Low Hill Nursery School

Safe Sleep Policy

Written by: Low Hill Nursery School

Approved: October 2026

Review: October 2027

Low Hill Nursery School

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Policy Statement

This Safe Sleep Policy outlines our commitment to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of children during sleep and rest periods. Low Hill Nursery School follows the statutory requirements of the EYFS 2026 framework and relevant NHS and Lullaby Trust safer sleep guidance.

Our aim is to provide a safe, nurturing and developmentally appropriate sleep environment for every child in our care.

This policy should be read alongside the following Low Hill Nursery School policies:

- Child Protection / Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Behaviour and Wellbeing Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Policy Aims

- To safeguard children by implementing evidence-based safe sleep practices.
- To ensure sleep environments are safe, hygienic and conducive to rest.
- To support individual sleep routines and preferences in partnership with families.
- To train staff in safe sleep supervision and emergency response.
- To monitor and review sleep practices regularly to maintain high standards of care.

Creating a Safe Sleep Culture

At Low Hill Nursery School, leadership and management play a critical role in establishing and maintaining a safe sleep culture. Leaders ensure that the importance of safe sleep is understood, that staff are appropriately trained and that safe sleep procedures are consistently followed and monitored.

Shared Responsibility and Team Accountability

Every practitioner takes responsibility for ensuring a safe sleep environment. Staff follow and promote safe sleep guidance and remain vigilant in identifying and addressing potential risks. Ongoing communication, particularly during handovers, helps ensure that children's sleep needs and any specific requirements are consistently and safely met. Staff are encouraged to raise concerns about sleep safety and to support one another in maintaining safe practice.

Child-Centred Care

In line with the EYFS 2026 framework, Low Hill Nursery School promotes children's welfare and ensures that individual needs are met. Practitioners never force a child to sleep. They observe signs of tiredness and offer rest in a calm and reassuring environment. Sleep and rest routines are developmentally appropriate and support children's emotional regulation and overall wellbeing.

Individual sleep plans are developed in partnership with parents and carers where required, reflecting each child's needs, routines and any relevant medical or cultural considerations. Specialist advice will be sought for children with SEND where additional support or reasonable adjustments may be required.

Safe Sleep Environment

Low Hill Nursery School prioritises a safe sleep environment to support children's wellbeing and reduce risk. Children who wish or need to sleep are provided with a clean, firm, flat sleep mat appropriate for their age and stage.

- Children over two who wish to sleep will be placed on a sleep mat that is suitable and in good condition.
- Children are appropriately dressed for sleep to avoid overheating. Shoes and restrictive clothing are removed where appropriate.
- Sleep spaces are kept clear of hanging objects, cords, bags and other hazards.
- Children who fall asleep while being comforted by a practitioner are transferred to an appropriate safe sleeping surface to complete their rest.
- Sleep spaces are not positioned next to radiators or in direct sunlight.
- Daily checks of sleep equipment, mats are undertaken. Damaged or unsafe equipment is removed from use immediately.
- Sleep mats have waterproof surfaces/covers and are cleaned in accordance with the setting's infection-control procedures.
- Comforters are checked to ensure that they are clean and in safe condition.
- Regular audits of sleep areas and staff adherence to safe sleep practices are undertaken by senior leaders.

Temperature and Ventilation

Careful attention is given to temperature and ventilation so that children are comfortable while sleeping or resting. Staff monitor the environment and remain alert to signs that a child is too hot or too cold. Rooms are well ventilated while avoiding direct airflow onto sleeping children.

Supervision and Monitoring

The EYFS 2026 requires sleeping children to be frequently checked and to remain within sight and hearing of staff. At Low Hill Nursery School, staff carry out visual checks at least every 10 minutes while a child is sleeping, observing breathing, sleep position, colour and general wellbeing.

Checks are documented on a sleep record, including the time, observations, any action taken and the name of the member of staff completing the check if this is different to the staff member recording the observation. Sleep records are reviewed as part of the setting's monitoring procedures and relevant information is shared with parents and carers.

A member of staff remains available to respond promptly to any change in a sleeping child's condition.

Staff need to recognise signs of overheating, breathing difficulties and unusual sleep behaviours, and to respond to emergencies in accordance with first-aid and safeguarding procedures.

