



Nursery Safe Sleeping Policy

Reviewed by:	Anna Yates/Rachel Beevers
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Version:	1

This policy is based on an original template produced by The National College. Burscough Village Primary School has reviewed, adapted and amended the content to ensure it reflects the school's own context, practice and statutory responsibilities.

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Statement of intent

[Burscough Village Primary School](#) understands the importance of sleep in a child's development and growth. Ensuring that a safe and comfortable sleeping environment is available for each child is one of the nursery's top priorities.

This policy underlines the nursery's approach to ensuring safe sleeping practices are maintained throughout the setting through robust staff training, regular risk assessment and open communication.

These practices have been put in place to promote safe rest and sleep routines, reduce avoidable risks, and support children's health, safety and wellbeing.

The nursery welcomes any questions parents may have about safe sleep – please speak to nursery staff, or contact Mrs Beevers, our EYFS leader or Mrs Yates, Headteacher to raise any queries about safe sleep or concerns regarding the nursery's safe sleep practices.

Although some national safer sleep guidance is aimed primarily at babies, the nursery applies relevant principles to children aged over two where appropriate.

Additionally, parents can find more information on safe sleeping practices via the following websites:

- [NHS - Safer sleep](#)
- [The Lullaby Trust](#)

1. **[Updated]** Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 1989
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education 2026'
- DfE 'Early years foundation stage statutory framework 2026'
- **[New]** NHS 'Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)'

This policy also operates in conjunction with safe sleep guidelines published by The Lullaby Trust.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following nursery policies and documents:

- BVPS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Nursery Equipment Hygiene Policy
- Nursery Safe Sleeping Risk Assessment

2. **[Updated]** Roles and responsibilities

The lead practitioner will be responsible for:

- Establishing and maintaining a safe sleep culture throughout the nursery.
- Ensuring that the importance of safe sleep is fully understood by all nursery practitioners.
- Ensuring that practitioners are well-trained and are clear on the procedures outlined in this policy.
- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that safe sleep procedures are designed in accordance with guidance from the NHS, Lullaby Trust and EYFS statutory framework.
- Fostering a culture in which practitioners feel empowered to raise concerns about unsafe sleep practices.
- Carrying out a risk assessment of sleeping spaces and safe sleeping protocols and ensuring that this is regularly reviewed.
- Conducting regular audits of the nursery's sleep areas to ensure compliance with safety standards.

- Communicating with parents to ensure that each child's individual sleep patterns, routines and needs are met and liaising with nursery practitioners about this.
- Working closely with parents to share good practice and ensure that safe sleeping extends beyond the nursery.
- Ensuring practitioners are trained in paediatric first aid (PFA).

[Updated] All nursery practitioners will be responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with the procedures and practices outlined in this policy.
- Undertaking training relevant to the oversight of safe sleeping in nursery settings.
- Monitoring children during sleep to ensure they are safe and comfortable.
- Familiarising themselves with each child's sleep patterns, routines and needs.
- Ensuring that they are able to act on their training and are prepared to respond to emergencies.
- Being prepared to administer first aid if they are a PFA-certified practitioner.
- Being aware of any children with medical or SEND requirements and how to meet their needs.
- **[New]** Familiarising themselves with the Nursery Safe Sleeping Risk Assessment and following its controls to support safe rest and sleep arrangements.

Parents will be responsible for:

- Communicating with the nursery regarding their child's sleep patterns, routines and needs.
- Ensuring they are contactable whilst their child is at the nursery.
- Familiarising themselves with safe sleep guidelines.
- Ensuring safe sleep practices continue in their child's home.

3. **[Updated]** Ensuring a safe sleep space

When considering the creation of a safe sleeping space in the nursery, practitioners will maintain an awareness of both the physical and emotional aspects that ensure a safe and comfortable sleeping environment for children.

Practitioners will have a good understanding of each individual child's sleeping routines and needs.

Practitioners will ensure that sleeping spaces are clear of items such as loose bedding, toys and pillows to minimise the risk of choking or smothering.

Nursery practitioners will ensure that the sleeping environment is free from noise as far as is reasonably practicable.

The sleeping environment will be spacious, well-ventilated and arranged to allow for clear supervision.

[New] Checks will be carried out to ensure that all mattresses used for sleep are suitable, clean, firm, flat, waterproof, well maintained and appropriate for children aged over two.

[New] The nursery will ensure that:

- Mattresses meet BS 7177:2008+A1:2011.
- Mattresses are checked before each use to ensure they are clean, dry, firm, flat and free from damage.
- Each child will have their own separate sleep space on an individual suitable mattress.

