

SLEEP AND REST POLICY

All children have individual sleep and rest requirements. Our 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 Highland Grove

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

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, developmental stages and individual needs of the children. Our *Sleep and Rest 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.

Highland Grove will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs. Safe Sleep practices are informed by Red Nose and guidance from ACEQCA.

SCOPE

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

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).

Highland Grove defines ‘rest’ as a quiet 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 in order 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.

Highland Grove 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 associated with sleep requirements.

SLEEP AND REST SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENT

The approved provider (Director), in conjunction with educators, 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 to facilitate continuous improvement in our service. 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 beds within the sleep and rest areas
- the safety and suitability of 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)

THE APPROVED PROVIDER (OUR DIRECTOR) 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.
- reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by Highland Grove 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
- 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
- that all sleeping children are within hearing range and observed.
- That regular checks are made of sleeping children
- to provide children with safe sleeping equipment and environment, including adequate ventilation and adequate lighting to enable effective supervision
- the child's safety is always the first priority
- children who are sleeping or resting have their face uncovered at all times
- 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 of stretchers or mattresses available to children that meet Australian Standards to be used only for sleep and rest purposes
- sleep and rest environments will be safe and free from all hazards including cigarette and tobacco smoke
- the supervision window (or similar) will be kept clear to ensure safe supervision of sleeping children
- safe sleep practices are documented and shared with families
- to negotiate sleep and rest routines and practices with families to reach agreement on how these occur for each child at our centre

EDUCATORS WILL:

- have a thorough understanding of our centre'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 mattresses and stretchers are stored safely in specified storage areas in each playroom.
- ensure that bed linen is clean and in good repair
- ensure bed linen is 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
- 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
- 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.
 - Children do not always need to be “patted” to sleep. By providing a quiet, tranquil environment, children will choose to sleep if their body needs it. Educators will discuss with families their rituals for this time of the day.
- maintain adequate supervision and maintain educator ratios throughout the sleep period
- supervision is active, effective and frequent
- Conduct and document a ‘wellbeing’ check every 30 minutes for children who are sleeping.
- 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
- ensure sleeping spaces are not dark- there needs to be sufficient light to allow supervision
- communicate with families about their child’s sleeping or rest times and Highland Grove’s policy regarding sleep, rest and relaxation times
- respect family preferences regarding sleep, rest and relaxation and consider these daily while ensuring children feel safe and secure in the environment. 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 quiet activities and 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 in regard to sleep/rest time
- develop positive relationships with children to assist in settling children confidently when sleeping and resting
- record sleep and rest patterns to provide information to parents/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 during a ‘Quiet Time’
- introduce relaxation techniques into rest routine
- 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 BEDDING

Regular checks and maintenance of bedding 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, such as ensuring there are no choking hazards-cords, strings, bunting

PARENTS/FAMILIES WILL:

- be informed during orientation of our *Sleep and Rest Policy* and procedures
- be provided with regular information and communication about safe sleep practices from Red Nose and any changes to our policies or procedures
- be required to provide specific bedding for their child each day (as detailed in enrolment information)

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

Revised National Quality Standard. (Amended 2023).

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

REVIEWED: 14.11.23