



Sleep, Rest, Relaxation and Clothing Policy

NQS

QA2	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.
	2.1.2	Health practices and procedures - Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented
	2.2.1	Supervision - At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard
	3.1.1	Fit for purpose - Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child
	3.1.2	Upkeep - Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained
	6.1.2	Parent views are respected - The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing
	6.1.3	Families are supported - Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing
	7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities - Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service

National Law

Section	165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
	167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards

National Regulations

Regs	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

	110	Ventilation and natural light
	168(2)(a)(v)	Education and Care Services must have policies and procedures relating to sleep and rest for children

EYLF

LO3	Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and wellbeing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children recognise and communicate their bodily needs (for example, thirst, hunger, rest, comfort, physical activity). • Educators consider the pace of the day within the context of the community. • Educators provide a range of active and restful experiences throughout the day and support children to make appropriate decisions regarding participation.

Aim

Our Service aims to meet each child’s needs for sleep, rest and relaxation in a safe and caring manner that takes into consideration the preferences and practices of each child’s family.

Related Policies

Enrolment Policy

Governance Policy

Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy

Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy

Medical Conditions Policy

Physical Environment Policy

Staffing Arrangements Policy

Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Policy

Implementation

Most children benefit from periods of rest which help them grow and prepare them for meaningful learning experiences. Rest periods are included in all children’s daily routine consistent with their developmental needs, including a short period of rest each day for older children.

Educators have a legal obligation to ensure children are safe when sleeping or resting, and our safe sleep and rest procedures follow current Red Nose guidelines, the recognised national authority in this area, as well as relevant guidance from ACECQA and our Regulatory Authority. Educators will accommodate any requests about their child’s sleeping practices where these are not inconsistent with the safe sleeping practices discussed in the policy.

Educators must also comply with laws requiring them to offer children sleep and rest based on their age, development and individual sleep and rest needs. Educators will take into account families’ preferences about the amount of sleep their child has at the service, but if a child is displaying signs of tiredness, educators must allow the child to sleep or rest for a reasonable period of time.

Where families are concerned that children's sleep at the service is impacting night sleep patterns, educators will discuss expected sleep patterns with families based on advice from recognised authorities and adjust a child's sleep time at the service if appropriate. The Nominated Supervisor and educators, however, will make the final decision about the child's sleep and rest at the service to ensure they can meet their obligations. For example, if a resting child falls asleep without assistance in instances where families have requested the child not have naps, educators may allow the child to sleep for a period they believe is in the best interests of the child.

Approved Provider Responsibilities

The Approved Provider must ensure systems are in place to ensure the health and safety of children, including during periods of sleep and rest. These systems include effective induction processes, training opportunities, spot checks and audits of educator practices and sleep/rest environment, and procedures ensuring compliance with policies and procedures, including supervision and safe sleep practices.

The Approved Provider is also responsible for ensuring there is suitable furniture and equipment, for example, cots which comply with relevant Australian Standards, and the environment is hygienic and comfortable.

Nominated Supervisor Responsibilities

The Nominated Supervisor must ensure sleep practices, environment and equipment are safe and reflect best practice guidelines from recognised authorities, and educators understand and follow Service sleep and rest policies and procedures, including the safe sleeping practices in this policy at all times.

To promote children's safety and wellbeing during sleep and rest periods, the Nominated Supervisor will also ensure:

- Sleep and rest environments are quiet and restful
- Sleep spaces are light enough to allow supervision and for educators to properly see babies' and toddlers' breathing, lip and skin colour (and that of older children who may be ill, have additional needs etc) when they physically check them
- Timers can be used to ensure 10 minute checks of sleeping or resting babies and 15 minute check for toddlers is not overlooked
- There are comfortable spaces for children to engage in quiet activities if they're not sleeping or resting
- Rostering enables adequate supervision of sleeping and resting children
- Ratios are maintained at all times children are sleeping and resting
- Hanging cords or strings from blinds, curtains, mobiles or electrical devices are away from cots and beds/stretchers
- Babies are never left to sleep in a bassinet, hammock, pram or stroller
- Heaters and electrical appliances aren't near cots or beds/stretchers
- There is no furniture in the sleep or rest area that a child could pull over or collapse onto themselves

- Information about safe sleeping practices is discussed during enrolment and displayed or available in the parent information area.

