

SLEEP AND REST POLICY

PURPOSE

Village Early Education is committed to ensuring children are provided with safe, comfortable and appropriate opportunities for sleep, rest and relaxation in accordance with their age, developmental stage and individual needs.

Children's safety, rights and best interests are the paramount consideration in all sleep and rest practices.

Village Early Education will maintain safe sleep and rest practices in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, ACECQA guidance, Red Nose safe sleep recommendations and the associated Sleep and Rest Procedure.

INDIVIDUAL SLEEP, REST AND RELAXATION NEEDS

Children have individual sleep, rest and relaxation needs that may vary according to their age, development, health, family routines and individual circumstances.

Village Early Education will:

- provide appropriate opportunities for children to sleep, rest and relax throughout the day
- consider each child's age, developmental stage, individual needs and sleep patterns
- respond to children's signs of tiredness and need for rest
- support children's agency and participation in decisions about sleep and rest where developmentally appropriate
- provide alternative quiet experiences for children who do not require sleep
- ensure children are not forced to sleep or prevented from sleeping
- ensure sleep and rest practices are respectful, responsive and free from inappropriate discipline, rough handling or physical restraint.

Sleep and rest arrangements will be guided by the child's individual needs and cues rather than prescribed sleep times or limits.

Family preferences regarding sleep and rest will be considered; however, Village Early Education will not implement a request to force a child to sleep, prevent a child from sleeping when they demonstrate a need for sleep, or routinely wake a child solely to limit the duration of their sleep.

SAFE SLEEP PRACTICES

Sleep and rest practices will be informed by current recognised safe sleep guidance, including Red Nose and ACECQA. Detailed safe sleep practices are outlined in the Sleep and Rest Procedure.

Safe sleep requirements include:

- babies being placed on their back to sleep unless an alternative position is supported by written medical advice
- sleeping children's head and face remaining uncovered
- sleep environments being free from suffocation, strangulation, entrapment, choking and other foreseeable hazards
- loose or unsafe items not being placed in an infant's sleep environment
- clothing and bedding being appropriate for the child and environmental conditions
- sleep products being used only for their intended purpose
- children who fall asleep in equipment not designed for sleep being moved to an appropriate sleep surface
- safe sleep practices being adjusted where necessary in response to an individual child's identified health or safety risks.

SUPERVISION AND SLEEP CHECKS

Sleeping and resting children must be adequately and actively supervised at all times.

Village Early Education requires sleeping children to be physically checked at least every 10 minutes.

Physical checks must allow educators to assess the child's wellbeing, including their breathing, skin and lip colour, position and whether their head and face remain uncovered.

The frequency of physical checks must be increased where an individual child's circumstances or identified risk factors require a higher level of supervision.

Electronic monitoring devices, including CCTV, audio monitors or other monitoring equipment, do not replace physical supervision or physical sleep checks.

Educators supervising sleeping and resting children must remain able to appropriately observe and respond to children and must not undertake tasks that compromise effective supervision.

Children with health conditions, illness, developmental needs or other circumstances that may increase their risk during sleep or rest will be provided with an appropriate level of supervision.

Additional or more frequent physical checks will be implemented where required by the child's individual circumstances.

Sleep checks must be documented in accordance with the Sleep and Rest Procedure.

SLEEP AND REST RISK ASSESSMENT

Each service will maintain a sleep and rest risk assessment in accordance with Regulation 84C.

The risk assessment must consider matters including:

- the number, ages, developmental stages and individual needs of children
- individual sleep and rest requirements, including health care needs and family information
- staffing and supervision arrangements
- the knowledge and training of employees supervising sleep and rest
- the location and arrangement of sleep and rest areas
- the safety, cleanliness and condition of sleep equipment
- the suitability of cots, beds, mattresses and bedding
- hazards within the sleep and rest environment
- hazards associated with children's clothing, jewellery or other items
- temperature, lighting and ventilation
- any additional risks specific to children attending the service.

The risk assessment will be reviewed at least every 12 months and whenever an incident, change or circumstance identifies a potential new or changed risk to children's health, safety or wellbeing during sleep or rest.

Where a risk assessment identifies a change is required to the Sleep and Rest Policy or Procedure, the documents will be reviewed and updated as soon as practicable.

SLEEP AND REST ENVIRONMENT

Sleep and rest areas must be safe, comfortable and appropriate for the children using them.

