Woodsetton School

Safer Sleep Policy

This policy was reviewed and updated in September 2026

The next anticipated review date will be September 2027

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Policy statement

At Woodsetton School, we are committed to promoting the safety, health and wellbeing of all children during rest and sleep. We recognise that some pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, disabilities (SEND) and complex medical needs, may require planned rest periods or may fall asleep during the school day.

The school will provide a safe sleeping environment and implement safer sleep procedures in accordance with the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework**, current public health guidance, and recognised safer sleep recommendations. Safe sleep arrangements will be individualised where necessary to meet a child's developmental, sensory, physical or medical needs, while ensuring that risks are identified, assessed and minimised.

1. Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure that all children who sleep or rest during the school day are supported in a safe and appropriate environment.
- Promote safer sleep practices in line with current national guidance.
- Reduce the risk of sleep-related accidents and incidents.
- Ensure staff understand and consistently implement safer sleep procedures.
- Meet the individual needs of children with SEND, medical conditions and complex needs through personalised risk assessments and care planning.
- Work in partnership with parents, carers and healthcare professionals to support safe and consistent sleep practices.

2. Key Principles

Woodsetton School recognises that every child has individual needs and that safer sleep arrangements must take account of their age, stage of development, medical needs and risk assessments.

Where children sleep in school:

- A safe, clear, firm and flat sleeping surface will be provided wherever possible.
- Children will be positioned in accordance with safer sleep guidance and individual care plans.
- Sleep spaces will be kept free from pillows, soft toys, loose bedding and other items that may increase the risk of overheating, entrapment or suffocation.
- Children will be checked regularly and supervised appropriately throughout any sleep period.
- Staff will ensure sleeping children can be seen and/or monitored in accordance with their individual risk assessment and level of need.

- Any child requiring adaptations to standard safer sleep procedures due to a disability, medical condition or physical need will have documented guidance agreed with parents and relevant professionals.
- Sleep arrangements will always balance safer sleep recommendations with the child's assessed medical, physical, developmental and sensory needs.

3. Woodsetton School Context (SEND Considerations)

As a primary special school, many pupils have complex learning difficulties, autism, sensory processing differences, physical disabilities, epilepsy, neurodevelopmental conditions and other medical needs which may affect sleep, alertness, regulation and supervision requirements.

Some pupils may require scheduled rest periods as part of their individual provision, whilst others may fall asleep unexpectedly due to fatigue, medication, medical conditions or sensory regulation needs. The school recognises that a "one size fits all" approach is not appropriate for all pupils.

Where a child's needs require adaptations to standard safer sleep guidance, the school will undertake an individual risk assessment and follow advice from parents, healthcare professionals and medical care plans. The safety, dignity, wellbeing and individual needs of the child will remain central to all decisions regarding sleep and rest arrangements.

4. Safe sleep environment

Woodsetton School provides a safe, clean and suitable environment for any child who requires sleep or rest during the school day. Sleeping children are placed on a firm, flat sleep surface that is appropriate to their age, developmental stage and individual needs. Sleep equipment is regularly checked to ensure it remains safe, hygienic and fit for purpose.

Where bedding is required, it will be lightweight, used only as necessary, and positioned to minimise the risk of overheating or head covering. Sleep environments will be kept free from pillows, soft toys, beanbags, cushions, loose bedding and any other items that could present a risk of suffocation, entrapment or overheating, unless specifically identified within an individual risk assessment or healthcare plan. Children will be positioned in accordance with current safer sleep guidance and their individual needs. For babies and very young children, recognised safer sleep guidance will be followed wherever appropriate. For older pupils and those with SEND, physical disabilities or medical conditions, sleeping positions and equipment will be determined through individual risk assessments and, where applicable, healthcare plans developed in partnership with parents and relevant professionals.

All sleep areas will remain uncluttered, well supervised and appropriately ventilated, ensuring children can rest safely and comfortably.

5. Temperature and Clothing

The temperature of sleep and rest areas will be monitored to ensure children remain comfortable and are not at risk of overheating or becoming too cold. Staff will maintain a well-ventilated environment and consider individual pupil needs, medical conditions and sensory preferences when supporting rest and sleep.

Before a child sleeps, staff will remove outdoor clothing and any unnecessary items that could contribute to overheating or pose a safety risk, such as coats, scarves or garments with large

hoods. Children will be dressed appropriately for the room temperature and their individual comfort needs.

During sleep periods, staff will monitor children regularly for signs of discomfort, overheating or becoming too cold. Observations may include checking the child's temperature, breathing, colour, responsiveness and overall wellbeing. Any concerns will be responded to immediately and recorded in accordance with school procedures.

