

Low Road and Windmill Music Federation and Windmill Daycare



**Low Road and Windmill
Music Federation**

EYFS Safer Sleep Policy

September 2026

Introduction

The purpose of this Safer Sleep Policy is to promote a safe sleeping environment for all infants in our care and to reduce the risk of sleep-related incidents, including Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). This policy is based on current national guidance and evidence-based best practices for safer sleep.

We are committed to ensuring that every baby is placed to sleep safely, that staff receive appropriate training, and that parents and carers are supported with consistent information about safer sleep practices. All staff are responsible for following this policy at all times and for maintaining a safe, comfortable, and supervised sleep environment that meets the individual needs of each child while complying with relevant safeguarding, health, and safety requirements.

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it reflects current legislation, national guidance, and best practice recommendations.

Safer Sleep Procedures

- The child's key person will work in partnership with parents/carers to gather information about the child's usual sleep patterns, routines and individual needs. This information will be recorded within the child's profile, reviewed regularly and updated when circumstances change. Wherever possible, established home routines will be followed while ensuring that safe sleep guidance and the setting's procedures are maintained.
- A safe, calm and appropriately supervised sleep area will be available within nursery rooms for children who require sleep or rest during the day.
- A risk assessment will be in place for all designated sleep areas. Staff will ensure that the area surrounding cots, mattresses and other sleep equipment is free from potential hazards, including cords, drawstring bags and other items that could present a strangulation, suffocation or entrapment risk.
- Staff will undertake daily safety checks of cots, mattresses and sleep equipment. Any equipment found to be damaged, defective or unsafe will be removed from use immediately and reported in accordance with the setting's procedures.
- Children under 12 months will sleep in an appropriate cot. Babies will be positioned safely within the cot in accordance with current safer sleep guidance. Children aged 12 months and over may sleep in a cot or on an appropriate sleep mattress, according to their individual developmental needs.
- For children who were born prematurely, staff will take account of the child's corrected age when considering appropriate sleep arrangements, in consultation with parents/carers and relevant health professionals where necessary.
- Babies will be placed on their backs to sleep, unless there is documented medical advice stating otherwise. Once a baby is able to independently roll from their back to their front and back again, they may be allowed to find their own natural sleeping

position. Staff will continue to monitor sleeping babies in accordance with the setting's safer sleep procedures.

- Sleep positioners, wedges, straps or other products designed to restrict a child's sleeping position will not be used, unless specifically recommended by an appropriate healthcare professional and written medical guidance has been provided to the setting.
- The setting operates a smoke-free environment and recognises the risks associated with exposure to second-hand and residual tobacco smoke. Staff who smoke during designated breaks must take appropriate measures to minimise children's exposure to smoke residue, including removing or covering their uniform while smoking and thoroughly washing their hands before returning to care for babies and young children.
- Sleep areas will be maintained at an appropriate and comfortable temperature, with staff remaining alert to signs that a child may be overheating. Staff will check the child's chest, back or neck where appropriate; if the child feels unusually hot, sweaty or clammy, bedding or clothing will be adjusted and the child monitored.
- Before sleeping, shoes, bibs and unnecessary outer layers, such as jumpers and cardigans, will be removed to promote comfort and reduce the risk of overheating. Hats, dummy clips and other accessories that could present a safety risk will also be removed.
- Cots and sleep mattresses will be positioned away from direct sources of heat and direct sunlight, including radiators and windows, to help maintain a safe and comfortable sleeping environment.
- Staff will ensure that each child's individual sleep needs are respected while maintaining safe practice at all times. A parent's preferred routine will not override current safer sleep guidance or the setting's safeguarding responsibilities.

Sleep Arrangements and Parental Preferences

- Sleeping children will be appropriately supervised and regularly checked to ensure their safety and wellbeing. Within our setting, physical sleep checks will be undertaken at least every 10 minutes and recorded in accordance with our safer sleep procedures.
- During each check, staff will observe the child's breathing, sleeping position, temperature and general wellbeing, ensuring that the child's face and airway remain clear and that the sleep environment continues to be safe.
- Staff will work in partnership with parents and carers to understand each child's individual sleep routine, usual sleep times and rest needs. This information will be recorded and reviewed as the child's needs develop and change.
- Parents' and carers' wishes regarding their child's sleep routine will be listened to and taken into consideration wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so.

- Children will not be forced to sleep. Where a child does not wish to sleep or is unable to settle, staff will provide an appropriate opportunity for quiet rest and respond to the child's individual needs.
- Staff will not deliberately keep a tired child awake where doing so would be contrary to the child's wellbeing or individual needs. Equally, children will not routinely be woken from sleep solely to meet a preferred schedule where practitioners consider that continued sleep is necessary for the child's wellbeing.
- Practitioners will use their professional judgement, taking account of the child's age, development, health, individual needs and behaviour alongside information provided by parents/carers.
- While partnership with parents/carers is fundamental to effective early years practice, parental preference will not override safer sleep guidance, safeguarding requirements or the setting's duty of care. Where a requested sleep practice conflicts with current safer sleep guidance, staff will explain this sensitively and agree a safe approach with the family.
- Where there are concerns about a child's sleep pattern, excessive tiredness or a significant change in their usual sleep behaviour, this will be discussed with parents/carers and escalated to the appropriate senior member of staff where necessary.

