# SLEEP AND REST POLICY

This policy is guided by the paramount consideration that children's safety, rights and best interests are upheld above all other considerations in all decisions, actions and practices.

Goals / What are we going to do?

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 education and care service will provide beds that comply with Australian Standards. 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.

Strategies / How will it be done?

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.

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 asleep. 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. We encourage children to rest their bodies and minds for 15 minutes even if they don't sleep. 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.

## SLEEP AND REST SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENT

The approved provider, in conjunction with educators of the service, will conduct a comprehensive risk assessment to identify any potential risk/s or hazards and ensure the safety of all children during sleep and rest.

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 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 beds within the sleep and rest areas
- the safety and suitability of any beds and bedding equipment, having regard to the ages and developmental stages of the children who will use the 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)

(ACECQA 2023)

## THE APPROVED PROVIDER/MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL ENSURE:

- 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 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 process
- up to date knowledge regarding safe sleeping practices is maintained and information communicated to educators and families
- ongoing training is provided on safe sleep practices for all educators and keep a record of all such training
- opportunities are provided for educators to participate in Red Nose professional training
- 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
- to provide children with safe sleeping equipment and environment, including adequate ventilation and adequate lighting to enable effective supervision

- 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
- to provide information to parents and families about Safe Sleep practices (see Red Nose)
- educators, staff and volunteers 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 mattresses available to children that meet Australian Standards to be used only for sleep and rest purposes
- they stay up to date with banned/recalled products and remove these immediately from the service if required
- educators follow the *Administration of First Aid Policy* 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
- the Nominated Supervisor will ensure an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* is completed in its entirety
- the Nominated Supervisor will ensure the parent and the regulatory authority are notified as soon as possible and within 24 hours of a serious incident
- sleep surfaces are checked for firmness in accordance to Australian Standard AS/NZS 8811:1:2013
- a safe indoor environment 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 (Reg.110)
- sleep and rest environments will be safe and free from all hazards including cigarette and tobacco smoke
- areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated and have natural lighting
- safe sleep practices are documented and shared with families
- to negotiate sleep and rest routines and practices with families to reach agreement on how these occur for each child at the Service
- Nominated Supervisors and educators are not expected to endorse practices requested by a family if they differ from Red Nose safe (formerly SIDS and Kids) sleeping recommendations.
- if any requirements differ from Red Nose sleeping recommendations, written authorisation from a medical practitioner will be required and shared with educators

EDUCATORS WILL:

- have a thorough understanding of the Service's policy and practices and embed practices to support safe sleep into everyday practice
- ensure children's safety and wellbeing is paramount at all times.
- 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. Parent survey sent out regularly to ensure parents and children's voices are heard and needs met.
- ensure there are appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation. Encourage children to rest their bodies and minds for 15 minutes even if they don't sleep.
- Create a relaxing atmosphere for resting children by playing relaxation music, reading stories, cultural reflection, dimming lights or using lamps 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.
- Maintain active supervision at all times, checking children at least every ten minutes to see the rise and fall of each child's chest and the colour of their skin and lips.
- If children are sick with colds, chronic lung disorders or have specific health care needs, check every 5 mins and provide higher levels of supervision. Record these extra checks on the bottom of the sleep chart as required.
- Ensure a record is maintained recording the time and observation of each physical check immediately after checks are made, on the Safe Sleep Record [include children of all age groups on Sleep/Rest record]
- Ensure that beds/mattresses are clean and in good repair. Beds and mattresses will be wiped over with warm water and neutral detergent or vinegar between each use. Beds will be stored in the storeroom in each classroom.
- ensure mattresses are used for the correct purpose of sleep and rest only
- Ensure that 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. Ensure children do not rest / sleep with pillows. A "small" soft toy in good condition from home is allowable under active supervision from educator, ensuring it is not on their face. A small light blanket (provided by centre) may be used, providing educators ensure it does not go above armpit level and is not covering their head / face.
- arrange children's mattresses to allow easy access for children and staff

- Encourage children to dress appropriately for the room temperature when resting or sleeping. Lighter clothing is preferable, with children encouraged to remove shoes, hoodies, jumpers, jackets and bulky clothing. The room temperature will be considered to ensure maximum comfort for the children.
- 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 an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* is completed in its entirety following an incident
- ensure sleeping 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 all sleeping children are within hearing range and observed
- ensure children sleep with their face uncovered
- 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. [Any sleep requirements that differ from Red Nose recommendations must be supported by a medical certificate]. 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 recorded daily for families.
- ensure that children who **do not** wish to sleep are provided with alternative quiet activities and experiences, whilst those 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
- respond to children's individual cues for sleep (yawning, rubbing eyes, disengagement from activities, crying etc).
- acknowledge and support children's agency, emotions, feelings and fears in regard to sleep/rest time
- develop positive relationships with children to assist in settling children confidently when sleeping and resting
- record sleep and rest patterns to provide information to parents/families if requested.

