Children will be given the opportunity to rest/sleep if required. We will ensure all children have enough sleep for them to develop and to promote best practice for all children in a safe environment. Children under the age of 3 will be kept awake only if requested by the parent/carer. From the age of 18 months the children in the Sun Room will rest/sleep on a sleep mat to prepare them for the transition to the Moon Room. Children younger than this will sleep in a pop up cot, unless requested by a parent. (Babies/toddlers will only be allowed to sleep in a pushchair if they have fallen to sleep whilst out on a walk)

The safety of sleeping children is paramount. Our policy follows the advice provided by The Cot Death Society and Lullaby Trust to minimise the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

**The sleep room is to be prepared before lunchtime.**

* When setting up, ensure pop up cots and mattresses have adequate space around them to ensure easy access and manoeuvrability in the event of an emergency.
* When preparing the sleep mats each child will have their own individual sheet and blanket, which will be kept in their labelled bag. Ensure pop up cots and mattresses are clearly labelled with child’s name and sleep chart, which holds key information regarding sleep pattern, comforters and needs. Sheets and blankets will be washed weekly and bed mats will be wiped down weekly using a sanitizer spray and disposable towel.
* If parents have requested that children have comforters for sleeping, ensure that these are on the pop up cot or mattresses. Information for this can be found on the child’s sleep chart.
* Once set up all sleep charts are placed at the bottom of the cots and mattresses and draw-string bags are placed out of reach of the children.
* Check the temperature of the room is adequate, using aids such as a radiator or fan to adjust accordingly.
* Check windows are open for ventilation.
* Turn lights off, close curtains. Use adequate light to monitor a child’s colour and respiratory movement. Sleep music will be put on, this helps fade out the noise from the nursery and creates a relaxing atmosphere.

**Preparing children for rest time.**

* Ensure that children have finished eating at least 10 minutes prior to sleep (where possible).
* Children need to go to the toilet or have nappies/pull-ups put on as required. Records containing this information can be found in the sleep record folder and sleep charts for the Moon group.
* Any outer clothing will be removed such as jumpers, shoes, and bibs. Any tight clothing or fasteners loosened/undone.
* Children will be placed or encouraged to lie on the backs with their feet at the foot of the cot minimising the chances that they will slip down under the covers. (Staff will liaise with parents/carers to confirm babies preferred sleeping position). Covers should be lightweight and should never go higher than a baby's shoulders and they should be tucked under the sides of the mattress to keep them from shifting and tangling.
* Children on bed mats who lie side by side must be encouraged to lie head to foot
* Staff will tend to each child’s needs in preparation for a comfortable rest/sleep using methods such as rocking, stroking or singing.
* Babies/toddlers are never put down to sleep with a bottle to self-feed
* Transferring any baby who falls asleep while being nursed by a practitioner to a safe sleeping surface to complete their rest
* Children will be supervised at all times during the rest/sleep period.
* When there are more than three children asleep in the sun room a staff member must stay in the sleep room at all times. When there are more than 5 children asleep in the moon room a staff member must stay in the sleep room at all times. When there are less then three children asleep then the top half of the Sun group’s sleep room door must stay open and intercom must be on. In the moon group when there is less than 5 children asleep the door must be propped open.
* Monitoring will be carried out every 10 minutes and the evidence recorded. These records will be kept for a period of 6 months. How long each child sleeps for and the times of the sleep will be recorded on our online portal.
* On waking, comforters, sheets and blankets will be returned to the child’s sleep bag or going home bag where appropriate.
* Children will be dressed and buttons fastened etc.
* Ensure that children go to the toilet or have nappies/pull-ups removed as required.
* Ensure that the time each child went to sleep and woke up is transferred on to footsteps for all children.
* Sleep mats will be wiped down weekly using a sanitizer spray and disposable towel weekly.
* The sleep room will be adapted to suit the needs of active children resuming the daily routine (lights on, curtains open).

Sleeping twins

We follow the advice from The Lullaby Trust regarding sleeping twins.

Further information can be found at: <http://www.lullabytrust.org.uk>

We ask parents to complete forms on their child’s sleeping routine with the child’s key person when the child starts at nursery and these are reviewed and updated at timely intervals. If a baby has an unusual sleeping routine or a position that we do not use in the nursery i.e. babies sleeping on their tummies or in a sling, we will explain our policy to the parents and not usually offer this unless the baby’s doctor has advised the parent of a medical reason to do so. In such cases, we would ask parents to sign to say they have requested we adopt a different position or pattern on the sleeping babies form.

We recognise parent knowledge of their child with regard to sleep routines and will, where possible, work together to ensure each child’s individual sleep routines and well-being continues to be met. However, staff will not force a child to sleep or keep them awake against his or her will. They will also not usually wake children from their sleep.

Individual sleep routines are followed rather than one set sleep time for all children. We create an environment that helps to settle children that require a sleep, for example dimming the lights or using soft music, where applicable. We will maintain the needs of the children that do not require a sleep and ensure they can continue to play, learn and develop. This may involve taking children outdoors or linking with other rooms or groups of children.

Staff will discuss with parents any changes in sleep routines at the end of the day and share observations and information about children’s behaviour if they do not receive enough sleep.

**Use of dummies and comforters**

We recognise that a dummy or other comforter toy can be a source of comfort for a child who is settling and/or upset, and that it may often form part of a child’s sleep routine.

We also recognise that overuse of dummies particularly may affect a child’s language development as it may restrict the mouth movements needed for speech. As babies get older they need to learn to move their mouths in different ways, to smile, to blow bubbles, to make sounds, to chew food and eventually to talk. As babies move their mouths and experiment with babbling sounds they are learning to make the quick mouth movements needed for speech. The more practice they get the better their awareness of their mouths and the better their speech will be.

Our nursery will:

* Discuss the use of dummies with parents as part of babies’ individual care plans
* Only allow dummies or comforters for comfort if a child is really upset (for example, if they are new to the setting or going through a transition) and/or as part of their sleep routine
* Store dummies in individual hygienic dummy boxes labelled with the child’s name to prevent cross-contamination with other children
* Immediately clean or sterilise any dummy or bottle that falls on the floor or is picked up by another child.
* Dummies and comforters will be removed and/or disposed of if they become damaged and/or when they are required to be disposed of.

When discouraging the dummy staff will:

* Make each child aware of a designated place where the dummy/comforter is stored
* Comfort the child and, if age/stage appropriate, explain in a sensitive and appropriate manner why they do not need their dummy/ comforter
* Distract the child with other activities and ensure they are settled before leaving them to play
* Explain to the child they can have their dummy/ comforter when they go home or at sleep time.

We will also offer support and advice to parents to discourage dummy use during waking hours at home and suggest ways which the child can be weaned off their dummy through books and stories (when appropriate).