

Sleep and Rest for children

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

Introduction

At Nimbin Preschool we do not have a mandatory rest / sleep time as we teach children to listen to their bodies, rather than have conform to a group timetable. All children have individual sleep and rest requirements. Children need a comfortable relaxing environment to enable their bodies to rest. This environment must be safe and well supervised to ensure children are safe, healthy and secure in their environment.

Goals / What are we going to do?

Nimbin Preschool will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs. Preschool will provide beds that comply with Australian Standards.

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.

Safe Equipment

- Nimbin Preschool will comply with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) standards and requirements for sleep and bedding equipment.

Safe Bedding

- Bedding that meets Australian Standards is recommended.

Supervision during sleep and rest

- The spaces used for sleep and rest will have adequate light and ventilation so that educators can supervise each child.
- Children, sleeping and resting, will always be within sight and hearing distance so that educators can monitor children's safety and wellbeing and respond immediately when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation.
- We will take into consideration the risk for each individual child, such as considering the age of the child, medical conditions, individual needs and history of health and/or sleep issues.
- Educators will maintain active supervision.

Assessing risk for sleep and rest times

- Our service will conduct a risk assessment to identify and mitigate risks associated with sleep and rest. These will include the individual needs of children, the location of the sleep and rest space, the environment, the equipment used for sleep and rest, supervision practices, ventilation, lighting, beds and linen and staff understanding of the service's sleep and rest policy and procedures (see annual risk assessment).

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- Our preschool will conduct a sleep and rest risk assessment at least once every 12 months, and as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect the safety, health and wellbeing of children during sleep and rest.
- Our preschool will make any necessary updates to the sleep and rest policies and procedures as soon as practicable after conducting the sleep and rest risk assessment and keep a record of each sleep and rest risk assessment conducted (in appendix).
- Refer to ACECQA's sleep and rest risk assessment template.

Communicating with families about safe sleep practices

- Our preschool will consult with families about their child's routine for sleep and rest at home and carry this out at the preschool where possible and safe to do so, in line with the prevailing safe sleep practices recommended by Red Nose Australia. Hence why we do not have a mandatory sleep time, our families do not endorse it.
- Our preschool will consult families about their child's individual needs and will be sensitive to different values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise, associated with sleep and rest.

The Approved Provider will:

- *“Take reasonable steps 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, development stages and individual needs of the children (regulation 84A). The approved provider must also ensure there are policies and procedures in place for managing sleep and rest for children (regulation 168) and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed (regulation 170).”*
- Undertake a risk assessment to ensure adequate supervision and monitoring of children during periods of sleep and rest is conducted and documented, we inform families if their children sleep at preschool (it's a rare event).
- Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met.
- Ensure educators (including casual/relief staff) receive information and induction training to fulfil their roles effectively, including being made aware of the sleep and rest policies, their responsibilities in implementing these, and any changes that are made over time.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures.
- Ensure 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 the children.
- Ensure the premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and in good repair. Ensure the bedding and bedding equipment being used for sleep and rest are safe and appropriate for the ages and developmental stages of children who will use them .
- Ensure that each child has access to sufficient furniture, materials and developmentally appropriate equipment suitable for the education and care of that child.
- Ensure that the indoor spaces used by children are well ventilated; have adequate natural light; and are maintained at a temperature that ensures the safety and wellbeing of children.
- Ensure sleep and rest environments are free from tobacco smoke.
- Ensure that the premises are designed to facilitate supervision.

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- Ensure children are supervised during periods of sleep and rest. This should include ensuring clear procedures and processes are in place for regular physical bed-side checks of children and recording all checks at the time they occur.
- Ensure copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers, and available for inspection.

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure that children's' safety, health and well-being are upheld at all times.
- Maintain up to date knowledge and training regarding safe sleeping practice and communicate this information to educators and families.
- Support all educators to have the knowledge, training and practical skills to implement safe sleep and rest practices, develop secure attachments with children and provide sensitive and responsive care.

Educators will:

- 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.
- Ensure that beds are clean and in good repair. Beds will be wiped over with warm water and neutral detergent or vinegar between each use. Beds will be stored in the drama room as they are used as loose parts also.
- 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.
- Identify and remove potential hazards from sleep environments. As per risk assessment matrix.
- Ensure the sleeping environment has been considered with hazards in the sleeping environment removed or mitigated (such as access of a child to other parts of the environment as they wake; including items that could pose a risk such as blinds, cords or other objects, and access of other people to the sleeping environment and sleeping children).
- Arrange children's beds to allow easy access for children and staff. We rarely have more than one child sleeping therefore a sleep area is not planned for.
- Create a relaxing atmosphere for resting children.
- Promote children's agency and decision making by providing routines and environments, both indoors and outdoors, that facilitate sleep and rest opportunities.
- Maintain educator ratios if children sleep.
- Ensure the physical environment caters for non-resting children, we call the middle of the day 'down time' and we all relax, read stories, draw, converse and do art. It is rare that children need any form of formal rest time.
- Assess each child's circumstances and current health to determine whether higher supervision levels and checks may be required.
- Communicate with families about their child's sleeping or rest times and the preschool 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. Conversations with families may be necessary to remind families that children will neither be forced to sleep nor prevented from sleeping. Sleep times will be shared daily with families as needed.

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- Ensure children will sleep and rest with their face uncovered.
- Encourage children to dress appropriately for the room temperature when resting or sleeping. Lighter clothing is preferable, with children encouraged to remove shoes, jumpers, jackets and bulky clothing. The room temperature will be considered to ensure maximum comfort for the children.

Families will:

- 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 if needed.
- Provide specified bedding if required by the preschool.
- Dress their child appropriately for the weather conditions and provide additional clothing.
- Review the services policies and procedures.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every 12 months.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

Related legislation

- Education and Care Services National Law: Sections 165, 167
- Education and Care Services National Regulations: 82, 84A, 84B, 84C, 87, 103, 105-107, 110, 115, 116, 168-172
- Australian Consumer Law 2011
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Related Guidelines, Standards, Frameworks

- National Quality Standard Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety: Standards QA2: 2.2.2, 2.1.2 QA3: 3.1.1, 3.1.2 QA6: 6.1.2 QA7: 7.1.3
- ACECQA: Sleep and Rest for Children: Policy Guidelines - www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-08/PolicyGuidelines_SleepRestForChildren_July.pdf
- Red Nose Safe Sleeping Guidelines

Sources

- ACECQA's Sleep and Rest legislative Requirements - www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/supporting-materials/infosheet/safe-sleep-and-rest-practices#NewLeg
- Product Safety Australia - www.productsafety.gov.au
- Kidsafe Australia - <https://rednose.org.au>

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- ACCC Product Safety Australia - www.productsafety.gov.au/publication/keeping-baby-safe-a-guide-to-infant-and-nursery-products
- Red Nose Australia - www.rednose.org.au
- NSW Department of Education - ECE Resource Library - Safe Sleep and Rest: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/leadership/resource-library/safe-sleep-red-nose>
- Kidsafe – Kidsafe Family Day Care Safety Guidelines (7th ed.) - https://kidsafe.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/FINAL-FDC-Safety-Guidelines_7thEd.pdf
- New South Wales Government – NSW Health Safe sleep for babies - <http://health.nsw.gov.au/kidsfamilies/MCFhealth/child/Pages/safe-sleep.aspx>
- https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-08/Sleep_restriskassessment_template_0.pdf

Role	Authority / Responsibility For
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Reviewed Katie 10/4/24

Next review date:

May 2025

Procedure checklist

attachment: 2023 policies/Sleep_restriskassessment 2024.pdf