

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

Safe Sleep, Rest and Relaxation



Introduction

All children have individual sleep and rest requirements. Children need a comfortable relaxing environment to enable their bodies to rest. This environment must be safe and well supervised to ensure children are safe, healthy, and secure in their environment.

Goals – What are we going to do?

The Education and Care service will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs. The risk of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI), including Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), will be minimised by following practices and guidelines set out by health authorities.

Strategies – To achieve our goals

- Educators, staff and management have a shared duty of care to ensure all children are provided with a high level of safety when sleeping and resting, including:
 - Adequate lighting to enable effective supervision by staff and ventilation for children, and every reasonable precaution is taken to protect them from harm and hazard.
 - Safe equipment

Safe Equipment

- Children, sleeping and resting, will always be within sight and hearing distance so that educators can monitor children's safety and wellbeing and respond immediately when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation.

Supervision during sleep and rest

- Children will be physically checked/ inspected at least every 10 minutes by inspection of the child's:
 - sleeping position
 - skin and lip colour
 - breathing
 - body temperature
 - head position, airway head and face, ensuring they remain uncovered.
- We will take into consideration the risk for each individual child, such as considering the age of the child, medical conditions, individual needs and history of health and/or sleep issues.
- Educators will maintain active supervision and will not be performing duties that would take away from sleeping and resting children.

Assessing risk for sleep and rest times

- Our service will conduct a risk assessment to identify and mitigate risks associated with sleep and rest. These will include the individual needs of children, the location of the sleep and rest space, the environment, the equipment used for sleep and rest, supervision practices, ventilation, lighting, beds and linen and staff understanding of the service's sleep and rest policy and procedures. In accordance with the regulations, the risk assessment will be reviewed every 12 months or at a time when it is

deemed necessary to make changes/review/modify the document. (see risk assessment in WHS folder). We will make any necessary updates to the sleep and rest policies and procedures as soon as practicable after conducting the sleep and rest risk assessment and keep a record of each sleep and rest risk assessment conducted.

Communicating with families about safe sleep practices

- We will communicate with families about our safe sleep practices, on enrolment and when any changes are made.
- We will consult with families about their child's routine for sleep and rest at home and carry this out at the service where possible and safe to do so, in line with the prevailing safe sleep practices recommended by Red Nose Australia.
- Educators will consult with families about their child's individual needs and will be sensitive to different values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise, associated with sleep and rest.

Children's individual needs

- Children are encouraged to:
 - Bring any comfort toy or other requirements to access during quieter relaxation times, thus providing for emotional security and connection to family and routines at home
 - Participate in quiet time and relaxation for a short period, or alternately participate in quiet activities
 - Access the quiet spaces within each classroom or outside if they are requiring rest or relaxation
- Each child attending Kootingal & District Preschool has access to a clean, safe mattress if they choose to have a rest.
- The children's age and individual developmental stages are taken into consideration when planning for rest and relaxation. Kootingal & District Preschool practices are in line with current views about health, safety and welfare. The following procedures are observed:
 - Children rest with their faces uncovered
 - All areas are free from tobacco or cigarette smoke as Kootingal & District Preschool is a smoke free environment
 - All sleep and rest environments are free from hazards
 - Sleeping and resting children are closely monitored at all times, taking into consideration any individual risks including children who have any medical conditions, individual needs or history of health and/or sleep issues.
 - At all times during rest and relaxation periods each child is in sight of an educator.
 - Children are given the choice of other self-directed quiet activities.
 - Each child is provided with a comfortable space separate from main activity for relaxation.
 - Educators ensure there is enough natural light and ventilation in the room to ensure this practice.
 - If a child does sleep, all efforts will be made to allow the child to remain asleep for an entire sleep cycle of 60 minutes. After this time the child will attempt to be roused from sleep if a change in the routine requires (eg. going outside).
 - If a parent has informed staff that their child has had a late night, busy weekend etc., educators will allow the child to rest quietly earlier than the rest period that day if necessary, if the child indicates this.