Family Responsibilities

If a child has a medical condition which prevents educators from following these procedures, for example the child cannot sleep on their back, a medical practitioner must authorise an alternative resting practice in writing as part of the child's Medical Management Plan.

Families should also update educators on their child's sleeping routines and patterns when these change, and let educators know when their child has not slept well during the night.

Educator Responsibilities

To ensure children's safety and wellbeing during sleep and rest periods, educators and volunteers will:

- Ensure they understand and follow the safe sleeping practices in this policy at all times
- Ensure they can always see and hear sleeping or resting children
- Accommodate each child's and family's preferences, for rest, sleep and clothing, including cultural and religious preferences, to the extent they are consistent with this policy
- Provide children who do not require sleep or rest with quiet, meaningful activities
- Encourage children to communicate their needs for sleep and rest and make appropriate decisions about these needs
- Support children who need rest and relaxation outside the designated rest time
- Respect the privacy needs of each child when dressing and undressing
- Play calm, relaxing music
- Communicate daily with families about their child's sleep and rest routines
- Comfort children when required. Educators try to avoid rocking children to sleep so they don't expect this at home
- Ensure babies are never left to sleep in a bassinet, hammock, pram or stroller
- Ensure hanging cords or strings from blinds, curtains, mobiles or electrical devices are away from cots and mattresses
- Implement the safe sleeping practices which follow at all times, with the only exception based on written authorisation from a child's doctor
- Record the time children sleep and rest and provide this information to families

Safe Sleeping Practices

All children

- Can always see and hear sleeping or resting children and children actively supervised ie educators are not distracted by other duties
- Child's face is never covered when they sleep or rest
- Regular physical checks of all sleeping or resting children paying particular attention to breathing patterns and skin colour (particularly important for babies and toddlers). Checks will be more frequent if there are increased risk factors eg medical conditions, illness or sleep issues.
- Temperature of rest environment monitored to ensure it's not too hot or cold

- Adequate space between sleeping and resting children

Babies and toddlers

- Babies and toddlers placed on back
- Babies re-positioned onto back when they roll onto their front or side if they cannot repeatedly roll from back to front to back (occurs around 5-6 months of age). Babies who can roll back and forth may be left to find their own sleeping position
- Light bedding used and tucked in tightly. Sleeping bags with a fitted neck and arm holes but no hood may be used instead of bed linen. Wraps made from lightweight material like muslin or cotton
- Babies arms free from wraps once startle reflex disappears (around 3 months old)
- No wraps used if babies can roll from back to front to back again
- No quilts, doonas, pillows, soft toys, lamb's wool or cot bumpers
- No electric blankets, hot water bottles and wheat bags
- Babies and toddlers placed so their feet are close to the bottom end of the cot
- No bottles given to child (for safety and dental hygiene reasons)
- No bibs on child
- Dummies provided if required without chain attachments. Dummies not replaced if they fall out while child sleeping. Dummies should be phased out around age 1 following discussion with families
- Babies are never left to sleep in bassinets, hammocks, prams or strollers
- Toddlers moved from cot to bed if likely to succeed when attempting to climb out of cot (usually 2-3½)
- Babies and toddlers sleeping/resting in the cot room physically checked from the side of the cot or toddler bed every 10 minutes and sleep record completed at this time. Physical checks do not include looking through a window or using CCTV, audio, or heart monitors.

Cots

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure all cots meet Australian Standards and have one of the following labels - AS/NZS 2172:2010 or AS/NZS 2195:2010 (folding cots). For normal cots this means, for example:

- Cot mattresses are in good condition, clean, firm, flat and fit the cot base with no more than a 20mm gap between the mattress and the cot sides.
- The distance between slats is at least 50 mm
- Cots in the lowest base position, the distance between the top of the mattress base and the top edge of the lowest cot side or end is at least:
 - 600 mm when access is closed
 - 250 mm when access is open
- For cots in the upper base position, the distance between the top of the mattress base and the top edge of the lowest cot side or end is at least:
 - 400 mm when access is closed
 - 250 mm when access is open

Portable cots (portacots) are not intended for permanent use. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure portable cots, if used, are only used temporarily (no more than few days) for children up to 15 kg. Educators will ensure locking mechanisms are secure, only use mattresses supplied with the cots, and never add additional padding or a mattress under or over the mattress.

