

Sleep and Rest

Background

Children are active little people – constantly learning, playing, watching and interacting with others. It is crucial for their sense of well-being, healthy growth and development to have time away from busy surroundings to rest, to reflect and to imagine.

Policy statement

This Policy sets out how Bella Grace provides regular sleep and rest periods which follow the safe sleeping recommendations of the nationally recognised authority, Red Nose, and take into consideration the ages, development and needs of individual children and their families.

Strategies and practices

- Infants sleep on demand. Toddlers and older children have a scheduled sleep/rest period shortly after lunch. In addition, educators are alert to any indication that a child might need sleep/rest outside of routine. Quiet areas for children to rest or be alone are always available. QA 2.1.2
- If a family's beliefs and practices are in conflict with Red Nose, then the Service will only endorse an alternative practice after written advice has been received from a medical practitioner. QA 2.1.2
- The Service's sleep/rest strategies and practices are outlined in the Parent Handbook. Families recorded their child's sleep/rest routines on the Child Profile Forms. Information from Red Nose on safe sleeping practices is displayed in the cot rooms. QA 2.3.2
- All children are placed on their back when being settled for a rest. Children who turn onto their side or stomach during sleep are left undisturbed. QA 2.1.2
- All children rest with faces uncovered. QA 2.1.2
- Staff ratios are maintained according to the Education and Care Services National Regulations during sleep/rest periods. QA 4.1.1
- Educators constantly monitor the children (e.g. breathing patterns) and sleep/rest environment (e.g. room temperature). QA 2.1.2, 2.3.1
- Students or volunteers involved are supervised at all times.
- Sleep/rest areas are kept well-ventilated, uncluttered and appropriately lit. QA 2.3.1

Sleep and Rest

- Educators ensure children are dressed suitably for the room temperature. Some items of clothing may need to be removed for safety reasons (e.g. tops with hoods and cords that may cause choking, jewellery amber beads, comforters that cannot be breathed through). Educators are respectful and sensitive to cultural differences in attitudes to dressing, and encourage children to be independent in dressing at these times. QA 2.1.2, 2.3.2
- Comforters from home will be given to children who need them to settle. However, toys with ribbons, removable parts or parts that can be looped over a child's head cannot be used because of the Service adherence to the SIDS and Kids guidelines. QA 2.3.2
- To help children relax for sleep/rest, educators dim the lights, half close the blinds / curtains ensuring the room still has natural light, play calming music, use quiet soothing voices and, sometimes, use guided relaxation techniques QA 2.1.2
- While all children need time to relax at Bella Grace, some do not need to sleep during the day. Rather, they only require a quiet comfortable place to relax for 30 minutes on their bed. Quiet activities are offered after this period. QA 2.1.2
- No child is made to sleep against their wishes or needs, although it is expected that all children will otherwise speak and play quietly after the initial 30-minute rest period on their bed. QA 2.1.2
- Children are left to wake of their own accord, and educators attend to and soothe them when they do wake. In instances where families request that their child remain awake, that child will not be encouraged to sleep (e.g. patted). However, if the child should subsequently fall asleep, educators will not wake the child. QA 2.1.2
- On those occasions when parents do not supply a bed set, The service will provide a sheet from its stock of "spare sheets". These sheets are laundered after each child's use. QA 2.1.3
- Bella Grace supplies bed sets for cots and mattresses in Clam Cove rooms. Bed linen is washed weekly for full-time children or after each child's use by children who attend less frequently. QA 2.1.3
- The children's beds are cleaned daily with detergent and water before being stored. QA 2.1.3
- Beds are positioned so that educators may walk between them to gain easy access. QA 2.3.1
- For children under 3 years, their sleep pattern for the day (e.g. time the child went to sleep and woke up) is recorded on the Room Register. QA 2.1.2
- Educators receive regular first-aid training in resuscitation, and in the Red Nose guidelines. QA 2.1.4, 4.1.1

Additional safe resting practices for babies

SUDI (Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy) is the sudden, unexpected death of a baby during sleep. Babies under twelve months are considered to be at greater risk of SUDI than children over twelve months. Bella Grace closely follows the recommendations for safe sleeping practices from Red Nose.

