



## P2-13: Sleep, Rest and Relaxation Policy

Queanbeyan & District Preschool Association (QDPA) recognises that supporting healthy sleep, rest and relaxation rituals is vital in ensuring that children can flourish and meet their potential. As with all areas of early childhood development, there is considerable variation with all children having individual sleep and rest requirements. QDPA’s objective is to meet each child’s need for sleep, rest, and relaxation by providing a comfortable, relaxing, and safe space to enable their bodies to rest. This environment will also be well supervised ensuring all children feel secure and safe at our Preschools.

### NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1	Health	Each child’s health and physical activity is supported and promoted
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child’s wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child’s needs for sleep, rest, and relaxation.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.

QUALITY AREA 3: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT		
3.1	Design	The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service.
3.1.2	Upkeep	Premises, furniture, and equipment are safe, clean, and well maintained.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS AND NATIONAL LAW	
Section 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Section 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazard
82	Tobacco, drug, and alcohol-free environment
84A	Sleep and Rest
84B	Sleep and rest policies and procedures
84C	Risk assessment for purposes of sleep and rest policies and procedures
84D	Prohibition of bassinets



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
107	Space requirements-indoor space
110	Ventilation and natural light
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority

## RELATED POLICIES

Administration of First Aid Policy	Health and Safety Policy
Child Safe Environment Policy	Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy
Enrolment Policy	Physical Environment Policy
Dental Health Policy	Respect for Children Policy
Emergency and Evacuation Policy	Staffing Arrangements Policy
Family Communication Policy	Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol-Free Policy
Furniture and Equipment Safety Policy	Work Health and Safety

## PURPOSE

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* requires approved providers and nominated supervisors to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for children’s sleep and rest having regard to the ages, development stages and individual needs of the children. QDPA’s *Sleep, Rest and Relaxation Policy* will assist management, educators, and other staff to ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs whilst attending Preschool.

QDPA will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs. If a family’s beliefs and requests are against current recommended evidence-based guidelines, our Preschools will need to determine if there are exceptional circumstances that allow for alternate practices. Our



Preschools will only approve an alternative practice if the service is provided with written advice from, and the contact details of a registered medical practitioner accompanied by a risk assessment and risk minimisation plan for individual children.

Our policy sets out quality practice and is informed by recognised and evidence-based principles. Safe Sleep practices are informed by Red Nose and guidance from ACEQCA. We 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. In meeting QDPA's duty of care, it is a requirement that all educators implement and adhere to this policy and associated procedures to ensure we respect and cater for each child's specific needs and ensure all risks are appropriately addressed at all times.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, educators, staff, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers, and visitors of QDPA.

### IMPLEMENTATION

'Children have different sleep, rest, and relaxation needs. Children of the same age can have different sleep patterns that Nominated Supervisors and educators need to consider within the Service. As per Standard 2.1 (Element 2.1.1) 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.' (ACECQA).

QDPA defines 'rest' as a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness, or tranquillity, and can include a child being in a state of sleep. Considering the busy and energetic nature of children's day, we feel that it is important for children to participate in a quiet/rest period during the day to rest, relax, and recharge their body. Effective rest strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and safe in an early childhood environment.

Our Preschools will consult with families about their child's individual needs, ensuring all parties are aware of the different values, cultural, and parenting beliefs and practices, or opinions associated with sleep requirements.



### SLEEP AND REST SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENT

The approved provider, in conjunction with educators of the service, will conduct a comprehensive risk assessment in order to identify any potential risk/s or hazards and ensure the safety of all children during sleep and rest.

The risk assessment will be reviewed at least annually or after being aware of an incident or circumstance where the health, safety or wellbeing of children may be compromised during sleep or rest. All risk assessments will be regularly assessed and evaluated as to facilitate continuous improvement across our services. If a risk concerning a child's safety during sleep and rest is identified during the risk assessment, the approved provider must update the *Sleep and Rest Policy* and procedure as soon as possible. The risk assessment must be stored safely and securely and kept for a period of 3 years.

