

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 LAW AND REGULATIONS	
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

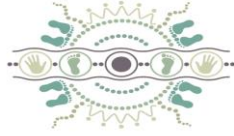
RELATED POLICIES

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

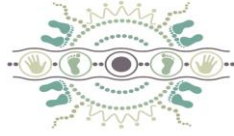
This policy applies to children, families, educators, staff, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers, and visitors of QDPA.

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

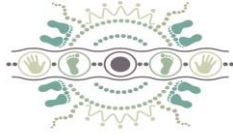
The approved provider, in conjunction with educators of the service, will conduct a comprehensive risk assessment to ensure all protentional hazards are identified and specify how any risks identified are managed and minimised in sleep and rest areas in line with Red Nose and ACECQA guidelines (reg. 84A).

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:

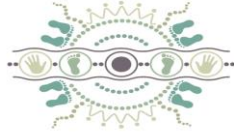
- the number, age, developmental stages and individual needs of children
- the sleep and rest needs of individual children being educated and cared for (including specific health care needs, cultural preferences, sleep and rest needs of individual children and requests from families about a child's sleep 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:

- that obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations* are met
- educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure
- all new employees are provided with a copy of this policy as part of their induction process
- families are aware of this *Sleep, Rest and Relaxation Policy*
- a sleep and rest specific risk assessment is conducted at least annually to ensure all protentional 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)
- up to date knowledge regarding safe sleeping practices is maintained and information communicated to educators and families.
- ongoing 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.
- reasonable steps are taken to ensure that each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation are provided
- consideration is given to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of children
- a safe indoor environment for sleep and rest 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 and is free from all hazards including cigarette and tobacco smoke (Reg.110)
- sleeping children are closely monitored and that all sleeping children are always within hearing distance and observed. This involves physically checking/inspecting sleeping children at regular 10-minute intervals and ensuring that educators 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)
- all equipment and furniture used for sleep and rest is safe, clean and in good repair (Reg. 103, 105)
- there are adequate numbers of cots and bedding (including mattresses) available to children that meet Australian Standards and are only to be used for sleep and rest purposes
- to negotiate sleep and rest routines and practices with families to reach agreement on how these occur for each child at the Preschool.



- 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 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
- an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* is completed in its entirety
- the parent and the regulatory authority are notified as soon as possible and within 24 hours of a serious incident.

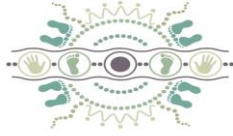
EDUCATORS WILL:

- 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 quiet relaxing music, reading stories, cultural reflection
- ensure children are comfortably clothed
- encourage children to rest their bodies and minds for 20-30 minutes
- 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
- ensure a record is maintained recording the time and observation of each physical check immediately after checks are made on the Sleep Record in OWNA
- record sleep and rest patterns to provide information to parents/families

SUPERVISION

EDUCATORS WILL:

- maintain adequate supervision and maintain educator ratios throughout the sleep period
- ensure supervision is active, effective and frequent



- not be engaged in other duties (e.g., administrative duties) that will take their attention away from actively supervising sleeping and resting children
- 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
- ensure physical checks of a sleeping child occur at least every 10 minutes
- physically check that the child to include:
 - breathing- rise and fall of child's chest
 - skin and lip colour
 - head position
 - body temperature
 - airway
 - head and face- ensure they remain uncovered
- ensure a record is maintained recording the time and observation of each physical check immediately after checks are made on the Sleep Record in OWNA
- consider the circumstances and any risk factors that may mean physical checks need to be more frequent for some children (e.g.; children with chronic lung disorders or specific health care needs that may require higher level of supervision)
- initiate first aid immediately including calling and ambulance and beginning resuscitation if the child's face/body appears blue and the child is not breathing
- ensure an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* is completed in its entirety following an incident.

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.
- mattresses are wiped over with warm water and neutral detergent between each use
- children's beds are arranged to allow easy access for children and staff and to prevent the risk of cross infection



PARENTS/FAMILIES WILL:

- be informed during orientation of our *Sleep, Rest and Relaxation Policy* and procedure.
- be provided with regular information and communication about safe sleep practices from Red Nose and any changes to our policies or procedures
- 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.

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">• that an educator can respond immediately, particularly when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation.• knowing where children are always and monitoring their activities actively and diligently
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.
Red Nose	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 Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). [*Guide to the National Quality Framework.*](#)

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)

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

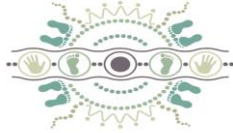
Red Nose: <https://rednose.org.au/section/safe-practices>

Red Nose: Cot to bed safety https://rednose.org.au/downloads/RN3356_Cot_Bed_DL_Oct2018_Online.pdf

Revised National Quality Standard. (Amended 2023).

REVIEW

Version Control	Date	Author	Description of Change
1.0	2018	QDPA	Original document
2.0	2021	QDPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document reviewed with change in leadership team in 2021. Additional related regulations & NQS references added. Version control and description box added to clarify reviewed items/new inclusions. Format change to include policy statement, purpose, scope and implementation, addition of footers and page numbering and general layout changes. Reviewed to align with ACECQA policy guidelines (June 2021) Additional legislative requirements added. Additional section added ‘Families’. Additional section added - Key Terms Additional information added to points.
3.0	2023	QDPA	Scheduled Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of infant SIDS risks due to ages of children enrolled at QDPA. NS/RP section merged into AP/NS section to reduce repetition. maintenance of cots and bedding section added. Parent/Family section updated. Hyperlinks checked and repaired if needed
4.0	Sept 2023	QDPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New information added regarding regulation changes effective October 2023. Hyperlinks checked and repaired.



5.0	December 2024	QDPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• thorough review to delete repeated dot points in different sections• rearranged content within policy for ease of implementation and relevance to stakeholders• merged some areas for ease of implementation and understanding by educators and staff• sources checked for currency
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