- All children are placed on their back when first being settled for sleep/rest. If a child younger than 6 months turns onto their side or stomach during sleep, educators return the child onto their back. Once the baby has been observed to repeatedly roll from back to front and back again on their own for several weeks (usually around 5-6 months), they can be left to find their preferred sleep position after initially being placed on their back. QA 2.1.2
- Should a child need to sleep on their stomach or side for sound medical reasons, the Service will only endorse this alternative practice upon receiving a letter from the child's Doctor stating the need for this alternative sleeping practice. QA 2.1.2
- All children rest with faces uncovered. Hooded tops, bibs and shoes are removed before children are put to rest. QA 2.1.2
- Children are placed with their feet at the bottom of their cot or mattress, and bedclothes are tucked in securely. Parents of babies under 12 months are asked to provide a correctly sized safe baby sleeping bag with fitted neck and armholes with no hood. QA 2.1.2
- If parents ask for their infant to be 'wrapped' as a means of settling for sleep, educators ensure that a lightweight wrap is used, the baby is not wrapped too tightly, and that the wrap is kept away from the face. QA 2.1.2
- Quilts, doonas, duvets, pillows, cot bumpers or lambskins are not used in cots. Other materials such blankets spare sheets are not draped over the sides or ends of cots to block light or children's view of each other. QA 2.1.2, 2.3.2
- Snugly rugs/blankets and soft toys are not given to children under the age of 7 months following Red Nose guidelines. Soft toys and other comfort items which may be used to settle a baby between 7-12 months, will be removed once the child has fallen asleep. QA 2.1.2, 2.3.2
- Mobiles or toys with stretch elastic cords are not used within reach of cots. QA 2.1.2, 2.3.2
- Cots are positioned well away from dangling electrical and curtain /blind cords, fans and other electrical appliances, and power points. QA 2.1.2, 2.3.2
- Children are to be transferred to their cot if they fall asleep initially in a rocker or pram. QA 2.1.2, 2.3.2

Sleep and Rest

- Cots are set up at least 30cm apart as well as 30cm from any other furniture. QA 2.1.2, 2.3.2
- After a child is placed in a cot, the cot side is pulled up and securely locked, and the educator makes a final check before leaving the cot. QA 2.1.2
- The viewing window to the cot room is kept clear of obstruction, and educators check sleeping infants every 15 minutes, and initial the Register. QA 2.3.1
- All cots in the Service meet the Australian Standard, are assembled according to manufacturer's instructions, and are maintained in good condition. QA 2.1.2
- Cot mattresses meet the manufacturer's size recommendations and fit the cot base with no more than a 25mm gap between the mattress and the sides of the cot. QA 2.1.2
- No child is placed in a cot if the child has the ability to climb out. QA 2.3.2
- Cots are wiped over each day with detergent and water. Cot mattresses are wiped with detergent and water at the end of a full-time child's week, or after each instance a part-time child has used the cot. QA 2.1.3
- The sleep/rest area, as are all other areas of the Service, is smoke-free. QA 2.3.2
- The temperature of the room is monitored to ensure children's comfort. QA 3.2.1
- Each child is always put to bed in their own allocated cot.
- The Service has a designated fire cot for use during Evacuation and Lockdown Procedures. QA 2.3.3

Responsibilities of parents

- Upon enrolment, to discuss with educators their child's particular needs (e.g. sleep patterns and habits, need for a comforter) and family values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise, associated with sleep/rest. Update this information in the event of change (e.g. a child becoming anxious about sleep/rest at Bella Grace).
- To supply a bed set consisting of a fitted bottom sheet and a loose top sheet for summer, and a light blanket for winter, and to bring the set to the Service in a draw-string bag labelled with the child's name.
- To take the bed set home at least once a week, launder it, and return it on the day the child next attends the Service.
- To provide any comforters necessary.

Sleep and Rest

Links to other policies

- Evacuation and Lock Down Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Interactions with Families
- Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Policy

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

Regs	81	Sleep and rest
	97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
	109	Ventilation and natural light

QA	2.1.1	Each child's health needs are supported
	2.1.2	Each child's comfort is provided for and there are appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation
	2.1.3	Effective hygiene practices are promoted and implemented
	2.1.4	Steps are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases and to manage injuries and illness, in accordance with recognised guidelines
	2.3.1	Children are adequately supervised at all times
	2.3.2	Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury

	2.3.3	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented
	3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources are suitable for their purpose
	3.1.2	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained
	3.2.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces are designed and organised to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural
	4.1.1	Educator-to-child ratios and qualification requirements are maintained at all times

Sources, further reading and useful websites

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011.
- NCAC. (2011). *Factsheet: Safe sleep and rest in child care* http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/family-resources/factsheets/Safe_Sleeping.pdf accessed 24 November 2013
- UNICEF. (n.d.). *Fact sheet: A summary of the rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child*. http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf accessed 24 November 2013

Sources, further reading and useful websites

- Abbey, B. (2012). *Relaxation is a Must*. http://www.childcarebydesign.com.au/uploads/brenda_abbey_article_relaxation_is_a_must.pdf accessed 5 February 2016
- Red Nose – <http://www.rednose.com.au/> accessed 26 February 2017

Policy Review

Bella Grace Early Learning Centres encourage educators and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

Date Reviewed: Feb 2017

Next Review Date: Feb 2018