Our risk assessment will consider and include the following information:

- the number, age, developmental stages and individual needs of children
- the sleep and rest needs of individual children being educated and cared for (including specific health care needs, cultural preferences, sleep and rest needs of individual children and requests from families about a child's sleep and rest)
- the suitability of staffing arrangements to adequately supervise and monitor children during sleep and rest periods
- the level of knowledge and training of staff supervising children during sleep and rest periods
- the location of sleep and rest areas, including the arrangement of cots and beds within the sleep and rest areas
- the safety and suitability of any cots, beds and bedding equipment, having regard to the ages and developmental stages of the children who will use the cots, bed and bedding equipment
- any potential hazards
  - in sleep and rest areas
  - on a child during sleep and rest periods (such as jewellery, clothing)
- the physical safety and suitability of sleep and rest environments (including temperature, lighting and ventilation)

(ACECQA 2023)



### THE APPROVED PROVIDER/MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL ENSURE:

- a sleep and rest specific risk assessment is conducted at least annually to ensure all potential hazards are controlled in sleep or rest areas in line with Red Nose and ACECQA guidelines
- every reasonable precaution has been taken to protect children from harm and from hazards likely to cause injury. Hazards posing a risk of suffocation, choking, crushing or strangulation risk to children must be removed from the sleep and rest environment. (Sec. 167)
- reasonable steps are taken to ensure that 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 each child.
- all educators and new employees are provided with a copy of this policy as part of their induction process
- up to date knowledge regarding safe sleeping practices is maintained and information communicated to educators and families.
- training is provided on safe sleep practices for all educators and keep a record of all such training.
- opportunities are provided for educators to participate in Red Nose professional training.
- to provide appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation including providing children with comfortable spaces away from the main activity area for relaxation and quiet activities.
- all sleeping children are within hearing range and observed. This involves physically checking/inspecting sleeping children at regular 10-minute intervals and ensuring that they are always within sight and hearing distance of sleeping and resting children so they can easily monitor a child's breathing and the colour of their skin. It is recommended that educators will not perform administrative duties that would take their attention away from sleeping/resting children- (Note: CCTV, audio monitors or heart monitors **do not** replace the need for physical checking/inspecting sleeping children)
- to provide children with safe sleeping equipment and environment, including adequate ventilation and adequate lighting to enable effective supervision.
- to negotiate sleep and rest routines and practices with families to reach agreement on how these occur for each child at the Preschool.
- they receive information and training to fulfil their role effectively, including being made aware of the sleep and rest policies, their responsibilities in implementing these, and any changes that are made over time.
- the child's safety is always the priority.
- children who are sleeping or resting have their face always uncovered.
- to provide information to parents and families about Safe Sleep practices (see [Red Nose](#))
- educators, staff, and volunteers follow the policy and procedures.
- all equipment and furniture used are safe, clean and in good repair (Reg. 103, 105)



- there are adequate numbers bedding available to children that meet Australian Standards to be used only for sleep and rest purposes.
- stay up to date with banned/recalled products and remove these immediately from the service if required.
- educators follow the *Administration of First Aid Policy* if the child's face/body appears blue and the child is not breathing, initiate first aid immediately including calling an ambulance and beginning resuscitation.
- the Nominated Supervisor will ensure an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* is completed in its entirety.
- the Nominated Supervisor will ensure the parent and the regulatory authority are notified as soon as possible and within 24 hours of a serious incident.
- a safe indoor environment is provided for children that is well ventilated, has adequate natural light and can be maintained at a temperature that ensures children's safety and wellbeing (Reg.110)
- risk assessments are conducted at least annually to ensure all potential hazards are controlled in sleep areas in line with Red Nose and ACECQA guidelines.
- sleep and rest environments will be safe and free from all hazards including cigarette and tobacco smoke.
- safe sleep practices are documented and shared with families. Nominated Supervisors and educators are not expected to endorse practices requested by a family if they differ from [Red Nose](#) safe (formerly SIDS and Kids) sleeping recommendations.
- if any requirements differ from Red Nose sleeping recommendations, written authorisation from a medical practitioner will be required and shared with educators.

