

Rostrevor Kindergarten

Safe Sleep and Relaxation Policy

SAFE SLEEP AND RELAXATION POLICY REGULATION 168

As of October 1st, 2017, Regulation 168 states that all, 'Education and care service must have policies and procedures' is amended to include a requirement for a policy on 'Sleep and rest for children and infants', including matters set out in Regulation 81 (Sleep and rest).

Definitions:

Adequate supervision: (In relation to this policy) supervision entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios at all times. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play including hazards created by the equipment used.

Adequate supervision refers to constant, active and diligent supervision of every child at the service. Adequate supervision requires that educators are always in a position to observe each child, respond to individual needs, and immediately intervene if necessary. Variables affecting supervision levels include:

- Number, age and abilities of children
- Number and positioning of educators
- Current activity of each child
- Areas in which the children are engaged in an activity (visibility and accessibility)
- Developmental profile of each child and of the group of children
- Experience, knowledge and skill of each educator
- Need for educators to move between areas (effective communication strategies).

Duty of care: A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury.

Relaxation/rest: A period of inactivity, solitude, calmness or tranquillity.

SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome): The unexpected and unexplained death of an infant usually occurring during sleep.

SIDS and Kids: The National SIDS Council of Australia dedicated to eliminating SIDS and providing support for bereaved families. SIDS and Kids is considered to be the national authority on safe sleeping practices for infants and children. A branch of SIDS and Kids is located in each state and territory and can provide resources and assistance (refer to Sources).

Principles to inform procedures: *The information in this policy is sourced from the ACECQA website update to NQF changes, October 2017.*

The following principles may inform sleep and rest policies and procedures at your service.

- Effective sleep and rest strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and is safe at a service.
- Approved providers, nominated supervisors and 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.

- Approved providers are responsible for ensuring sleep and rest policies and procedures are in place.
- Policies and procedures should be based on current research and recommended evidence-based principles and guidelines. [Red Nose](#) (formerly SIDS and Kids) is considered the recognised national authority on safe sleeping practices for infants and children.
- Regularly review and update sleep and rest policies and procedures to ensure they are maintained in line with best practice principles and guidelines.
- Nominated supervisors and educators should receive information and 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.
- Services should 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.

If a family's beliefs and requests are in conflict with current recommended evidence-based guidelines, we will need to determine if there are exceptional circumstances that allow for alternate practices. In other circumstances, nominated supervisors and educators would not be expected to endorse practices requested by a family, if they differ with Red Nose recommendations. Child safety should always be the first priority.

Children have different sleep, rest and relaxation needs. Children of the same age can have different sleep patterns, which nominated supervisors and educators need to consider within the service. 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 meet each child's sleep, rest and relaxation needs.

Current recommended evidence-based practices

Safe sleep and rest practices (All Children)

- Children should sleep and rest with their face uncovered.
- 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 are able to adequately supervise sleeping and resting children.
- Educators should closely monitor sleeping and resting children and the sleep and rest environments. This involves checking/inspecting sleeping children at regular intervals, and ensuring they are always within sight and hearing distance of sleeping and resting children so that they can assess a child's breathing and the colour of their skin.
- We will consider the risk for each individual child, and tailor this Sleep and Rest Policies and Procedures (including the frequency of checks/inspections of children) to reflect the levels of risk identified for children at the service. Factors to be considered include the age of the child, medical conditions, individual needs and history of health and/or sleep issues.

Safe placement - Educators will:

- Ensure a safety check of sleep and rest environments is undertaken on a regular basis.
- If hazards are identified, lodge a report as instructed in the service's policies and procedures for the maintenance of a child safe environment.
- Ensure hanging cords or strings from blinds, curtains, mobiles or electrical devices are away from children.
- Keep heaters and electrical appliances away from children.
- Do not place anything around the neck of a sleeping child.

Meeting children's sleep, rest and relaxation needs

Individual children - Educators will:

- Ensure that children who do not wish to rest are provided with alternative quiet activities and experiences, while those children who do wish to rest 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 (if required). It is important that opportunities for rest and relaxation, as well as sleep, are provided.

- Consider that there are a range of strategies that can be used to meet children's individual sleep and rest needs.
- Look for and respond to children's cues for sleep (e.g. yawning, rubbing eyes, disengagement from activities, crying, decreased ability to regulate behaviour and seeking comfort from adults).
- Avoid using settling and rest practices as a behaviour guidance strategy because children can begin to relate the sleep and rest environment, which should be calm and secure, as a disciplinary setting.
- Minimise any distress or discomfort.
- Acknowledge children's emotions, feelings and fears.
- Understand that younger children settle confidently when they have formed bonds with familiar carers.
- Ensure that the physical environment is safe and conducive to sleep. This means providing quiet, well-ventilated and comfortable sleeping spaces.

Safe Manual Handling for Educators:

Manual handling is defined in the OHS Regulations 2007, Part 3.1 Manual Handling, as 'any activity requiring the use of force exerted by a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any object'. The major manual handling hazards noted in the Children's Service's Sector are:

- lifting children
- working at low levels with children
- moving equipment
- storing supplies and equipment
- using office areas
- maintaining indoor and outdoor areas.

Educators should be aware of their own capabilities, notify the Nominated Supervisor if they are unable to perform tasks due to any physical ailment and be well informed of Safe Lifting practices as part of their induction to the service. <http://www.ohsinecservices.org.au/>

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ACECQA Website:

<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/Safe-sleep-and-rest-practices>

<https://rednose.com.au/resources/education>

Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (birth to 5 years): An Integration of Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour, and Sleep

[http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/DAAD9AEB38F655D6CA257C75001B546D/\\$File/24hrGuidelines-Factsheet-fa-0-5.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/DAAD9AEB38F655D6CA257C75001B546D/$File/24hrGuidelines-Factsheet-fa-0-5.pdf)

OHS in Early Childhood Education and Care: Manual Handling Tip Sheet:

<http://www.ohsinecservices.org.au/node/31>

Associated Policies:

- *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- *Hygiene Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*