

SLEEP AND REST POLICY

Revised March 2021

INTRODUCTION

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

GOALS

This preschool will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs. 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 preschool's duty of care, it is a requirement that all educators implement and adhere to this policy to ensure we respect and cater for each child's specific needs.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the preschool.

STRATEGIES

Children have different sleep, rest and relaxation needs. Children of the same age can have different sleep patterns, which Nominated Supervisors and educators need to consider within the preschool day. As per Standard 2.1 (element 2.1.2) 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.

Our preschool defines 'rest' as a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness or tranquility, and can include a child being in a state of sleep. Considering the busy and energetic nature of a preschool 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 and sleep strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and safe in an early childhood environment. Our preschool will consult with families about their child's individual needs, ensuring they are aware of the different values and parenting beliefs, cultural or opinions associated with sleep or rest requirements.

The Approved Provider will ensure:

- Reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by the preschool are met, having regard to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of each child.
- There is adequate bedding available to children that meet Australian Standards.
- That sleep and rest environments are safe and free from hazards
- That areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated and have natural lighting.
- Effective and safe supervision of sleeping children.

The 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 preschool 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.
- Ensure educators 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.
- Negotiate sleep and rest routines and practices with families as necessary, to reach agreement on how these occur for each child at the preschool.
- Ensure that educators are always within sight and hearing distance of sleeping and resting children and that child safety is always the first priority
- Ensure children who are sleeping or resting have their face uncovered at all times
- Ensure the sleep and rest environment is free from cigarette or tobacco smoke

Educators will:

- Ensure there are appropriate opportunities with the daily preschool routine to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.
- Respect family preferences regarding sleep and rest and consider these daily while ensuring children feel safe and secure in the environment and are having their individual rest needs met.
- Ensure that children who **do not** wish to sleep are provided with alternative quiet activities and experiences, while 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 (if required). It is important that opportunities for rest and relaxation, as well as sleep, are provided.
- Create a relaxing environment for resting children by playing relaxation music, reading stories, cultural reflection; turning off lights, monitoring room temperature and ensuring children are comfortably clothed. The environment should be tranquil and calm for both educators and children.
- Sit near children during rest time encouraging them to relax and listen to music. By providing a quiet, tranquil environment, children will choose to sleep if their body needs it.
- Maintain adequate supervision and educator/child ratios throughout the rest period.
- Ensure that beds are clean and in good repair and are wiped over with warm water and neutral detergent or vinegar between each use.
- Ensure that bed linen is clean and in good repair and is used by an individual child only and will be washed before use by another child.
- Communicate with families about their child's sleeping or rest times and the preschool policy regarding sleep and rest times.

Relevant Links to the National Quality Standard (NQS):

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD		
	Concept	Descriptor
QA2		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 need 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.
QA3		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 Regulations:

81	Sleep and rest
103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
107	Space requirements – indoor space

Sources

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority
 - Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2015.
 - ECA Code of Ethics.
 - Guide to the National Quality Standard.
 - Guidelines for SIDS and Kids Safe Sleeping in Childcare Facilities
 - SIDS & Kids Safe Sleeping Kit – www.sidsandkids.org
 - Standards Australia – www.standards.org.au
 - The Children's Hospital at Westmead – Safety factsheet – Cots and Cot Mattresses, <http://kidshealth.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/sites/kidshealth.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/files/safetyfactsheets/cots-and-cot-mattresses.pdf>
 - Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) – www.accc.gov.au - Cot safety PDF
 - 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
 - Safe sleep and rest practices from October 2017 (ACECQA)
 - Revised National Quality Standards
 - Red Nose
- <https://rednose.com.au/section/safe-practices>