Daily Safer Sleep Best Practice

- Where a child arrives at the setting asleep in a car seat or pushchair, staff will immediately check the child's wellbeing and breathing. The child will be transferred as soon as practicable to an appropriate, safe sleep space, such as a cot or designated sleep mattress. Unnecessary outer clothing will be removed to reduce the risk of overheating.
- Children must not routinely sleep in car seats, bouncers, bean bags, cushions, sofas or other equipment that is not designed as a safe sleep space. If a child falls asleep in such equipment, they will be transferred promptly and safely to an appropriate cot or sleep mattress.
- Sleeping children will be appropriately supervised at all times. A member of staff will remain within the designated sleep area, and physical checks will be undertaken at least every 10 minutes and recorded in accordance with the setting's procedures. The time each child falls asleep and wakes will also be recorded.
- During sleep checks, staff will observe the child's breathing, including the rise and fall of the chest, and check the child's sleeping position, general appearance and wellbeing. Any concerns will be acted upon immediately.
- Staff will continually monitor the safety of the sleeping environment, including room temperature, the area surrounding cots and mattresses, bedding, clothing and any potential hazards.
- Outdoor clothing and unnecessary layers, including coats, jackets, jumpers and hats, will be removed before a child is placed to sleep to minimise the risk of overheating.

- Where a child routinely uses a dummy, this may be offered when the child is settled to sleep. Comfort items will only be used following an individual assessment of their suitability and safety. Items that could present a suffocation, strangulation or overheating risk will not remain within the child's sleep space.
- Hair accessories, including large bobbles, clips and other items that could become loose or present a choking, entanglement or discomfort risk, will be removed before the child sleeps.
- Following a meal, staff will ensure babies and young children are comfortable and appropriately settled before being placed to sleep, taking account of their individual needs.
- If a child falls asleep while eating, staff will stop the meal and ensure that the child's mouth is clear of food. Bibs will be removed before the child is transferred to an appropriate safe sleep space.
- Any baby or young child who falls asleep while being held, nursed or during play will be transferred safely to an appropriate sleep space.
- Babies and young children will never be left unattended with a bottle or feeding cup or permitted to self-feed unsupervised. Bottles, cups and feeding equipment must never be left within a cot or sleep space while a child is sleeping.
- Children will never be forced to sleep. Staff will respond sensitively to each child's individual sleep and rest needs. Where a child does not settle to sleep, they will be offered an appropriate quiet or restful activity and another opportunity to sleep later where required.
- When a child wakes, staff will provide appropriate reassurance and time to wake gradually, responding to the individual child's needs.
- Cleaning and Infection Prevention
- Cot mattresses and sleep mats will be cleaned and appropriately disinfected between users, in accordance with the setting's infection prevention and cleaning procedures and the manufacturer's instructions.
- Each child will have individually allocated bedding. Bedding will be checked before and after use and changed immediately if wet, soiled or otherwise contaminated.
- Bedding will be laundered regularly and at least weekly, or more frequently where required. At the end of the child's attendance week, bedding will be removed for laundering in accordance with the setting's procedures.
- Clean bedding will be stored appropriately in a clearly labelled, individual storage bag or designated area to prevent cross-contamination between children.

Staff Responsibility

All staff have a responsibility to follow the setting's safer sleep procedures consistently. Safe sleep guidance takes priority over individual preferences or established routines where these would place a child at increased risk. Any concerns regarding a child's breathing, sleep position, temperature, health or general wellbeing must be acted upon immediately and reported to the appropriate senior member of staff.

Sleeping in Pushchairs While Outdoors

- Children may occasionally fall asleep in a pushchair while participating in walks or outdoor activities. Staff will continue to follow safer sleep principles and closely monitor the child throughout this time.
- Where the pushchair is designed to do so, the seat will be reclined to the most appropriate position for safe sleep, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Staff will ensure that the child is correctly secured using the pushchair's fitted safety harness.
- Staff will ensure that the child is protected from direct sunlight by using the pushchair's hood, canopy or an appropriate sunshade designed for this purpose.
- Blankets, muslins, cloths or other materials must never be draped over a pushchair to provide shade. Covering a pushchair can restrict airflow and significantly increase the temperature around the child, increasing the risk of overheating.
- Staff will regularly monitor the child's breathing, position, temperature and general wellbeing while they remain asleep in the pushchair. Particular attention will be given to ensuring that the child's head and face remain uncovered and that their airway is unobstructed.
- Staff will remain alert to changes in weather and temperature and will adjust the child's clothing, positioning and sun protection appropriately to reduce the risk of overheating or becoming too cold.
- On returning to the setting, a sleeping child will be transferred as soon as practicable to their designated safe sleep space, such as an appropriate cot or sleep mattress.
- Pushchairs will not be used as a substitute for the setting's designated safe sleep spaces. Sleeping in a pushchair will be limited to occasions when a child naturally falls asleep while travelling or participating in an outdoor activity.

Reception – Safer Sleeping Arrangements

If a child in Reception falls asleep during the school day, staff will respond sensitively to the child's individual needs and wellbeing. The child will be transferred to a designated sleeping mat in a safe, calm and appropriate area, where they can rest comfortably. Any unnecessary outer clothing, footwear or items that could present a risk will be removed as appropriate. The child will be appropriately supervised and monitored in accordance with the setting's EYFS Safer Sleep Policy, including the completion of regular recorded sleep checks. Staff will monitor the child's breathing, sleeping position, temperature and general wellbeing throughout the sleep period. Parents/carers will be informed where appropriate, particularly where the need for sleep is unusual for the child or represents a change in their usual behaviour. The child's safety, wellbeing and individual needs will remain the priority at all times.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of all of Daycare Staff and EYFS staff to follow this policy. The Head of EYFS and SLT will carry out monitoring of the policy.

The policy will be reviewed before the start of each academic year.

A .Swan – EYFS Leader

Review: September 2027