

Policy: **Sleep and Rest in Preschool**

The following principles inform sleep and rest policies and procedures at our preschool. Effective sleep and rest strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and is safe at preschool.

- All educators have a duty of care to ensure 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.
- Our policy and procedure is based on current research and recommended evidence-based principles and guidelines. Red Nose is considered the recognised national authority on safe sleeping practices for infants and children.
- All educators will be made aware of this sleep and rest policy, their responsibilities in implementing this, and any changes that are made over time.
- Educators will consult with families about their child's individual needs and be sensitive to different values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise, associated with sleep and rest.
- Child safety is always the first priority.

Individualised Sleep and Rest Practices

It is important that opportunities for rest and relaxation, as well as sleep, are provided. Children have different sleep, rest and relaxation needs. 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.

Educators will ensure that children who do not wish to sleep or rest are provided with alternative quiet activities and experiences, while those children who do wish to sleep or rest can 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.

Current recommended evidence-based practices

- Children of all ages should sleep and rest with their face uncovered.
- A quiet place should be designated for rest and sleep, away from interactive groups. If designated for rest, the space should allow for a calm play experience.
- Children's sleep and rest environments should be free from cigarette or tobacco smoke.
- Sleep and rest environments and equipment should be safe and free from hazards.
- Supervision planning and the placement of educators across a service should ensure educators adequately supervise sleeping and resting children.

Educators will closely monitor sleeping and resting children and the sleep and rest environments. This involves checking sleeping children at regular intervals, and ensuring they are always within sight and hearing distance of sleeping and resting children so they can assess a child's breathing and the colour of their skin. Educators will consider the risk for each individual child, and tailor their practice to reflect the levels of risk identified for children. Factors to be considered include the age of the child, medical conditions, individual needs and history of health and/or sleep issues.

Following Family Beliefs and Requests

If a family's beliefs and requests conflict with current recommended evidence-based guidelines, the preschool will need to determine if there are exceptional circumstances that allow for alternate practices.

In other circumstances, the nominated supervisor and educators would not be expected to endorse practices requested by a family if they differ with Red Nose recommendations. The nominated supervisor and educators should refer this policy if parents make requests that are contrary to the safety of the child.

This policy contains information from the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority website.

Version Control: This policy was last updated in July 2021.