- Follow digital media, photography, and surveillance protocols in relation to sleep/rest areas.

- Do not permit vaping devices, tobacco products, alcohol or prohibited substances in any area of the service, including rest/sleep areas.
- Follow the method and frequency of physical checks as documented in the current sleep and rest risk assessment

PARENTS/FAMILIES WILL:

- be informed during orientation of our *Sleep and Rest Policy* and procedure
- be provided with regular information and communication about safe sleep practices from Red Nose and any changes to our policies or procedures
- be informed that if any requirements for sleep for their child differs from Red Nose sleeping recommendations, written authorisation from a medical practitioner will be required
- 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.
- Be informed of the service's prohibition on vaping and tobacco products.
- Dress their child appropriately for the weather conditions and provide additional clothing.
- Review the services policies and procedures.
- be required to provide specific bedding for their child each day (as detailed in enrolment information)

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:<br>• that an educator can respond immediately, particularly when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation;<br>• knowing where children are at all times and monitoring their activities actively and diligently |
| Continuous supervision | Ensure an educator is in sight and hearing of a sleeping child at all times- representing best practice (Red Nose) |
| Infant | A young child between the ages of birth and 12 months |

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| 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. |

CHILDCARE CENTRE DESKTOP- RELATED RESOURCES

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| Sleep and Rest Procedure<br>Safe Sleep Audit | Safe Sleep Record<br>Safe Sleep Practices Risk Assessment Action Plan |

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 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)
Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (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 to bed safety https://rednose.org.au/downloads/RN3356_Cot_Bed_DL_Oct2018_Online.pdf
Revised National Quality Standard. (Amended 2023).
Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations

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 |

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| 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 | | |
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| 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 REGULATIONS AND NATIONAL LAW | |
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| 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

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| Administration of First Aid Policy<br>Child Safe Environment Policy<br>Enrolment Policy<br>Death of a Child at the Service Policy<br>Dental Health Policy<br>Emergency and Evacuation Policy<br>Family Communication Policy<br>Furniture and Equipment Safety Policy | Health and Safety Policy<br>Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy<br>Physical Environment Policy<br>Respect for Children Policy<br>Staffing Arrangements Policy<br>Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol-Free Policy<br>Work Health and Safety |

REVIEW

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| POLICY REVIEWED | September 2026 | NEXT REVIEW DATE | September 2027 |
| VERSION NUMBER | V15.09.26 | | |
| | Paramountcy principle added | | |
| POLICY REVIEWED | JUNE 2026 | NEXT REVIEW DATE | JUNE 2027 |
| VERSION NUMBER | V12.06.26 | | |
| | JUNE<br>Annual policy review<br>Minor adjustments to wording and grammar | | |
| POLICY REVIEWED | OCTOBER 2023 | NEXT REVIEW DATE | OCTOBER 2025 |
| VERSION NUMBER | V13.10.23 | | |
| MODIFICATIONS | OCTOBER<br>• New information added regarding regulation changes effective October 2023<br>FEBRUARY<br>• annual policy review<br>• NS/RP section merged into AP/NS section to reduce repetition<br>• maintenance of cots and bedding section added<br>• Parent/Family section updated<br>• Hyperlinks checked and repaired if needed | | |
| POLICY REVIEWED | PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS | | NEXT REVIEW DATE |
| SEPTEMBER 2022 | • Additional information added following release of NSW Regulatory Authority Safe Sleep and Rest Regulatory Priority Program | | FEBRUARY 2023 |

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| | • Added Childcare Centre Desktop Resources box and continuous improvement sections<br>• link to Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations added in 'Sources' | |
| FEBRUARY 2022 | • Additional information added to policy to reflect best practice as requested by AO-NSW regulatory authority | FEBRUARY 2023 |
| JUNE 2021 | • policy reviewed to algin with ACECQA policy guidelines (June 2021)<br>• Additional legislative requirements added<br>• Additional section added 'Families'<br>• Additional section added- Key Terms | FEBRUARY 2022 |
| FEBRUARY 2021 | • rearranged content- Information re: Babies and Toddlers and other specific procedures for educators related to babies and toddlers<br>• added section specifically for pre-school aged children<br>• checked currency of information from sources<br>• additional related policies added | FEBRUARY 2022 |
| FEBRUARY 2020 | • Referenced appropriate content to ACECQA<br>• Sources checked for currency<br>• Red Nose link added | FEBRUARY 2021 |
| FEBRUARY 2019 | • Grammar, punctuation and spelling edited.<br>• Additional information added to points.<br>• Sources checked for currency – many links now unavailable: deleted and updated as required.<br>• Sources/references corrected and alphabetised. | FEBRUARY 2020 |
| FEBRUARY 2018 | • Added 'related policies' list<br>• Improvement to opening statement<br>• Minor terminology adjustments | FEBRUARY 2019 |
| OCTOBER 2017 | • 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 | • Minor adjustments made with the addition of the National Quality Standard requirements for sleeping. | February 2018 |