When a child wakes, staff observe their alertness, mood and any signs of discomfort or illness and share relevant information with parents/carers.

Staff Training

Safe sleep practice forms part of staff induction and ongoing professional development. Staff receive information and training appropriate to the ages of children attending Low Hill Nursery School, including safe sleep supervision, recognising concerns and emergency response procedures. Practice is refreshed when guidance changes and through regular supervision and monitoring.

Communication with Families

Clear and consistent communication with families is central to supporting children's sleep and rest routines. During induction and settling-in, parents/carers are asked about their child's usual sleep routine, individual needs and any relevant health information. This information is reviewed when circumstances change.

Low Hill Nursery School values parents' knowledge of their child and works collaboratively to maintain appropriate consistency between home and the setting. Staff never force a child to sleep or keep a tired child awake against their will. Feedback includes relevant information about sleep duration, mood on waking and any observations or concerns.

Staff may ask parents/carers how their child has slept before attending nursery where this information may help staff respond appropriately to the child's needs that day.

Risk Management

Effective risk management is essential to maintaining a safe sleep environment. Sleep areas and procedures are risk assessed and subject to routine checks. Before a child is settled to sleep, staff ensure that hazards have been removed and that the immediate environment is safe and secure.

Any sleep-related incident or concern is documented and communicated in accordance with Low Hill Nursery School procedures. Leaders monitor compliance with this policy through supervision, observation, feedback and review.

Unexpected Situations

Low Hill Nursery School does not promote children sleeping in seated or inclined positions. If a child falls asleep during an outing e.g on a minibus journey or in other exceptional circumstances and cannot immediately be transferred to a designated sleep space, staff will:

- Keep the child within sight and hearing at all times.
- Monitor child and observe child for any changes
- Keep the period of sleep to a minimum and transfer the child to an appropriate flat sleep space as soon as practicable.
- Provide suitable shade in warm or sunny conditions.
- If a child falls asleep and this is not within their usual routine then staff will observe for signs that the child is unwell or displaying changes in behavior. Parents and carers will be informed inline with our policy for when a child becomes unwell at Nursery.

- If a child falls asleep during play, practitioners assess the immediate environment and make it safe where possible. If the child needs to be moved for safety, staff gently support the child to transition to a designated sleep space.

Rest Times

Young children may become tired during the day and benefit from opportunities to rest or sleep. Low Hill Nursery School provides a flexible approach that respects individual needs and routines, offering rest when children need or choose it.

Quiet areas are available where children can relax. Clean, lightweight sleep mats are provided where a child needs to sleep. Staff remain attentive to children's cues and encourage rest when needed while respecting their autonomy; children are never forced to sleep or rest if they are unwilling or distressed.

Sleep and rest routines are discussed with parents/carers and recorded where appropriate. Sleep/rest records are completed for children who sleep, with checks undertaken at least every 10 minutes. Parents/carers are informed when their child has slept or rested during the session.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory requirements or relevant guidance changes.

Reviewed: October 2026

Next review: October 2027

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Individual Sleep Plan

Childs Name	Date of Birth	Date completed	Completed By	Review Date

Sleep Routine at home
Does the child have a consistent bedtime?
Does the child sleep through the night?
Does the child have set nap times?

Signs that the child might be tired	What helps the child to settle to sleep?

Typical sleep Behavior
Does the child move a lot in their sleep?
Normal sleeping position

