



Health and Safety

Sleep and Rest for Children

Reviewed: 09/08/2021 Next Review: Term 3, 2022

Education and care services regulation/s	Regulation 168(2)(a)(v) Education and care service must have policies/procedures Regulation 81 Sleep and rest Regulation 103 Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair Regulation 110 Ventilation and natural light Regulation 115 Premises designed to facilitate supervision
NSW Department of Education policy, procedure or guidelines	<p>The following department document can be accessed from the preschool section of the department's website: https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/early-learning/department-preschools</p> <p>Sleep and rest guidelines for department preschools (PDF 152KB)</p>
National Quality Standard(s)	<p>Quality Area 2 2.1.1: Wellbeing and comfort Each child's comfort is provided for and there are appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation. 2.1.2 Health practices and procedures Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented. 2.2.1: Supervision At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard. Quality Area 3 3.1.1 Fit for purpose Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.</p>
Leading and operating department preschool guidelines	<p>Leading and operating department preschool guidelines</p>
School policy or procedure	<p>NSW Department of Education Sleep and rest for children</p>

Introduction

Effective sleep and rest strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and is safe at a service. It is necessary for children to learn how to self-regulate in order for them to be an active member of society.

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. Red Nose safe sleeping guidelines should be adhered to and families informed.

All children have individual sleep and rest requirements. Each child's comfort is provided for and there are appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.

The preschool will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs and as advised by the child's parents / carers.

Educators 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, as advised by their family, having regard to the ages, development stages and individual needs of the children.
- Upon enrolment and as required during the school year, consult with families about children's sleep and rest requirements and be sensitive to each child's needs so that sleep and rest times are a positive experience.
- Respect family preferences regarding sleep and rest and consider these daily while ensuring children feel safe and secure in the environment.
- Use a range of practices to manage sleep, rest and relaxation needs. Children sleep, rest and relax in a range of different ways. Some children may prefer to quietly rest and read; some may enjoy relaxation activities like guided meditation or yoga; some may need to be more active in order to then sleep and/or relax.
- Ensure that children who do not require sleep or rest have opportunities to engage in appropriate quiet play experiences, such as drawing, listening to a story, or completing a puzzle.
- Assess each child's circumstances and current health to determine whether higher supervision levels and checks may be required whilst they are sleeping.
- Ensure that areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated and have natural lighting.
- Encourage children to lie on their backs before they fall asleep. A child may then turn over whilst resting/sleeping to find a comfortable position.
- Ensure children sleep and rest with their face uncovered. If a child's face becomes covered, by any clothing or other whilst they are resting/sleeping, the staff/carer will immediately uncover the child's face. In addition, children should be asked to remove jumpers with hoods and cords, hats etc. whilst resting and/or sleeping, to reduce the risk of choking or strangulation.
- Maintain adequate and direct supervision and educator to child ratios throughout the rest/sleep period.
- 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.
- Assess each child's circumstances and current health to determine whether higher supervision levels and checks may be required whilst they are sleeping e.g. Children who are unwell will need to be monitored constantly whilst sleeping especially if they have a high temperature, vomited or received minor trauma to their head. In addition children who are taking medication or have recently received a vaccine may experience increased drowsiness (or restlessness) and this will also need to be taken into consideration.

Implementation

- Children will be encouraged to recognise their need for rest through the provision of rest, relaxation and self-regulation.
- Children are not forced to lie down or sleep.
- The preschool has mattresses, sheets, blankets and pillows for children who are expressing or demonstrating a need for sleep. Sheets, blankets and pillows/covers are stored in the linen press and mattresses are kept in the storeroom. After each individual use these items are hygienically cleaned with disinfectant or washed using detergent before re-storage.
- If a child requires rest or is feeling unwell at any time throughout the day, quiet areas, with cushions, are always available and can be accessed by the children if necessary. At any time during the day a child may request to have a rest or sleep. Provisions are made for them to rest/sleep for as long as is required.
- During indoor learning the book corner is the designated quiet area inside and has cushions and a sheer curtained off area for rest.
- Should a child feel the need to rest whilst in the outdoor environment large soft cushions, mats, books and quiet activities are available for usage in the shade under the cola. In addition to these items, if a child is indicating the need for sleep, a mattress, linen and pillows are provided.
- If a child sleeps during the preschool day the length of time the child slept and at what time during the day is recorded. A note is made on the family sign in/out sheet for the parent/carer collecting the child to see a staff member, to enable this information to be shared. Any educator can document the sleep and/or inform the parent/carer. The sleep and notation is also shared verbally amongst educators.
- After lunch (approximately 11:45am) we have a dedicated period of time where the children are encouraged to choose a quiet activity, rest in a quiet area, read a book, or participate in yoga, meditation, audio books (if required) etc. Cosmic Kids yoga and smiling minds are used as relaxation exercises, promoting quiet, calm and self regulation. This period of time is conducted indoors to enable adequate supervision and suitable activities for all children to meet their individual needs, whether sleep, relaxation or quiet activity.
- We follow the Department of Education Sleep and Rest Guidelines for Preschool.

Evaluation

Communications with families are maintained throughout the year to encourage a consistent approach in responding appropriately and respectfully to children's sleep and rest needs. Safe sleeping practices are followed to minimise the risk of harm to children. Children are encouraged to learn relaxation and self regulation techniques.

School Principal, Early Childhood Teacher and Educators

The principal is responsible for ensuring:

- the preschool is compliant with legislative standard related to this procedure at all times
- all staff involved in the preschool are familiar with and implement this procedure
- all procedures are current and reviewed as part of a continuous cycle of self-assessment

The preschool educators are responsible for working with leadership to ensure:

- all staff in the preschool and daily practices comply with this procedure
- storing this procedure in the preschool and making it accessible to all staff, families, visitors and volunteers
- being actively involved in the review of this procedure, as required, or at least annually
- ensuring the details of the procedure's review are documented

References: 9 August 2021

<https://rednose.org.au/section/safe-sleeping>

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/supporting-materials/infosheet/safe-sleep-and-rest-practices>

[ACECQA Sleep and rest for children](#)