

Rest, Relaxation & Sleep Policy

Scope

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

Statement

Our Service defines 'rest' as a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness, or tranquillity, and can include a child being in a state of sleep.

All children have individual rest requirements. Our objective is to meet each child's need for 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.

Legislative Requirements

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
82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment
84A	Sleep and Rest
84B	Sleep and rest policies and procedures

84C	Risk assessment for purposes of sleep and rest policies and procedures
84D	Prohibition of bassinets
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 Death of a Child at the Service Policy Emergency and Evacuation Policy Health and Safety Policy	Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy Physical Environment Policy Respect for Children Policy Staffing Arrangements Policy Work Health and Safety
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Purpose

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* requires approved providers and nominated supervisors to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for children's sleep and rest having regard to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of the children. Our *Sleep and Rest Policy* will assist management, educators and other staff to ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs whilst attending the service.

Our Service will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs. The risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) for infants will be minimised by following practices and guidelines set out by the national authority on safe sleeping practice for infants and children- Red Nose (formerly SIDS and Kids). Our policy sets out quality practice and is informed by recognised and evidence-based principles. Safe Sleep practices are informed by Red Nose and guidance from ACEQCA.

We have a duty of care to ensure children are provided with a high level of safety when sleeping and 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.

Strategies

All strategies detailed below will be implemented to the extent reasonably practicable.

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).

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 provides daily rest and relaxation periods where children participate in calming experiences such as yoga, visualisation stories, meditation or listening to restful music.

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 rest requirements.

SLEEP AND REST SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENT

The approved provider, in conjunction with educators of the Service, will conduct a comprehensive risk assessment to ensure all potential hazards are identified and specify how any risks identified are managed and minimised in sleep and rest areas in line with Red Nose and ACECQA guidelines (reg. 84A).

The risk assessment will be reviewed at least annually or after being aware of an incident or circumstance where the health, safety or wellbeing of children may be compromised during sleep or rest. All risk assessments will be regularly assessed and evaluated as to facilitate continuous improvement in our service. If a risk concerning a child's safety during sleep and rest is identified during the risk assessment, the approved provider must update the *Sleep and Rest Policy* and procedure as soon as possible. The risk assessment must be stored safely and securely and kept for a period of 3 years.

Our risk assessment will consider and include the following information:

- the number, age, developmental stages and individual needs of children
- the sleep and rest needs of individual children being educated and cared for (including specific health care needs, cultural preferences, sleep and rest needs of individual children and requests from families about a child's sleep and rest)
- the suitability of staffing arrangements to adequately supervise and monitor children during sleep and rest periods
- the level of knowledge and training of staff supervising children during sleep and rest periods
- the location of sleep and rest areas, including the arrangement of cots and beds within the sleep and rest areas
- the safety and suitability of any cots, beds and bedding equipment, having regard to the ages and developmental stages of the children who will use the cots, bed and bedding equipment
- any potential hazards
 - in sleep and rest areas
 - on a child during sleep and rest periods (such as jewellery, clothing)
- the physical safety and suitability of sleep and rest environments (including temperature, lighting and ventilation)
- for services that provide overnight care (such as services located in hospitals catering for shift workers) the risk assessment must address management of risks relating to overnight care (ACECQA 2023)

The Approved Provider/Management/Nominated Supervisor 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 Rest, Relaxation and Sleep Policy
- a sleep and rest specific risk assessment is conducted at least annually to ensure all protentional hazards are controlled in sleep or rest areas in line with Red Nose and ACECQA guidelines
- 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 rest, relaxation and sleep environment. (Sec. 167)
- reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the needs for rest and relaxation 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 process
- to provide appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for rest and relaxation including providing children with comfortable spaces away from the main activity area for relaxation and quiet activities
- to provide children with a safe rest, relaxation and sleep environment, including adequate ventilation and adequate lighting to enable effective supervision
- to negotiate rest, relaxation and sleep routines and practices with families to reach agreement on how these occur for each child at the Service
- educators receive information and training to fulfil their role effectively, including being made aware of the rest, relaxation and sleep policies, their responsibilities in implementing these, and any changes that are made over time
- educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures
- the child's safety is always the first priority
- children who are resting, relaxing and sleeping have their face uncovered at all times
- all equipment and furniture used are safe, clean and in good repair (Reg. 103, 105)
- a safe indoor environment for sleep and rest is provided for children that is well ventilated, has adequate natural light and can be maintained at a temperature that ensures children's safety and wellbeing and is free from all hazards including cigarette and tobacco smoke (Reg.110)