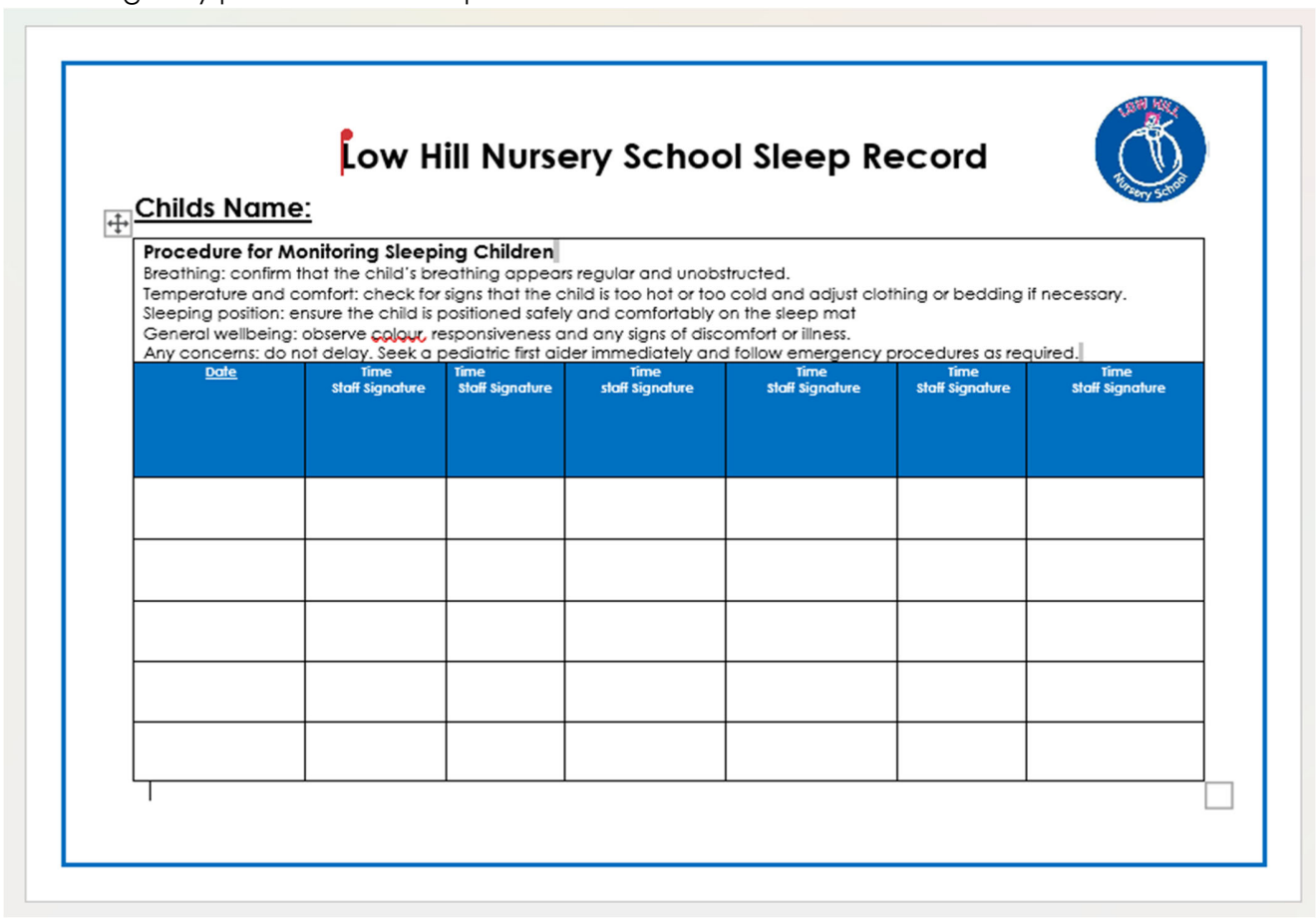
Waking Up Behavior
What helps when the child is waking?
How does the child usually present when they wake?

Any Other information

Appendix 2 - Safe Sleep

Procedure for Monitoring Sleeping Children

- Breathing: confirm that the child's breathing appears regular and unobstructed.
- Temperature and comfort: check for signs that the child is too hot or too cold and adjust clothing or bedding if necessary.
- Sleeping position: ensure the child is positioned safely and comfortably on the sleep mat
- General wellbeing: observe colour, responsiveness and any signs of discomfort or illness.
- Documentation: record observations promptly and accurately on sleep record
- Any concerns: do not delay. Seek a pediatric first aider immediately and follow emergency procedures as required.



Low Hill Nursery School Sleep Record

Childs Name:

Procedure for Monitoring Sleeping Children
Breathing: confirm that the child's breathing appears regular and unobstructed.
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Sleeping position: ensure the child is positioned safely and comfortably on the sleep mat
General wellbeing: observe colour, responsiveness and any signs of discomfort or illness.
Any concerns: do not delay. Seek a pediatric first aider immediately and follow emergency procedures as required.

Date	Time Staff Signature	Time Staff Signature	Time staff Signature	Time Staff Signature	Time Staff Signature	Time Staff Signature