The Nominated Supervisor will also ensure:

- Mattress firmness complies with AS/NZS 8811.1:2013 Methods of testing sleep surfaces.
- Mattresses are not tilted or elevated
- Plastic packaging is removed from new mattresses
- Waterproof mattress protectors are strong, not torn and a tight fit.

Sleep and Rest Environment

The Nominated Supervisor will conduct regular safety checks of the rest environment and equipment.

To promote learning and wellbeing, educators may occasionally encourage children to sleep or rest outdoors in suitable weather conditions eg it's not too hot or raining. Educators will ensure:

- Beds are placed in clean and shaded areas ie not in wet dirt or mud
- Bed linen is washed at the end of the day if it is dirtied outside
- Beds are cleaned before being stored inside after rest time
- Children are supervised at all times
- The quality of children's sleep and rest time is not affected by being outdoors.

Hygiene

To ensure sleeping environments are hygienic educators will:

- Clean beds, linen and mattress covers with detergent and water every day or at end of week if used by same child
- Clean beds, linen and mattress covers when they look dirty
- Make sure each child has their own bed linen
- Implement the cleaning procedure cots and stretchers to clean soiled cots, beds, mattresses, and bed linen.

Cleaning Procedure Cots and Stretchers

Wash cots and stretchers at the end of every day with detergent and warm water, and during the day if visibly dirty.

Wash sheets and mattress covers, or return them home, on child's last day for the week.

If faeces/urine/vomit etc gets on the cot/stretchers/mattress/linen

1. Wash hands and put on gloves
2. Clean the child
3. Remove gloves
4. Dress the child
5. Wash child's hands

6. Educators wash hands
7. put on gloves
8. remove most of the soiling in the cot/bed with paper towels
9. place paper towels in garbage bin
10. put linen in a plastic-lined, lidded laundry bin. Throw liner out after linen is washed and place new liner in bin
11. clean cot or mattress thoroughly with detergent and water
12. use disinfectant after detergent if surface is or could be contaminated with infectious material.
13. air dry if possible
14. remove gloves and wash hands
15. put clean linen in cot

Children's Clothing

To ensure children's comfort and safety at the service, they must wear clothing that is suitable for the weather, lets them explore and play freely, and minimises the risk of injury. Some clothing items and jewellery, for example, can strangle or choke young children. Educators may remove jewellery and teething necklaces if children wear them to the service.

Amber Teething Necklaces and Bracelets

Based on Australian Government product safety warnings, we do not allow children to wear amber teething necklaces or bracelets at our service. This is to minimise the risk they may choke on the beads if the necklaces or bracelets break apart.

Educators and volunteers will encourage parents to dress their children in clothes that:

- Are loose and cool in summer and warm enough for cold weather including outdoor play in winter
- Protect them from the sun during outdoor play
- Do not restrict them or compromise their safety when playing, sleeping or resting eg no hoods, cords, ties, ribbons or crocheted jackets that can pull tight around the neck, no hats with cords or strings that may get caught on equipment and furniture, footwear that is stable and supportive eg no thongs, clogs or backless shoes which can cause children to trip, and clothing that allows easy access for toileting eg elasticised trousers and track pants rather than buttons, zips, belts etc
- Can get dirty when children play ie children should not come in their best clothes

Families must clearly label all clothing with the child's name.

To ensure children's comfort educators and volunteers will:

- Ensure children are appropriately dressed for the weather, play experiences, and rest and sleep
- Provide clean spare clothing to children if needed
- Encourage children to use aprons for messy play and art experiences to protect their clothing

Sources

Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations

National Quality Standard

Early Years Learning Framework

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2017

Red Nose <https://rednose.com.au/>

NHMRC: Staying Healthy Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services

NQF e-bulletin Qld 9.5.16

Product Safety Australia

ACECQA Safe sleep and rest practices Information Sheet

NSW Department of Education: Sleep and rest for children – Policy/Procedure guidelines for ECEC

The policy will be reviewed annually by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties

Last reviewed: May 2023

Date for next review: May 2024