

Often appears sleepy or tired

Good-quality sleep is essential for children's health, wellbeing, learning, and development. Consistent bedtime routines help children feel secure and prepare their bodies and minds for sleep. Children who have enough sleep are better able to concentrate, regulate their emotions, engage in play, and participate in learning. A lack of sleep can affect a child's behaviour, mood, wellbeing, and ability to learn and interact with others.

Practitioners can support by:

- Working in partnership with parents to promote consistent sleep routines, including regular bedtimes and wake-up times, and discuss the importance of adequate sleep for young children.
- Exploring with parents any factors that may be affecting the child's sleep, including health conditions, medication, neurodivergence, sensory processing differences, or significant life events.
- Supporting parents to establish calming bedtime routines through strategies such as visual timetables, stories, quiet play, and reducing screen time before bed.
- Signposting families to their Health Visitor or other relevant professionals where additional support is required.
- Monitoring patterns in their tiredness, wellbeing, and energy levels to help inform support strategies.
- Providing a calm, nurturing environment with predictable routines and opportunities for rest, regulation, and quiet activities when needed.
- Following safeguarding procedures where there are concerns that a child's sleep or wider needs are not being consistently met.

Activities, ideas, resources and strategies:

- Provide sensory baskets containing calming resources, such as fidget toys, soft fabrics, sensory bottles, or weighted items
- Offer yoga, stretching, and movement activities to support relaxation and emotional regulation
- Share mindfulness exercises, relaxation activities, and calming stories
- Create a cosy, quiet area with cushions, soft lighting, and books where children can relax when needed
- Plan outdoor walks and nature-based activities to support wellbeing and reduce stress
- Use calming music, listening games, or relaxation sounds during quieter parts of the day
- Use visual timetables and predictable routines to help children understand what will happen next and feel secure
- Offer quiet activities, such as puzzles, drawing, or book sharing, during times when children appear tired
- Use nurturing interactions and reassurance to help children feel safe, calm, and ready to engage