- Kootingal Preschool has adequate bedding to provide each child with their own mattress and enough space to allow each child their own personal space to rest comfortably and allow easy access by educators.
- During the heat of the summer, air conditioning is provided for the children’s comfort, and in the colder months heating is used to keep the children warm.
- Whenever children are resting, soothing relaxation music or stories are played throughout the Preschool to encourage rest and relaxation. Lights are turned off, and educators speak quietly to individual children when necessary.
- Educator ratios are maintained at all times during this time
- The names of the children who do sleep during the rest period are recorded and parents notified at the end of the day.
- Children are encouraged to remove shoes, additional jumpers and glasses to make the rest period as comfortable as possible.
- If a child is wearing neck jewelry, this will be removed as per the risk assessment, before the child rests.
- Children will be physically checked on every 10 minutes.
- Children have access to books and other quiet activities to engage them quietly whilst others are still resting.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Authority/Responsibility For
Approved Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ “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 (Regulation 84A). The approved provider must also ensure there are policies and procedures in place for managing sleep and rest for children (Regulation 168) and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed (Regulation 170). “ ➤ Undertake a risk assessment to ensure adequate supervision and monitoring of children during periods of sleep and rest is conducted and documented, including the method and frequency of checking children’s safety, health and wellbeing. ➤ Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met. ➤ Ensure all educators receive information and induction training to fulfill their roles effectively, including being made aware of the sleep and rest policies, their responsibilities in implementing these, and any changes that are made over time. ➤ Take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures. ➤ Ensure 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 the children. ➤ Ensure the premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and in good repair.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure that each child has access to sufficient furniture, materials and developmentally appropriate equipment suitable for the education and care of that child. ➤ Ensure that the indoor spaces used by children are well ventilated; have adequate natural light; and are maintained at a temperature that ensures the safety and wellbeing of children. ➤ Ensure sleep and rest environments are free from cigarette and tobacco smoke. ➤ Ensure that the premises are designed to facilitate supervision ➤ Ensure children are supervised during periods of sleep and rest. This should include ensuring clear procedures and processes are in place for regular physical bed-side checks of children and recording all checks at the time they occur. ➤ Ensure copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to Nominated Supervisors, Educators, staff and volunteers, and available for inspection.
Nominated Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure that children’s safety, health, and well-being are upheld at all times. ➤ Maintain up to date knowledge regarding safe sleeping practice and communicate this information to educators and families. ➤ Support all educators to have the knowledge, training and practical skills to implement safe sleep and rest practices, develop secure attachments with children and provide sensitive and responsive care. ➤ Ensure there is a procedure for educators to record the time and observation of physical checks of children sleeping and resting.
Early Childhood Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Consult with families about children’s sleep and rest needs. Educators will be sensitive to each child’s needs so that sleep and rest times are a positive experience. ➤ Ensure that beds/pillows are clean and in good repair. Beds/pillows will be sprayed with Tutti Fruitti Disinfectant and wiped off with an individual paper towel for each item. ➤ Arrange children’s beds/pillows to allow easy access for children and staff. ➤ Ensure bed linen is clean and in good repair. Bed linen is for use by an individual child and will be washed before use by another child. ➤ Identify and remove potential hazards from sleep environments. As per risk assessment. ➤ Ensure the sleeping environment has been considered with hazards in the sleeping environment removed and mitigated. ➤ Create a relaxing atmosphere for resting children by playing relaxation music, reading stories, cultural reflection, turning off lights and ensuring children are comfortably clothed. The environment should be tranquil and calm for both educators and children. Educators will sit near resting children and support them by encouraging them to relax and listen to music or stories. ➤ Remember that children do not need to be “patted “to sleep. By providing a quiet, tranquil environment, children will choose to sleep if their body needs it.

	<p>However, if children request staff to pat or sooth them, educators will do so appropriately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Encourage children to rest their bodies and minds by providing quiet activities for the duration of relaxation time. ➤ Maintain adequate supervision and maintain educator ratios throughout the rest period. ➤ Assess each child’s circumstances and current health to determine whether higher supervision levels and checks may be required. ➤ 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. Sleep and rest patterns will be communicated to families. ➤ Ensure children will sleep and rest with their face uncovered. ➤ Promote children’s agency and decision making by providing routines and environments both indoors and outdoors, that facilitate sleep and rest opportunities. ➤ 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. The room temperature will be considered to ensure maximum comfort for the children and will not be too warm. Jumpers with hoods and necklaces will be removed from child. ➤ 10 Minute sleep checks will be conducted on each child. ➤ Allow children to sleep for an entire sleep cycle of 60 minutes whenever possible.
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Regularly update the service on their child’s sleeping routines and patterns. ➤ Provide informal updates on the previous night’s sleep to assist with sleeping during the day. ➤ Dress their child appropriately for the weather conditions and provide additional clothing ➤ Review service policies and procedures

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Management and staff will monitor and review the effectiveness of the Safe Sleep and Rest policy regularly. Updated information will be incorporated as needed.

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this policy annually.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with Regulation 172 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child

enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

Communications with families are maintained to encourage a consistent approach in responding appropriately and respectfully to children's sleep and rest needs. Safe sleeping practices are followed to minimise the risk of harm to children.

Links to other policies:

Administration of First Aid

Emergency and Evacuation

Clothing and Footwear

Dental Health

Supervision

Family Communication and Participation

Enrolment and Orientation

Interactions with Children

Cleaning and Maintaining the Environment

Toileting & Nappy Change

Providing a Child Safe Environment

Related Legislation:

NQS

Quality Area 2		Children's health and safety
<i>Standard</i>	<i>2.1</i>	<i>Health</i>
<i>Element</i>	<i>2.1.1</i>	Wellbeing and comfort
<i>Standard</i>	<i>2.2</i>	<i>Safety</i>
<i>Element</i>	<i>2.2.1</i>	Supervision
Quality Area 3		Physical environment
<i>Standard</i>	<i>3.1</i>	<i>Design</i>

National Regulations

Reg	85	Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures
Reg	103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
Reg	105	Furniture, material and equipment
Reg	110	Ventilation and natural light
Reg	115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
Reg	168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures

Sources:

- National Quality Standards
- Australian Consumer Law 2011 – Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.
- The NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011 & the NSW Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011

- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations.
- ACCC Product Safety Australia – www.productsafety.gov.au/publication/keeping-baby-safe-a-guideto-infant-and-nursery-products
- Red Nose Safe Sleeping Guidelines
- ACECQA: Sleep and Rest for Children: Policy Guidelines – www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-08/PolicyGuidelines_SleepRestForChildren_July.pdf
- NSW Health Safe Sleeping Recommendations – <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/kidsfamilies/MCFhealth/child/Pages/safe-sleep.aspx>
- Raising Children: About Sleep - <https://raisingchildren.net.au/newborns/sleep/understanding-sleep/about-sleep>

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