Where pupils have complex medical, physical or sensory needs that affect temperature regulation or sleep safety, additional control measures and monitoring arrangements will be identified through individual risk assessments and healthcare plans. This ensures that all pupils can rest safely whilst having their individual needs appropriately met.

6. Supervision, Monitoring and Recording

All sleeping children will receive appropriate supervision in accordance with EYFS requirements and their individual needs.

- Sleeping children will be checked at regular intervals determined through risk assessment.
- Staff will monitor breathing, skin colour, responsiveness, body temperature and sleeping position.
- Children with complex medical needs, epilepsy, respiratory conditions or other identified risks may require enhanced observation levels in accordance with healthcare plans.
- Any concerns regarding a child's wellbeing whilst sleeping will be acted upon immediately and recorded in line with safeguarding, medical and reporting procedures.
- Sleep records will be maintained where required by an individual's risk assessment, healthcare plan or school procedures.

This approach ensures that children remain safe while enabling staff to meet the diverse needs of pupils within a primary special school setting.

7. Unexpected sleep

Woodsetton School recognises that some pupils may fall asleep unexpectedly during the school day due to fatigue, sensory regulation needs, medical conditions, medication or other individual factors.

If a child falls asleep outside a designated sleep area, staff will respond promptly and carry out an immediate assessment of the child's safety and wellbeing. Where it is safe and appropriate to do so, the child will be transferred to a suitable sleep space that meets safer sleep requirements. If moving the child could compromise their safety, wellbeing or medical needs, staff will maintain close supervision and implement appropriate monitoring arrangements until it is safe to move them or they wake naturally.

Staff will consider the child's age, developmental stage, medical needs, care plan, risk assessment and the surrounding environment when deciding upon the most appropriate course of action. The child's safety, comfort and individual needs will remain the priority at all times.

8. Travel and equipment

Prams, buggies, car seats and specialist seating equipment are not considered routine sleep environments and will not be used as primary sleep spaces wherever this can be avoided.

Where a child falls asleep in a pram, buggy, car seat or other equipment, staff will assess the situation and, where safe and appropriate, transfer the child to a suitable sleep surface as soon as practicable. Any decision to allow a child to remain in specialist equipment will be informed by the child's individual risk assessment, physical needs, medical advice and care plan.

The school recognises that some pupils with complex physical or medical needs may require adapted positioning or specialist equipment. In these circumstances, arrangements will be clearly documented and agreed in partnership with parents, healthcare professionals and relevant specialists.

9. Partnerships with parents and carers

Woodsetton School works closely with parents and carers to ensure a consistent and individualised approach to sleep, rest and safer sleep practices.

Information regarding a child's sleep routines, preferences, medical needs, sensory requirements and any relevant advice from health professionals will be gathered and reviewed regularly. Parents and carers will be informed of any significant changes to their child's sleep patterns, any concerns relating to sleep or wellbeing, and any incidents that occur during sleep periods.

For children who regularly sleep or rest during the school day, agreed arrangements will be documented within individual support plans, healthcare plans or risk assessments as appropriate. This collaborative approach helps ensure that sleep arrangements are safe, suitable and responsive to each child's needs.

10. Staff responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to promote and maintain safe sleep practices and to follow the procedures outlined within this policy.

Staff will:

- Follow current safer sleep guidance, school procedures and individual risk assessments.
- Undertake relevant safer sleep, safeguarding and medical training appropriate to their role.
- Ensure sleep environments remain safe, suitable and appropriately supervised.
- Monitor sleeping children in accordance with individual risk assessments, healthcare plans and school procedures.
- Respond promptly to any concerns relating to a child's breathing, colour, temperature, responsiveness or overall wellbeing.
- Record and report any concerns, incidents or changes in a child's condition in line with safeguarding, medical and reporting procedures.

- Seek immediate medical assistance and follow emergency procedures if a child shows signs of distress or requires urgent intervention.

Leaders will ensure that staff receive appropriate training, guidance, supervision and support to enable them to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

11. Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team will monitor the implementation of this policy to ensure compliance with the EYFS Statutory Framework, safeguarding requirements and current safer sleep guidance.

Monitoring activities may include:

- Review of sleep records, risk assessments and healthcare plans.
- Observation of sleep practices and environments.
- Review of staff training records.
- Discussions with staff, parents and relevant professionals.
- Evaluation of incidents, concerns or near misses to identify improvements.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to statutory requirements, national guidance, safeguarding recommendations or the needs of pupils attending the school. Any updates will be communicated to staff and incorporated into training and practice as required.