[New] To ensure that the sleeping space is safe and comfortable, practitioners will check that:

- Children are placed down to sleep on their own separate sleep space on a clear, flat, firm and suitable mattress on the floor.
- Sleep spaces only contain a firm, flat, waterproof mattress and lightweight bedding which is firmly tucked around the child no higher than their shoulders to prevent head covering.
- Where blankets are used, they will be lightweight, appropriate for the child and positioned so that the child's head remains uncovered.
- Sleep spaces do not contain extra items such as toys, pillows, loose bedding, bumpers, wedges or straps.
- The room temperature remains between 16 and 20 degrees Celsius.
- Children's heads are not covered.

[New] Practitioners will check whether a child is too hot or too cold by feeling their chest or the back of their neck. If a child's skin feels clammy or sweaty, one or more layers of clothing or bedding will be removed. Practitioners will use their professional judgement during periods of extreme temperatures. Children will never sleep with a hot water bottle or electric blanket, next to a radiator, heater or fire, or in direct sunlight.

[New] The nursery does not provide care for children under the age of two. Cots, cribs, travel cots and baby sleep bags are not used as part of the nursery's sleep arrangements.

4. **[Updated]** Sleeping positions

Children will be settled in a safe position on a clear, flat and firm mattress. Practitioners will ensure children have a clear airway and are not sleeping in a position that may restrict breathing.

If a child falls asleep in a sitting position or in a position that may restrict their breathing, a practitioner will gently move them, where safe and practical, to a clear, flat and firm mattress and ensure that their airway remains clear.

Practitioners will recognise that children aged over two may naturally change position during sleep. Staff will not routinely reposition children who are sleeping safely, but will take prompt action if a child's position appears to restrict breathing, compromise their airway or cause concern.

Practitioners will monitor children's comfort, breathing and position during sleep checks and will liaise with parents where any repeated concern about a child's sleep position or pattern is identified.

5. **[Updated]** Medical needs

Practitioners will be familiar with children's individual health care plans and the associated hazards applicable to each child's medical condition.

Practitioners will be able to use their training in responding to signs of distress or breathing difficulties that may arise during a child's sleep.

Practitioners will be aware of any children taking medication and how this may impact their sleep patterns or create additional risks.

Only practitioners with the appropriate training will administer medication and they will have a strong understanding of the procedures for dealing with the associated medical emergencies.

[New] Where a child has a medical history, health condition or individual need that may affect their sleep or rest, practitioners will liaise with parents and, where necessary, follow medical advice or an individual healthcare plan.

6. SEND considerations

Practitioners will be aware of the additional sleep support that may be required for children with SEND.

The nursery will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that a safe and comfortable sleeping environment is available for children with SEND, this may include:

- Using specialist equipment or bedding for children with mobility issues.
- Providing additional supervision for children with breathing difficulties or sensory issues that may affect their sleep.

- Implementing sleep routines that cater to the individual needs of children with SEND.

Practitioners will receive training on the use of any specialist equipment required for use by children with mobility issues.

7. **[Updated]** Communication

The nursery will work with parents in order to raise awareness of the importance of safe sleeping practices for small children and to promote safe sleep practices that extend beyond the nursery.

[New] A copy of this policy and the Nursery Safe Sleeping Risk Assessment will be shared with parents in an accessible format.

The nursery will involve parents in discussions about their child's sleep environment and ensure that the specific needs of their child are met and understood. The EYFS leader and lead practitioners will gain a comprehensive understanding of each child's specific sleeping routines, needs and requirements and will assess the specific risks associated with any of these arrangements.

When interacting with parents about safe sleep, practitioners will focus on:

- Ensuring that they have a strong understanding of each child's sleep experiences and any changes in this area.
- Acting on any communication received from parents about their child's sleep needs or issues in sleeping patterns.
- Providing support and guidance about safe sleep practices where any questions have been raised.

All practitioners will ensure that there are ongoing discussions to help ensure that all children's sleep needs and any specific requirements are consistently met.

Staff with enhanced seniority or experience will be expected to provide guidance and support to newer colleagues, ensuring that they are well-aligned with the nursery's approach to safe sleeping by offering advice on aspects such as sleep checks and handling the specific needs of each child.

The nursery will encourage open communication regarding safe sleeping practices; any staff member or parent should feel confident in asking questions or raising concerns about the nursery's practices.

