



SLEEP AND REST POLICY

All children have individual sleep and rest requirements. Our objective is to meet each child's needs for sleep, rest and relaxation by providing a comfortable, relaxing and safe space to enable their bodies to rest. This environment will also be well supervised ensuring all children feel secure and safe at our service.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's needs for sleep, rest and relaxation.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.

QUALITY AREA 3: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT		
3.1	Design	The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service.
3.1.2	Upkeep	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS	
Section 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Section 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazard
81	Sleep and Rest
82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment
87	Incident, injury, trauma and illness record
103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
105	Furniture, materials and equipment
106	Laundry and hygiene facilities
107	Space requirements-indoor space
110	Ventilation and natural light
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures



170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority

RELATED POLICIES

Administration of First Aid Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Enrolment Policy Health and Safety Policy	Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol-Free Policy Work Health and Safety
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PURPOSE

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* requires approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for children's sleep and rest. While we do not have a formal 'sleep' time for our children, our Service will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs.

We have a duty of care to ensure children are provided with a high level of safety when resting and every reasonable precaution is taken to protect them from harm and hazard. In meeting the Service's duty of care, it is a requirement that all educators implement and adhere to this policy and associated procedures to ensure we respect and cater for each child's specific needs and ensure all risks are appropriately addressed at all times.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, educators, staff, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

'Children have different sleep, rest and relaxation needs. Children of the same age can have different sleep patterns that Nominated Supervisors and educators need to consider within the Service. As per Standard 2.1 (Element 2.1.1) of the National Quality Standard, each child's comfort must be provided for and there must be appropriate opportunities to meet each child's sleep, rest and relaxation needs.' (ACECQA).

Our Service defines 'rest' as a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness, or tranquillity, and can include a child being in a state of sleep. Considering the busy and energetic nature of children's day, we feel that it is important for children to participate in a quiet/rest period during the day in order to rest, relax, and recharge their body. Effective rest strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and safe in an early childhood environment.

Our Service will consult with families about their child's individual needs, ensuring all parties are aware of the different values, cultural, and parenting beliefs and practices, or opinions associated with sleep requirements.

Management will ensure:

- that obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations* are met
- educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure
- all new employees are provided with a copy of this policy as part of their induction process



- families are aware of this *Sleep and Rest Policy*
- every reasonable precaution has been taken to protect children from harm and from hazards likely to cause injury. Hazards posing a risk of suffocation, choking, crushing or strangulation risk to children must be removed from the sleep and rest environment. (Sec. 167)
- reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by the Service are met, having regard to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of each child
- all educators and new employees are provided with a copy of this policy as part of their induction program
- up to date knowledge regarding safe sleeping practices is maintained and information communicated to educators and families
- to provide appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation including providing children with comfortable spaces away from the main activity area for relaxation and quiet activities
- that sleeping children are within hearing range and observed. This involves physically checking/inspecting sleeping children at regular intervals and ensuring that they are always within sight and hearing distance of sleeping and resting children so they can easily monitor a child's breathing and the colour of their skin.
- to provide children with safe sleeping equipment and environment, including adequate ventilation and adequate lighting to enable effective supervision
- to negotiate sleep and rest routines and practices with families to reach agreement on how these occur for each child at the Service
- they receive information and training to fulfil their role effectively, including being made aware of the sleep and rest policies, their responsibilities in implementing these, and any changes that are made over time
- the child's safety is always the first priority
- children who are sleeping or resting have their face uncovered at all times
- the sleep and rest environment is free from cigarette or tobacco smoke
- educators, staff and students follow the policy and procedures
- all equipment and furniture used are safe, clean and in good repair (Reg. 103, 105)
- there are adequate numbers of bedding available for children that need to sleep
- areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated and have natural lighting

A Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person will:

- take reasonable steps to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by the Service are met, having regard to the ages, development stages and individual needs of the children
- maintain up to date knowledge regarding safe sleeping practice and communicate this information to educators and families
- there are appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation including providing children with comfortable spaces away from the main activity area for relaxation and quiet activities
- ensure that sleeping children are within hearing range and observed. This involves checking/inspecting sleeping children at regular intervals and ensuring that they are always within sight and hearing distance of sleeping and resting children so they can easily monitor a child's breathing and the colour of their skin.
- negotiate sleep and rest routines and practices with families to reach agreement on how these occur for each child at the Service
- ensure they receive information and training to fulfil their role effectively, including being made aware of the sleep and rest policies, their responsibilities in implementing these, and any changes that are made over time
- ensure the child's safety is always the first priority
- ensure children who are sleeping or resting have their face uncovered at all times



Educators will:

- have a thorough understanding of the Service's policy and procedure and embed practices to support safe sleep into everyday practice
- consult with families about children's sleep and rest needs
- be sensitive to each child's needs so that sleep and rest times are a positive experience
- ensure there are appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation
- ensure that each child's comfort is provided for
- ensure that beds are clean and in good repair
- ensure beds are used for the correct purpose of sleep and rest only
- ensure beds are wiped over with warm water and neutral detergent or vinegar solution between each use
- ensure beds are stored safely
- ensure that bed linen is clean and in good repair
- ensure bed linen is used by an individual child and is washed before use by another child
- ensure children rest a safe distance apart to minimise the risk of cross infection-
- create a relaxing environment for sleeping children by playing relaxation music, reading stories, cultural reflection, turning off lights, and ensuring children are comfortably clothed
- ensure the environment is tranquil and calm for both educators and children
- sit near children who are resting and encourage them to relax and/or listen to music.
- maintain adequate supervision and maintain educator ratios throughout the rest period
- supervision is active, effective and frequent
- ensure all sleeping children are within hearing range and observed
- ensure they are not engaged in other duties that will take their attention away from actively supervising sleeping and resting children
- physically check that the child is breathing by checking the rise and fall of the child's chest and the child's lip and skin colour
- if the child's face/body appears blue and the child is not breathing, initiate first aid immediately including calling an ambulance and beginning resuscitation
- ensure resting spaces are not dark- there needs to be sufficient light to allow supervision and to physically check children's breathing, lip and skin colour
- ensure sleeping children are within hearing range and observed
- communicate with families about their child's sleeping or rest times and the Service policy regarding sleep and rest times
- respect family preferences regarding sleep and rest and consider these daily while ensuring children feel safe and secure in the environment. Conversations with families may be necessary to remind families that children will neither be forced to sleep nor prevented from sleeping.
- encourage children to dress appropriately for the room temperature when resting or sleeping
Lighter clothing is preferable, with children encouraged to remove shoes, jumpers, jackets and bulky clothing.
- monitor the room temperature to ensure maximum comfort for the children
- ensure that children who **do** wish to sleep are allowed to do so, without being disrupted. If a child requests a rest, or if they are showing clear signs of tiredness, regardless of the time of day, there should be a comfortable, safe area available for them to rest. It is important that opportunities for rest and relaxation, as well as sleep, are provided.
- consider a vast range of strategies to meet children's individual sleep and rest needs- consider inclusion of all children and adjustments that may need to be implemented
- acknowledge children's emotions, feelings and fears in regard to rest time
- develop positive relationships with children to assist in settling children confidently when resting.



PRE-SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

Educators will:

- be respectful for children's individual sleep and rest requirements
- discuss children's sleep and rest needs with families and include children in decision making
- provide a tranquil and calm environment for children to rest by turning off lights, playing relaxing music, reading stories, cultural reflection
- ensure children are comfortably clothed
- encourage children to rest their bodies and minds for 20-30 minutes
- introduce relaxation techniques into rest routine- use of a relaxation tape
- ensure children sleep with their face uncovered
- closely monitor sleeping and resting children
- provide quiet activities for children

PARENTS/FAMILIES WILL:

- be informed during orientation of our *Sleep and Rest Policy* and procedure
- be requested to provide educators with regular updates on their child's sleeping routines and patterns.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Sleep and Rest Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators and management.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
ACECQA- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority	The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.
Adequate supervision	Adequate supervision means: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• that an educator can respond immediately, particularly when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation;• knowing where children are at all times and monitoring their activities actively and diligently
Infant	A young child between the ages of birth and 12 months
Rest	A period of inactivity solitude, calmness or tranquility and can include a child being in a state of sleep.
Relaxation	Relaxation or other activity for bringing about a feeling of calm in your body and mind.
Red Nose	Red Nose is Australia's leading authority on safe sleep and safe pregnancy advice.
Sudden and Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI)	A broad term used to describe the sudden and unexpected death of a baby for which the cause is not immediately obvious- (SIDS or Fatal sleeping accident)
Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)	The sudden and unexpected death of an infant under one year of age with an onset of a fatal episode occurring during sleep, that remains unexplained after a thorough investigation including performance of a complete autopsy and review of the circumstances of death and the clinical history.



Source

ACECQA. (n.d.). Safe sleep and rest practices: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/information-sheets/safe-sleep-and-rest-practices>

ACECQA. (2023). [Sleep and Rest for Children. Policy Guidelines.](#)

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). [Guide to the National Quality Framework.](#)

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC). (2013). Find out more: [Keeping baby safe](#)

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).

Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2011)

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).

Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2018). (Amended 2020).

NSW Department of Education. (2022). *Sleep and rest for children-Policy guidelines for early childhood education and care services. (updated)*

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/whats-happening-in-the-early-childhood-education-sector/resource-library/safe-sleep-red-nose>

Red Nose: <https://rednose.com.au/section/safe-practices>

Revised National Quality Standard. (Amended 2023).