

*'Believing and Achieving'*

Sleeping for success – a guide to help parents and carers establish healthy and happy sleep routines.

A good night's sleep is essential for healthy growth and development in children. It also supports a child's progress in school. Children who get enough sleep remember what they learn, can pay attention and concentrate and solve problems and think of new ideas.

Research also shows that they don't struggle so much with moodiness and behavioural problems. Developing good sleeping habits can be tricky but it's important that parents and carers start early.

The number of hours sleep a child needs can vary but the following table shows the average recommended amount.

Age	Hours of sleep	Suggested bedtime
1-3	12-14	6.00 pm
4-5	11-13	7.00 pm
6-12	10-11	8.00 pm

Source: [www.sleepforkids.org](http://www.sleepforkids.org)



Establishing a happy bedtime routine can be a challenge. We hope these tips will help.

- ❖ Begin the routine at the same time everyday
- ❖ Be loving but firm. Your rules apply!
- ❖ Try to have a gentle wind down before bed. A warm bath and a story are perfect.
- ❖ No screens an hour before bedtime! The light emitted from computers, phones and the television before bedtime can make it harder for children to switch off and go to sleep. If possible, avoid having any of these in a child's bedroom.
- ❖ Save your child's favourite activity until last. It might be a favourite picture book or some nursery rhymes. Make sure this happens in the bedroom.
- ❖ Make sure the lighting and temperature of the bedroom are always the same. Children generally sleep better in a cool room.
- ❖ Don't give up! It sometimes takes a while to break habits and establish a really good routine but the results will be well worth the effort.

Children, particularly babies and toddlers, often prefer to fall asleep with an adult. As they grow a little older, this can become a problem as they may need an adult to comfort them during normal night time awakenings. Ideally, children should be able to go back to sleep alone. Following a good routine will help your child have positive associations with bedtime and help them fall asleep alone.



Typical bedtime routine... (30-40 minutes)

- ❖ Have a light snack
- ❖ Have a bath
- ❖ Put on pyjamas
- ❖ Brush teeth
- ❖ Read a story
- ❖ Settle the child with a cuddle and leave
- ❖ Resist the urge to keep checking



## Sleep matters!

Scientific evidence shows that the right amount of night-time sleep is just as important for children's development as healthy eating and regular exercise.





At stressful times, such as when your child starts in Reception and at the start of each new school year, your child will probably get more tired than usual and will need more sleep.

In the summer, because of the light evenings, it may be tempting to keep children up later but try to keep to scheduled bedtimes and if you can, invest in curtains with a blackout lining so the room is dark.



**At Little Hadham Primary School, we want all our children to be able to make the most of every minute of every day. If there is anything that we can do to help or offer any advice regarding bedtime routines, please do not hesitate to contact us.**



E Stockley

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