



## Procedure related to sleep and rest for children

Associated National Quality Standard	Education and Care Services National Law or Regulation	Associated Department policy, procedure or guideline
2.1	81	Preschool sleep and rest guidelines

### Aim

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. In taking reasonable steps to ensure children's needs for sleep and rest are met, children will not be forced to lie down or sleep.

Punchbowl Public School 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.

### Preschool 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, having regard to the ages, development stages and individual needs of the children ([regulation 81](#)).

Consult with families about children's sleep and rest requirements at the initial parent/ teacher interview. Educators will be sensitive to each child's needs so that sleep and rest times are a positive part of their preschool experience. Conversations with families may be necessary to remind families that children will neither be forced to sleep nor prevented from sleeping.

Respect family preferences regarding sleep and rest and consider these when planning to ensure children feel safe and secure in the preschool environment. Both indoor and outdoor environments will have quiet restful places for the children to choose to relax whenever they feel the need throughout the day.

Meet children's individual sleep, rest and relaxation needs through a variety of methods, some children may prefer to quietly rest and read; or participating in relaxation activities like yoga and mindfulness. Children are monitored and consulted by educators throughout the day as to how they are feeling and decisions made with the children as to whether they would like to rest or not.

Ensure that opportunities to engage in appropriate quiet play experiences, such as drawing, listening to a story, or completing a puzzle are offered to children who do not wish to participate in sleep or rest activities.

***If sleep is required, educators will:***

- Assess each child's circumstances and current health to determine whether higher supervision levels and checks may be required whilst they are sleeping. For example, 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
- Ensure that areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated and have subdued natural lighting.
- At Punchbowl Public School Preschool, if children need a sleep, a mattress is provided and all bedding (all bedding is washed after each individual use).
- Encourage all 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 the bed linen whilst they are resting / sleeping, the staff/carer will immediately uncover the child's face. Additionally, children are asked to remove jumpers with hoods and cords and scarves 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. If a child is resting educators will discuss at the time how adequate supervision will be maintained for that child depending on the time of day and activities that the rest of the children are undertaking at the time.
- Communicate with families the service policy regarding sleep and rest times
- 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.
- Arrange children's beds to allow easy access for children and educators.
- Create a quiet, tranquil environment where children will choose to sleep if their body needs it. This may involve playing relaxing music with reduced lighting or reading stories
- 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. The room temperature will be considered to ensure maximum comfort for the children.

There a no designated rest period noted on our daily routine as children are able to rest at any time they feel the need to do so.

If a child sleeps during the day, their family is notified how long they slept for on the comments section of the **arrival and departure register**.

## Linen, pillows and cushions

If a child requires a sleep at preschool, PPS Preschool supplies the linen for the child, as well as take responsibility for washing them. If a child uses preschool linen, it will be washed before it is used by another child or is stored in contact with other linen.

Any cushions have removable covers or are covered by a sheet so they can be washed if used by an unwell child or a child lays their head on one. If a stretcher bed is covered by linen, it does not require cleaning between uses, unless soiled or visibly dirty.

## Key Resources

- Leading and Operating Department Preschool Guidelines
- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
- SIDS & Kids Safe Sleeping Kit
- Community Early Learning Australia – Safe Sleep & Rest Time
- SLEEP – Sleep Learning for Early Childhood Professionals

ACECQA Information Sheet: Safe sleep and rest practices



# Preschool sleep and rest guidelines

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. In taking reasonable steps to ensure children's needs for sleep and rest are met, children will not be required to lie down or sleep.

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.

## Procedures

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, having regard to the ages, development stages and individual needs of the children."(Regulation 81)
- Consult with families about children's sleep and rest requirements. Educators will 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. Conversations with families may be necessary to remind families that children will neither be forced to sleep nor prevented from sleeping.
- 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 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.
- Ensure that areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated and have natural lighting. Rooms that are very dark and have music playing may not provide adequate supervision for sleeping children.
- Ensure that if beds/mattresses are used, they are clean and in good repair. Bed linen is for use by an individual child only and will be washed before use by another child. Light bedding is

encouraged, as opposed to doonas and heavy blankets. If beds are used, ensure they are low to the ground to prevent falls.

- All children will be encouraged to lie on their backs before they fall asleep. A child may then turn over whilst the resting / sleeping to find a comfortable position.
- Ensure children sleep and rest with their face uncovered. If a child's face becomes covered, by the bed linen 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 and scarves 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.

## In planning provisions for sleep and rest consider

- How to meet the needs of children who require sleep, based on discussions with the child's parents/carers.
- How to meet the needs of children who no longer require sleep, yet require a period of rest/relaxation.
- How to respond to changes in children's sleep, rest and relaxation needs.
- How to include children in decision making about sleep, rest and relaxation.
- When sleep, rest and relaxation opportunities are provided throughout the day.
- How to meet the needs of children who require sleep at different times of the day, such as also providing a quiet, restful area outdoors.
- How the environment might best be used to provide children who need to sleep a quiet space without distraction.
- How the environment might best be used to provide children who do not sleep a space and opportunity to do alternate activities.

### Sources

Education and Care Services National Regulations: 81, 103, 110, 115, 168

National Quality Standards: Elements 2.1.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 3.1

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education Care Services National Regulations

Red Nose [SIDS & Kids Safe Sleeping Kit](#)

Community Early Learning Australia - Safe sleep and rest time

SLEEP- [Sleep Learning for Early Childhood Professionals](#)

ACECQA- [Safe sleep and rest practices](#)