

9.9 Unplanned Sleep and Rest Policy

Unplanned Sleep and Rest policy was adopted by **Poplar Pre-School** on **1st August 2026**.

Unplanned Sleep and Rest Policy (Over 2s)

1. Statement of Intent

Our preschool operates as an "awake" setting, and we do not offer scheduled nap times. However, we recognise that children over the age of two may occasionally fall asleep due to illness, growth spurts, or unusual fatigue.

Our primary goal is to ensure that any child who falls asleep is placed in a legally compliant, safe sleep environment immediately, while fully protecting our staff from injury under the Manual Handling Operations Regulations.

2. Core Principles

- **No Lifting Policy:** To protect practitioner health and safety, staff must **never** lift, carry, or transport a sleeping child over the age of two.
- **Immediate Safety:** Safe sleep guidelines apply the exact second a child falls asleep. Children must never be left sleeping on sofas, cushions, beanbags, or chairs, as these present immediate positioning and airway risks.
- **Parental Partnership:** Because we are an awake setting, an unexpected sleep usually indicates a child is unwell or overly fatigued. We will always contact parents to discuss collection when a child drops off.

3. Procedure for an Unplanned Sleep

If a child over the age of two unexpectedly falls asleep, staff must follow these steps in this exact order:

1. **Prepare the Safe Sleep Space First:** Before disturbing the child, a staff member will retrieve an approved, low-profile foam sleep mat and place it in our designated safe quiet area.
 - The mat must be firm, flat, and clean.
 - The mat must be placed at least **30 cm away from walls** or heavy furniture to prevent trapping.
 - The area must be clear of drafts, radiators, and dangling blind cords.
2. **The Wakeful Transition:** A practitioner will sit next to the child, gently say their name, and lightly rub their back to rouse them.
3. **The Guided Walk:** Once the child is awake enough to stand, the practitioner will verbally guide and physically escort them to walk the short distance to the prepared sleep mat.
4. **Settle the Child:** The child will be encouraged to lie down on the mat. If blankets are required, they will be lightweight and tucked in no higher than the child's shoulders. Soft comforters are permitted.
5. **Contact the Parent:** The moment the child is safely settled on the mat, a manager or designated practitioner will call the parent to inform them and arrange collection.

4. Supervision and Monitoring

While the child rests on the mat waiting for their parent:

- They will remain in the main playroom under **constant sight and hearing** of the staff.

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- A practitioner will perform regular physical and visual checks (breathing, skin colour and temperature) every **10 minutes**.
- A staff member will immediately start the **Unplanned Sleep Log** to document the event.