staff will ensure that:

- Children are appropriately supervised.
- Unauthorised adults cannot access the sleep/rest area.
- Staff maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Children are treated with dignity and respect.
- Any concern about a child's welfare is reported in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy.

Any unexplained injury, unusual behaviour or safeguarding concern identified while a child is sleeping or resting must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in accordance with school procedures.

Personal Care

Children who are asleep will not routinely be woken for toileting unless there is an identified health, welfare or individual-care reason to do so.

If a sleeping child requires a nappy change, toileting assistance or other intimate care, staff will follow the school's Intimate Care Policy.

Children will be treated respectfully and their privacy will be maintained while ensuring appropriate safeguarding.

Medical and Additional Needs

Where a child has a medical condition, disability, additional need or individual sleep requirement that affects sleeping arrangements, the school will work with parents/carers and relevant professionals to develop an appropriate individual plan where necessary.

Any specialist equipment or sleep arrangement must be risk assessed and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and professional advice.

Staff will be informed of any relevant requirements before the child uses the sleep/rest area.

Emergency Procedures

If staff are concerned that a sleeping child is not breathing normally, is unresponsive, appears seriously unwell or cannot be safely roused, they will immediately follow the school's emergency and first-aid procedures.

Emergency services will be contacted where necessary.

Parents/carers will be informed as soon as appropriate following an incident, in accordance with the school's policies.

All significant incidents will be recorded and reviewed.

Hygiene

Sleep/rest equipment will be kept clean and in good condition.

The school will:

- Clean bedding and sleep equipment regularly.
- Clean items immediately following contamination.
- Avoid sharing bedding without appropriate cleaning.
- Inspect sleep equipment regularly.
- Remove damaged or unsuitable equipment.
- Maintain appropriate hand hygiene before and after assisting children.