Educators will:

- have a thorough understanding of the Service's policy and procedure and embed practices to support safe sleep into everyday practice
- ensure children's safety is paramount
- ensure supervision is active, effective and frequent
- 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 there are no loose aspects of clothing or jewellery that could entangle the child during sleep/rest
- sit near children who are resting and encourage them to relax and/or listen to music.
- ensure that each child's comfort is provided for
- respond to children's individual cues for sleep (yawning, rubbing eyes, disengagement from activities, crying etc).
- create a relaxing environment for sleeping children by playing quiet 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
- contact parents to collect their child if they are unable to participate in the program and monitor the child until they arrive
- ensure that children who do not wish to rest are provided with alternative quiet activities and experiences, whilst those children who do wish to rest 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 are provided.
- acknowledge and support children's agency, emotions, feelings and fears in regard to rest\sleep time
- develop positive relationships with children to assist in settling children confidently when resting
- provide sleep or rest information to parents/families

Parents/Families will:

- be informed during orientation of our *Rest, Relaxation & Sleep Policy* and procedure
- provide educators with any updates or changes on their child's sleeping routines and patterns

Continuous Improvement/Reflection

Our *Rest, Relaxation & Sleep 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.

Sources

ACECQA. (n.d.). Safe sleep and rest practices: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/supporting-materials/infosheet/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 2023).

Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2023)

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

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

Red Nose: Cot Bed DL Oct2018 Online.pdf

Revised National Quality Standard. (Amended 2023).

[Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)

Review

POLICY REVIEWED	FEBRUARY 2024	NEXT REVIEW DATE	FEBRUARY 2025
VERSION NUMBER	V14.02.24		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> rearranged content within policy for ease of implementation and relevance to stakeholders merged some areas for ease of implementation and understanding by educators and staff sources checked for currency 		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE	
FEBRUARY/OCTOBER 2023	<p>OCTOBER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New information added regarding regulation changes effective October 2023 <p>FEBRUARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> annual policy review NS/RP section merged into AP/NS section to reduce repetition maintenance of cots and bedding section added Parent/Family section updated Hyperlinks checked and repaired if needed 	FEBRUARY 2024	
SEPTEMBER 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional information added following release of NSW Regulatory Authority Safe Sleep and Rest Regulatory Priority Program Added Childcare Centre Desktop Resources box and continuous improvement sections link to Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations added in 'Sources' 	FEBRUARY 2023	

FEBRUARY 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional information added to policy to reflect best practice as requested by AO-NSW regulatory authority 	FEBRUARY 2023
JUNE 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> policy reviewed to align with ACECQA policy guidelines (June 2021) Additional legislative requirements added Additional section added 'Families' Additional section added- Key Terms 	FEBRUARY 2022
FEBRUARY 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> rearranged content- Information re: Babies and Toddlers and other specific procedures for educators related to babies and toddlers added section specifically for pre-school aged children checked currency of information from sources additional related policies added 	FEBRUARY 2022
FEBRUARY 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referenced appropriate content to ACECQA Sources checked for currency Red Nose link added 	FEBRUARY 2021
FEBRUARY 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammar, punctuation and spelling edited. Additional information added to points. Sources checked for currency – many links now unavailable: deleted and updated as required. Sources/references corrected and alphabetised. 	FEBRUARY 2020
FEBRUARY 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added 'related policies' list Improvement to opening statement Minor terminology adjustments 	FEBRUARY 2019
OCTOBER 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merged Rest Time Policy with Sleeping Requirements Policy. Changes made to comply with changes to National Regulations and revised National Quality Standard and safe sleeping practice. 	FEBRUARY 2018
FEBRUARY 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor adjustments made with the addition of the National Quality Standard requirements for sleeping. 	February 2018