

Sleep and Rest for Children Policy

Statement

This policy is based on recommendations from Red Nose Australia. Red Nose Australia (formerly SIDS and KIDS) is the recognised national authority on safe sleeping practices for infants and children. There is now much research available to inform decisions about safe sleeping environments, including research that identifies poor sleep procedures and inadequate supervision as risk factors, which can result in, or contribute to, serious harm to young children. All children need rest and sleep for their wellbeing and health, and this is an area that our Service effectively considers, diligently monitors and actively reviews to ensure risks are appropriately addressed at all times. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children attending our Service and appropriate opportunities are provided to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation in regard to their age, developmental stage and individual needs.

Background

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011)* and *Education and Early Childhood Service (Registration and Standards) Act 2011* require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for children's sleep and rest.

In the National Quality Framework Quality Area 2 covers the area of sleep.

Legislative Requirements

Section/regulation	Description
Section 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Section 167	Offence related to protection of children from harm and hazards
Regulation 82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment
Regulation 84A	Sleep and rest
Regulation 84B	Sleep and rest policies and procedures
Regulation 84C	Risk assessment for purposes of sleep and rest policies and procedures
Regulation 87	Incident, injury, trauma and illness record
Regulation 103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
Regulation 105	Furniture, materials and equipment
Regulation 106	Laundry and hygiene facilities
Regulation 107	Space requirements – indoor space
Regulation 110	Ventilation and natural light
Regulation 115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
Regulation 168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Regulation 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Regulation 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Regulation 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

NQF	Description
Element 2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort

Procedure

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that all staff members, educators and volunteers implement the following requirements –

General/Supervision

- The Service will provide a quiet and restful environment for sleep and rest periods that is within hearing and observation range for educators to closely monitor children.
- When children (in the under twos environment) are sleeping, a baby monitor is used to ensure children are heard at all times (this will not be used to replace regular 10-minute checks).
- The Service has three areas in the under twos environment where the children sleep. Educators will go in and out of these rooms at least every 10 minutes.
- An educator will remain physically present inside the building in the under twos environment to observe and check the sleeping children, at least every 10 minutes, whilst babies and young children are sleeping
- We recognise and respect the differences between each child and family's preferences in relation to routines for rest, sleep and clothing. These needs will be met provided they are within the Service's policies/procedures.
- All children who are resting will be supervised by educators ensuring ratios are upheld across the Service.
- When a child is asleep in the cot rooms, the doors are to be left open for adequate supervision. When a child is sleeping outside, the outdoor supervision plan is adhered to (see separate plan). Children that choose to sleep outdoors are to be in a position that can be seen by educators.
- Cots are to be positioned in a location that is visible from the doorway. In the second cot rooms, no cots are to be placed in the corner behind the door. Cots are not to be placed under the air conditioning unit or air-conditioning vent is to be pointed forward, so that air does not flow directly onto the child in a cot below.
- The under two environment has an outside white board which lists which children are sleeping in the am and pm.
- Children are to be checked at 10-minute intervals. (A timer will be used for the am and pm sleepers in the under two environment to ensure checks.) This must be a physical check. Educators are to document the check on the sleep chart (displayed in room). This should include checking each individual child for:
 - ◆ Sleeping position
 - ◆ Breathing
 - ◆ Colour of child's lips and skin
 - ◆ Body temperature
 - ◆ Head position
 - ◆ Airway
 - ◆ Child's head and face – ensuring they remain uncovered
 - ◆ Sleep state
- Children that are a higher risk of SUDI in accordance with Red Nose risk factors, will have an individual risk and action plan completed to minimise the potential risk of SUDI. Additional supervision requirements will be adhered to in accordance with a child's individual sleep action plan

- All children have rights and where appropriate, should have choice about sleeping and resting within the day. Educators will work with children to help them learn about their need for rest and comfort. Children will be encouraged to communicate their needs where possible. Children will have the choice to sleep in the outdoor environment in accordance with the sleep procedure and outdoor risk assessment.
- Children who do not require sleep or rest will be provided with appropriate and quiet play activities.
- Children will be grouped in a way that minimises overcrowding in both the indoor and outdoor environment.
- 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's health and wellbeing. Educators will attempt to contact parents/guardians to discuss the situation as soon as possible.
- Children will not have their bottles in cots (QA2 Health and Hygiene)
- If a child is brought to the Service asleep, the child is to be roused before transferring into our cot or bed, to ensure their wellbeing.

