

Sleep and Rest Policy

BELLA GRACE EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

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. Effective sleep and rest strategies are important factors in ensuring a child is safe and feels secure while at a service.

Policy statement

This Policy sets out how the Service provides regular sleep and rest periods which follow the safe sleeping recommendations of Red Nose, the recognised national authority on safe sleeping practices for infants and children, and take into consideration the ages, development and needs of individual children and their families.

Strategies and practices

- The Service has a prime 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 children from harm and hazard.
- Families record their child's sleep/rest routines on the Child Profile Forms.
- Nominated supervisors and permanent Nursery staff complete an online training course recommended by Red Nose. All staff are instructed in Safe Sleeping procedures upon orientation using information from the Red Nose Safe Sleeping Child Care Kit. All staff are given other training as required to ensure they are aware of best safe sleeping practises for babies and children and are made aware of how to contact Red Nose for further information.
- 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 away from interactive groups are always available.
- While all children need time to relax at the Service, 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.
- During the rest period children are given an opportunity to choose other activities to ensure their individual needs are being met.
- The Service's sleep/rest strategies and practices are outlined in the Parent Handbook and in enrolment forms and newsletters. Information from Red Nose on safe sleeping practices is displayed at the centre.
- All children rest with faces uncovered.

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- Staff ratios are maintained according to the Education and Care Services National Regulations during sleep/rest periods.
- Educators constantly monitor the children (e.g. breathing patterns, skin colour) and sleep/rest environment (e.g. room temperature). Educators are within sight and hearing distance of sleeping and resting children.
- Sleep/rest areas are kept well-ventilated, uncluttered, free from hazards and appropriately lit and, as with all other areas of the Service, are smoke-free.
- 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, bibs, comforters that cannot be breathed through). Shoes are also removed for comfort at sleep time. Educators are respectful and sensitive to cultural differences in attitudes to dressing and encourage children to be independent in dressing at these times.
- 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's adherence to the Red Nose guidelines.
- 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.
- 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. After 2pm, room lights are put on and curtains open.
- Parents are to supply a bed set consisting of a fitted bottom sheet and a loose top sheet for summer, and a light blanket if required for winter with the child's name.
- Parents are 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.
- On those occasions when parents do not supply a bed set, the Service will provide a sheet its stock of "spare sheets". These sheets are laundered after each child's use.
- The Service supplies bed sets for cots and mattresses in the younger rooms. Bed linen is washed weekly for full-time children or after each child's use by children who attend less frequently.
- The children's beds are cleaned daily with detergent and water before being stored.
- Each cot mattress is aired at the end of each day by lifting and leaving it tilted in the cot.
- Beds are positioned so that educators may walk between them to gain easy access.

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- 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.
- Educators receive regular first-aid training in resuscitation, and in the Red Nose guidelines.
- Electric blankets, hot water bottles or wheat bags are not used in the Service.
- The sleep/rest area, as are all other areas of the Service, is smoke-free.
- The temperature of the room is monitored to ensure children's comfort.

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. The Service closely follows the recommendations for safe sleeping practices from Red Nose.

- All cots meet the current mandatory Australian Standard for Cots (AS/NZS 2172), and carry a label to indicate this. If used, portable cots meet the current mandatory Australian Standard for children's portable folding cots, AS/NZS 2195, and carry a label to indicate this. Safety checks at regular basis. Babies are never put to sleep in a bassinet, hammock or pram/stroller because they do not carry safety codes for sleep.
- 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. Babies who can repeatedly turn from their back to stomach and stomach to back, are left undisturbed if they roll onto their stomach while sleeping.
- 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. If a family's beliefs and practices conflict with Red Nose, then the Service will only endorse an alternative practice after written advice has been received from the baby's medical practitioner.
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- All children rest with faces uncovered. Hooded tops, bibs, shoes and amber necklaces/bracelets are removed before children are put to rest.
- Children are placed with their feet at the bottom of their cot or mattress, and bedclothes are tucked in securely.
- 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.

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- 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.
- Snugly rugs/blankets and soft toys are not given to children under the age of 12 months.
- Mobiles or toys with stretch elastic cords are not used within reach of cots.
- Cots are positioned well away from dangling electrical and curtain /blind cords, heaters, fans and other electrical appliances, and power points.
- Cots are set up at least 30cm apart as well as 30cm from any other furniture.
- 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.
- The viewing window to the cot room is kept clear of obstruction, and educators check sleeping infants regularly (at least every 15 minutes), and record this on the Room Register.
- All cots in the Service meet the Australian Standard, are assembled according to manufacturer's instructions, and are maintained in good condition.
- 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.
- No child is placed in a cot if the child has the ability to climb out.
- Cots are wiped over each day with soapy water. Cot mattresses are cleaned 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. Each child is always put to bed in the same cot unless it has been sanitised.
- The Service supplies a sheet set consisting of a fitted bottom sheet and a flat top sheet for each child. Each child's sheet set is stored in a labelled draw-string bag when not in use. All bed linen is laundered at least weekly.
- The Service has a designated fire cot and the *Service's Evacuation and Lockdown Policy* specifically addresses sleep and rest times.
- Children who are unwell are constantly monitored until collected by their parent(s).

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

Regs	81	Sleep and rest
	103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
	105	Furniture, materials and equipment
	97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
	110	Ventilation and natural light
	115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision

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	168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
QA	2.1.1	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation
	2.1.2	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented
	2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard
	2.2.2	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, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child
	3.1.2	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained
	3.2.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments

Sources, further reading and useful websites

- ACECQA. (2017). *Safe sleep and rest practices from October 2017*
<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/Safe-sleep-and-rest-practices>
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2018
- 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 26 December 2017

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 20 December 2017
- Red Nose. (2017) *Education*. <https://rednose.com.au/section/education> accessed 20 December 2017

Policy Review

The Service encourages staff 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.

REVIEW DETAILS:

Review Date	Details of Changes
November 2017	Additional information included from Red Nose regarding safe sleep practises.
January 2018	Updated to changed NQF requirements 1 Feb 2018
April 2018	Reviewed. Minor wording changes made.

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