### EDUCATORS WILL:

- have a thorough understanding of QDPA's policy and practices and embed practices to support safe sleep into everyday practice.
- ensure children's safety is paramount.
- consult with families about children's sleep and rest needs.
- be sensitive to each child's needs so that sleep and rest times are a positive experience.
- ensure there are appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest, and relaxation.
- ensure that each child's comfort is provided for.
- ensure that beds/mattresses are clean and in good repair.
- ensure beds and mattresses are used for the correct purpose of sleep and rest only.
- ensure beds and mattresses are wiped over with warm water and neutral detergent or vinegar solution between each use.



- ensure that any linen used for sleep and rest is clean and in good repair.
- ensure that any linen used for sleep and rest, used by an individual child, and is washed before use by another child.
- arrange children's beds and cots to allow easy access for children and staff.
- ensure children rest/sleep with their beds/mattresses head to toe to minimise the risk of cross infection.
- create a relaxing environment for sleeping children by playing relaxation music, reading stories, cultural reflection, turning off lights, and ensuring children are comfortably clothed.
- ensure there are no loose aspects of clothing that could entangle the child during sleep/rest (including bibs)
- ensure the environment is tranquil and calm for both educators and children.
- sit near children who are resting and encourage them to relax and/or listen to music.
  - Remember that children do not need to be "patted" to sleep. By providing a quiet, tranquil environment, children will choose to sleep if their body needs it.
- maintain adequate supervision and maintain educator ratios throughout the sleep period.
- supervision is active, effective, and frequent.
- ensure they are not engaged in other duties (e.g., administrative duties) that will take their attention away from actively supervising sleeping and resting children.
- physically check that the child is breathing by checking the rise and fall of the child's chest and the child's lip and skin colour.
- ensure physical checks of a sleeping child occur at least every 10 minutes (Note: CCTV, audio monitors or heart monitors **do not** replace the need for physical checking/inspecting sleeping children)
- consider the circumstances and any risk factors that may mean physical checks need to be more frequent for some babies or children (e.g.; children with colds, chronic lung disorders or specific health care needs that may require higher level of supervision)
- if the child's face/body appears blue and the child is not breathing, initiate first aid immediately including calling an ambulance and beginning resuscitation.
- ensure an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* is completed in its entirety following an incident.
- ensure a record is maintained recording the time and observation of each physical check immediately after checks are made on the *Sleep Record* on OWNA.
- ensure sleeping spaces are not dark- there needs to be sufficient light to allow supervision and to physically check children's breathing, lip, and skin colour.
- 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 QDPA's 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. Any sleep requirements that differ from Red Nose recommendations must be supported by a medical certificate. Conversations with families may be necessary to remind families that children will neither be forced to sleep nor prevented from sleeping. Sleep and rest patterns will be recorded daily for families.
- 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.
- monitor the room temperature to ensure maximum comfort for the children.
- ensure that children who **do not** wish to sleep are provided with alternative experiences, whilst those children who **do** wish to sleep are allowed to 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. It is important that opportunities for rest and relaxation, as well as sleep, are provided.
- consider a vast range of strategies to meet children's individual sleep and rest needs- consider inclusion of all children and adjustments that may need to be implemented.
- respond to children's individual cues for sleep (yawning, rubbing eyes, disengagement from activities, crying etc).
- acknowledge and support children's agency, emotions, feelings, and fears regarding sleep/rest time.
- develop positive relationships with children to assist in settling children confidently when sleeping and resting.
- record sleep and rest patterns, which can be available to be provided to families

### PRE-SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

#### EDUCATORS WILL:

- be respectful for children's individual sleep and rest requirements.
- discuss children's sleep and rest needs with families and include children in decision making (children's agency)
- provide a tranquil and calm environment for children to rest by turning off lights, playing relaxing music, reading stories, cultural reflection.
- ensure children are comfortably clothed.
- encourage children to rest their bodies and minds
- introduce relaxation techniques into rest routine- use of a relaxation tape.
- ensure children sleep with their face uncovered.
- closely monitor sleeping and resting children





- provide quiet activities for children- puzzles, books, drawing if they do not fall asleep.
- record sleep and rest patterns to provide information to parents/families.

