

SLEEP AND REST DRAFT POLICY/PROCEDURES

TITLE: SLEEP AND REST POLICY AND PROCEDURE/SAFE SLEEP AND REST

BACKGROUND

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to ensure arrangements for safe sleep and rest for children of varying ages. The centre offers occasional care and preschool and there are children of varied ages and developmental levels. It is essential that all staff are aware of how to manage sleep and rest to ensure each child's safety and wellbeing. Children need the opportunity to sleep or rest if they need this and to consider parent requests around sleep and rest need to be considered.

EQUIPMENT

A cot or cots will be available for babies. Cots will comply with safety standards. Cots will not have loose items that could be a choking or smothering hazard. Cots will be reviewed annually for safety and to ensure they comply with standards and are easy to put together and fold.

Waterproof mattresses designated for sleep for older children over 12 months are available. Assessment of numbers of mats will be done depending on enrolments.

Fitted sheets are provided and a light cover if needed.

Children are never left in a pram or stroller to sleep and always taken out and placed on suitable sleep equipment.

Cleaning/washing of sheets/ blankets, mattresses etc. should be done after each use.

Ensure mattresses are adequately spaced so that an adult can walk through.

Bassinets are not used at the centre.

ENVIRONMENT

Staff will ensure the environment is safe and comfortable. Staff supervision is a key part of a safe sleep and rest area. Staff will stay with the sleeping child(ren) and will be in sight/sound of other staff. An ECW will be in sight/sound of a teacher. A teacher will be in sight/sound of another teacher.

Staff will ensure there are no loose toys or equipment near sleeping or resting children.

Staff will monitor the room temperature, and this may factor into the room used.

Staff will ensure there are no children playing directly near a child resting/sleeping if a child falls asleep suddenly.

Where it is known a child may get tired regularly plans will be in place for sleep rest prior to the time a child is known to need a sleep/rest.

PARENT COLLABORATION

Collaborating with parents/guardians around sleep and rest is a priority. Teachers will become familiar with the information about sleep and rest in the “About your Child” form before a child starts preschool/occasional care. Staff will contact parents if there is a need for a child to have a lengthy sleep each day and ask the parent if they would like to change the enrolment pattern to half days in preschool or morning or afternoon session in occasional care to maximise learning time. Sleep and rest are guided by the parent and is a parent choice. Staff will contact a parent if a child goes to sleep or looks fatigued, if a parent asks for this or if a parent expresses that the child should not sleep at the centre. Staff however cannot wake a child once asleep in this instance but can only contact a parent/guardian. An incident report will be completed if staff contact a parent/guardian about a fatigued or sleeping child.

EXCURSIONS

On an excursion if a child goes to sleep a parent may need to be contacted.

ROUTINE OF THE DAY

Occasionally the routine of the day may be adapted to accommodate a sleeping child. For instance, if a child is suddenly asleep and adult-child ratios would be impacted if there was an educator supervising the child, then the routine may change for that period of sleep.

DUTY OF CARE

The teachers have the duty of care to decide what to do around sleep and location of sleep on a given day and should follow the policy. They will delegate what will happen with sleep to other staff. An ECW also has a duty of care to ensure children are safe while sleeping or resting. Staff will consult with the director (or another authorised person) as needed.

RELAXATION TIME

There is a relaxation time in the middle of the day on full days of preschool and at any other time it is felt children need this (e.g., on a very hot day). This is not a formal rest or sleep time but should be used to help children wind down. While children may on occasions lie down (e.g., to music or to listen to a story), this should only be part of a relaxation plan over time and not a daily activity. Relaxation activities should vary daily. The needs of the children are the priority at this time.

RISK ASSESSMENT

A risk assessment of sleep and rest should be conducted annually. The results of this assessment will factor into whether there are changes in the sleep and rest policy/procedures.

CLOTHING

Ensure children do not have bulky clothing or hoodies on when resting/sleeping. Children should not be wearing jewellery at any time at the centre but check to ensure there is none on when sleeping and resting.

SAFE SLEEP

Red Nose Australia Safe Sleep practices are followed in the centre. Staff must be familiar with this.

This policy includes Appendix A.

Drafted from the centre Safe Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment, Information from National Regulations and Red Nose Australia Safe Sleep Practices. Updated on 15 December 2024 by Governing Council. Review date: December 2026