

Noise Levels and Quiet Time in the Special Care Nursery

This factsheet explains the impact of noise levels on babies, and the need for Quiet Time in the SCN.

Noise Levels

What do high noise levels mean for my baby?

Keeping noise levels low helps prevent your baby experiencing high stress levels. High noise is harmful for your baby as it disturbs your baby's sleep, and sudden loud noises affect heart rate and breathing patterns. In the long term, high noise can impair hearing or affect language development. During the brain and sensory development stages, babies born at full term are exposed to lower frequency noises than premature babies.

How do I know what the noise levels in the SCN are?

The sound ear device shows the noise levels in the SCN. If you can see the orange lights, the noise is starting to get too loud, and if you can see the red lights, it's too loud.

What can I do to reduce the noise levels?

Whisper or use quiet voices, and avoid waking your baby where possible. Help your baby return to sleep or settle if he/she wakes up and seems unsettled or starts crying. Also, remind staff and visitors to keep their noise levels down. As well as this, Quiet Time helps make sure your baby has time in a low noise environment.

Quiet Time

What is Quiet Time?

Quiet Time is a rest period for your baby, when your baby can sleep in a quiet environment with minimal handling and stimulation. We have the lights dimmed and only essential activities and personnel are allowed in the SCN.

Why does the Special Care Nursery have quiet time?

Quiet Time allows your baby to rest so he/she can grow bigger and stronger. It helps your baby get used to sleeping in dim lights and a quiet environment. It also helps ensure your baby gets enough sleep, as premature or sick babies need to sleep for at least 18 hours every day.

When is quiet time?

Quiet Time is every day from 12.30 to 3.00 pm.

Who can be in the Special Care Nursery during quiet time?

Parents and their nominated support person are welcome in the SCN during Quiet Time.

For more information