## MAINTENANCE OF SLEEPING AREAS

Regular maintenance of bedding, linen and the physical environment must be made to ensure there is no hazard posed to children. This may include:

- all equipment and furniture used are safe, clean and in good repair (Reg. 103, 105)
- spaces do not pose any danger to children- arm and leg traps/finger traps.
- ensuring there are no choking hazards- cords, strings, bunting.
- stay up to date with banned/recalled products and remove these immediately from the service if required.

## PARENTS/FAMILIES WILL:

- be informed during orientation of our *Sleep, Rest and Relaxation Policy* and procedure.
- be informed that if any requirements for sleep for their child differs from Red Nose sleeping recommendations, written authorisation from a medical practitioner will be required.
- be requested to provide educators with regular updates on their child’s sleeping routines and patterns if these change during enrolment with QDPA.
- be provided with regular information about Safe Sleep practices from Red Nose and any changes to our policies or procedures.

## CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Sleep, Rest and Relaxation Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators, and management.

## Key terms

Term	Meaning
ACECQA- Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority	The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources, and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.
Adequate supervision	Adequate supervision means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• that an educator can respond immediately, particularly when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation.</li></ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowing where children are always and monitoring their activities actively and diligently</li> </ul>
Continuous supervision	Ensure an educator is in sight and hearing of a sleeping child at all times- representing best practice (Red Nose)
Rest	A period of inactivity solitude, calmness or tranquility and can include a child being in a state of sleep.
Relaxation	Relaxation or other activity for bringing about a feeling of calm in your body and mind.
<a href="#">Red Nose</a>	Red Nose is Australia’s leading authority on safe sleep and safe pregnancy advice.

## SOURCES

ACECQA. (n.d.). Safe sleep and rest practices: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/supporting-materials/infosheet/safe-sleep-and-rest-practices>

ACECQA. (2023). [Sleep and Rest for Children. Policy Guidelines.](#)

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC). (2013). Find out more: [Keeping baby safe](#)

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).

Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2023)

Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (Amended 2023).

NSW Department of Education. (2022). [Sleep and rest for children-Policy guidelines for early childhood education and care services. \(updated\)](#)

Red Nose: <https://rednose.org.au/section/safe-practices>

Red Nose: Cot to bed safety [https://rednose.org.au/downloads/RN3356\\_Cot\\_Bed\\_DL\\_Oct2018\\_Online.pdf](https://rednose.org.au/downloads/RN3356_Cot_Bed_DL_Oct2018_Online.pdf)

Revised National Quality Standard. (Amended 2023).

[Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)

## REVIEW

Version Control	Date	Author	Description of Change
1.0	2018	QDPA	Original document
2.0	2021	QDPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document reviewed with change in leadership team in 2021. Additional related regulations &amp; NQS references added.</li> <li>Version control and description box added to clarify reviewed items/new inclusions.</li> <li>Format change to include policy statement, purpose, scope and implementation, addition of footers and page numbering and general layout changes.</li> <li>Reviewed to align with ACECQA policy guidelines (June 2021)</li> </ul>



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Additional legislative requirements added.</li><li>• Additional section added 'Families'.</li><li>• Additional section added - Key Terms</li><li>• Additional information added to points.</li></ul>
3.0	2023	QDPA	<p>Scheduled Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Removal of infant SIDS risks due to ages of children enrolled at QDPA.</li><li>• NS/RP section merged into AP/NS section to reduce repetition.</li><li>• maintenance of cots and bedding section added.</li><li>• Parent/Family section updated.</li><li>• Hyperlinks checked and repaired if needed</li></ul>
4.0	Sept 2023	QDPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New information added regarding regulation changes effective October 2023.</li><li>• Hyperlinks checked and repaired.</li></ul>