Colleagues will support each other and provide feedback and guidance on safe sleep practices whilst promoting a supportive culture in which all practitioners feel confident in their responsibilities.

8. **[Updated]** Supervision

Children will remain within the sight and hearing of practitioners during sleep periods, with staff positioned so they can carry out frequent checks and respond promptly to any need, concern or emergency.

[New] The nursery will ensure that the correct adult-to-child ratios are maintained during rest and nap times to ensure adequate supervision.

Supervision will not involve children being continuously watched whilst they are sleeping; however, practitioners will remain in close proximity at all times to check up on each child and respond to any basic needs or emergencies.

Practitioners will regularly check each child's breathing and ensure that they are comfortable.

When a child awakes from their sleep, a practitioner will swiftly come to attend to them and remove them from the sleeping area.

Children may become tired or fall asleep at different points during the nursery day, particularly as they attend for a full day. If a child falls asleep outside the planned rest or sleep period, practitioners will check that the child is breathing normally and has a clear airway. Where safe and practical, the child will be moved calmly to their own designated sleep space on a suitable mattress, where regular sleep checks and supervision procedures will continue. Parents will be informed of any significant or unusual changes to their child's sleep pattern.

9. **[Updated]** Emergencies

In the event that an emergency event unfolds whilst a child is sleeping, practitioners will utilise their training to take prompt action.

[New] The EYFS and lead practitioners will take into account the number of children, staff, and the layout of the premises to ensure that a PFA-certified practitioner is able to respond to emergencies quickly.

All practitioners will be able to recognise a situation in which emergency procedures need to be followed and will be trained to recognise signs of distress or breathing difficulties. In the event of an emergency occurring during children's sleep, practitioners will take a rapid response and follow the nursery's emergency procedures.

The nursery will ensure that clear emergency evacuation procedures are in place for children who are resting or asleep, and that every member of staff understands how to support children to leave the building quickly and safely.

In the event of a fire or emergency evacuation, staff will evacuate children immediately from the nursery building to the nearest designated safe evacuation point. Where the main school assembly point is further away, staff will first move children to the nursery's agreed initial safe evacuation

point, away from immediate danger, before proceeding to the main assembly point when it is safe to do so.

At least one PFA-certified practitioner will be present at all times to deal with emergency situations when they unfold. All school staff working in the nursery have a current PFA certificate.

Only PFA-certified practitioners will be permitted to provide first aid, including sleep-related first aid such as responding to breathing difficulties and seizures.

The emergency services will be contacted as part of the nursery's emergency response.

Where emergency services are required, nursery staff will call 999 immediately and must not delay the call in order to contact the main school first.

Once 999 has been called, the nursery will inform the main school office or a senior leader as soon as it is safe to do so, so that gates can be opened for emergency services and senior leaders can provide support at the incident.

Where an incident affects one child or a specific area, staff must calmly move the other children away from the immediate area of concern, while maintaining appropriate supervision, ratios and a clear route for emergency services.

The nearest practitioner will dial 999 if a child:

- Stops breathing.
- Will not wake up.
- Is struggling for breath.
- Is stiff, shaking, or jerking.
- Displays sudden symptoms of pale, blue or grey colours on their lips, tongue, face or skin. Such symptoms may be easier to see on the palms of the hands or soles of the feet on black or brown children.
- Becomes limp, floppy or not responding as normal.

10. **[New]** Off-site visits, travel and sleep

Any separate trips, visits or off-site activities involving nursery children will be covered by a separate visit-specific risk assessment. This will consider the individual needs of the children attending and, where relevant, will include arrangements for travel, supervision, rest, sleep and safe transfer back to the nursery's usual sleep procedures.

Children who fall asleep while travelling will be transferred to their own separate sleep space on a clear, flat and firm mattress as soon as practicable upon returning to the nursery.

11. **[New]** Safe rest and sleep awareness

The nursery will ensure all sleeping practices follow safer sleep evidence-based guidance approved by The Lullaby Trust. The nursery will not seek guidance from any unregulated self-proclaimed 'sleep experts'.

Parents will be informed about the nursery's safe sleep practices and will be encouraged to follow safer sleep guidance at home.

All practitioners will be aware of the safe sleeping practices including supervision, individual needs, clear airways and avoiding unsafe sleep practices.

Practitioners will have a strong understanding of this policy and the Nursery Safer Sleeping Risk Assessment. They will adhere to the procedures and controls set out in these documents and understand the importance of safer sleep practices.

12. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the lead practitioner as required and at least **annually**.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is **1st September 2027**.