Safe resting

- Babies will be placed on their back to rest.
- If a medical condition exists that prevents a child from being placed on their back, the alternative resting practice must be directed in writing by the child's registered medical practitioner.
- If older children turn over during their sleep, allow them to find their own sleeping position, but always lay them on their back when first placing them to rest (this starts to happen from 6 months)
- At no time will a baby's face be covered with bed linen.
- To prevent a baby from wriggling down under bed linen, they will be placed with their feet closest to the bottom end of the cot.
- Quilts and duvets will not be used as bed linen. Pillows, lamb's wool and cot bumpers will not be used in cots.
- Soft toys/comfort objects will not be placed in the cot with children who are under 7 months (as recommended by Red Nose).
- Light bedding is the preferred option, which must be tucked in to prevent the baby from pulling bed linen over their head.
- Calm relaxing music or a radio that is off frequency, will be played if suitable.
- Dummies from home can be used, but they will not be attached to chains.
- If babies fall asleep on a cushion they will be moved to an approved cot or mattress
- Prams and strollers will not be used for children to sleep or rest in.

Settling children for rest

- Educators will comfort children when required. Educators are to sit when doing so. Educators are unable to carry children around to rock them to sleep as this is not recommended by Red Nose. It is also unsustainable for an educator's health and safety (back care).

Environment

- All cots meet Australian Standards for Cots (AS/NZS 2172:2010, AS/NZS 2195:2010 and AS/NZS 8811 1:2013).
- Cot mattresses should be in good condition, clean, firm, flat and must fit the cot base with no more than a 25mm gap between the mattress and the sides of the cot.
- Sleep rooms will not be over heated (the recommendation is 18- 22 degrees).
- Rooms must allow for ventilation and be adequately lit, so that checks can be carried out effectively.
- Cots will be positioned so that babies cannot reach any hazard and are not directly under the air conditioning units. Rooms in which children sleep should be well ventilated.
- All potential hazards that may pose a physical risk of injury ie a fall, suffocation risk, will be cleared from the sleep rooms to ensure a safe sleep environment. This applies to children that are sleeping on toddler beds on the floor.

Hygiene practices

- Cots and mattresses protective covers are sprayed with disinfectant after each change of use – another child using the same mattress, but different bedding.
- Each child has their own bed linen. Children's blankets and baby's sheets will be washed regularly at the Service as per washing schedule located in rooms.

Sleepwear

- Educators will monitor the temperature of the rest environment and address children's clothing needs.
- Sleeping bags with a fitted neck and arm holes are an alternative option to bed linen and encourage a baby to rest on their back. Sleeping bags should not have a hood.
- Babies under the age of 3 months can be swaddled to sleep following the Red nose recommendations for safe sleeping practices. Once a child is over 3 months of age or begins to roll, wrapping is to be discontinued and the baby can be placed into a securely fitting sleep bag.
- Hooded jumpers or any loose parts that may be a choking risk e.g. jewellery, are to be removed at sleep time. If the child has a dummy chain, the chain is to be removed before sleep.

Educators

- Educators will attend a SIDS and KIDS/Red Nose training approximately every three years.
- New educators to the service will be informed of the safe sleep procedure and shown the policy for them to read.

Families

- We will communicate with parents about their child's routines that are in place at the Service and at the child's home. This includes how long their child may have slept and where they may have slept (indoors/outdoors).

- The Service will have up to date information from Red Nose Australia available for families regarding reducing the risk of SIDS and displayed at the Service. Educators will also refer families to the Red Nose website for further information.

Risk Assessment

- A risk assessment, will be undertaken annually, is to be conducted and documented to ensure adequate supervision and monitoring of children during periods of sleep and rest. This includes the method and frequency of checking children's safety, health and wellbeing.

Other Sources

Red Nose/SIDS and KIDS

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2001

Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 2172:2010, AS/NZS 2195:2010 and AS/NZS 8811 1:2013

United Nations Conventions on the Rights of a Child

Raising Children Network

Links to other policies

Clothing Policy and Procedure

Oral Health Policy and Procedure

Hygiene Policy and Procedure

Ongoing Training

SIDS and Kids training

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually.

Last reviewed: February 2025

Date for next review: August 2026