The environment will:

- support adequate supervision
- provide sufficient lighting to allow effective observation and physical sleep checks
- be appropriately ventilated
- be maintained at a safe and comfortable temperature
- remain free from tobacco smoke, vaping substances, drugs and alcohol

- be free from hazards that may create a risk of suffocation, strangulation, choking, crushing, entrapment or injury
- provide sufficient space for safe access to children and sleep equipment.

Supervision windows and lines of sight must remain unobstructed.

COTS, BEDS AND SLEEP EQUIPMENT

Village Early Education will provide sleep and rest equipment that is safe, appropriate for the child's age and development, clean, maintained in good repair and compliant with applicable mandatory product safety standards.

Cots, mattresses, portable cots and other sleep products must:

- comply with applicable Australian Standards and mandatory product safety requirements
- be used in accordance with manufacturer instructions
- be regularly checked for damage, deterioration or safety concerns
- be removed from use where they are damaged, unsafe, subject to a product recall or otherwise unsuitable
- only be used for their intended purpose.

Bassinets must not be used or stored at any Village Early Education service in accordance with Regulation 84D.

Children must not be accepted into the service in a bassinet and a bassinet must not remain on the service premises.

Equipment such as rockers, bouncers and other products not designed for sleep must only be used for their intended purpose.

A child who falls asleep in a product that is not designed or approved for sleep must be moved to an appropriate sleep surface as soon as practicable.

Village Early Education will not use inclined sleep products or other sleep equipment that does not meet applicable product safety requirements.

COMFORTERS, SOFT ITEMS AND JEWELLERY

Infant sleep environments must remain free from pillows, doonas, loose bedding, soft toys and other items that may create a suffocation or obstruction risk.

Comforters and soft items will be managed according to the child's age, developmental stage and current safe sleep guidance. Village Early Education does not permit comforters in the sleep

environment for children under 7 months. For children aged 7 months to under 12 months, a comforter may be used for settling with completed family consent and must be removed once the child is asleep.

Items that create an identified choking, strangulation, entanglement or suffocation risk must not be worn or placed within the sleep environment.

Detailed requirements relating to comforters, clothing, jewellery and other sleep items are contained in the Sleep and Rest Procedure.

FAMILY COMMUNICATION AND INDIVIDUAL REQUESTS

Village Early Education will work collaboratively with families to understand children's usual sleep routines, individual needs, cultural practices and preferences.

Family preferences will be considered where they are consistent with safe sleep requirements and the child's safety, wellbeing and individual needs.

Village Early Education will not implement a family request that is inconsistent with safe sleep recommendations or creates an unacceptable risk to a child.

Where a child's health or medical needs require a sleep practice that differs from recognised safe sleep recommendations, written advice from an appropriate medical practitioner must be provided and considered as part of the child's individual risk assessment.

Families will be provided with information about their child's sleep and rest while attending the service.

TRAINING AND EMPLOYEE AWARENESS

Employees responsible for supervising children during sleep and rest must have appropriate knowledge of:

- this policy and the Sleep and Rest Procedure
- safe sleep practices
- sleep and rest supervision requirements
- physical sleep checks
- identified sleep and rest hazards
- emergency response requirements.

Employees must follow Village Early Education's sleep and rest requirements at all times.

Safe sleep information and training will be provided as ongoing professional development as appropriate.

INCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES

Where a child becomes unresponsive, is not breathing normally, displays abnormal skin or lip colour or otherwise requires emergency assistance, educators must respond immediately in accordance with the Administration of First Aid Policy and relevant emergency procedures.

Incidents must be documented and notified in accordance with the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy and Procedure and applicable legislative requirements.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Sleep and Rest Policy* will be evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis, or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management and notification of any change to policies will be made to families within 14 days.

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 LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS

S. 2A	Paramount consideration—safety, rights and best interests of children
S. 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
S. 166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
S. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazard
82	Environment to be free from tobacco, vaping devices, vaping substances, drug and alcohol

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
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

SOURCES

ACECQA. (n.d.). [Safe sleep and rest practices](#)

ACECQA. (2024). [Sleep and Rest for Children. Policy Guidelines.](#)

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC). (2022). Find out more: [Your First Steps to help parents keep their baby safe](#)

[Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010.](#)

[Education and Care Services National Regulations.](#)

Red Nose: [Cot to bed safety](#)

Red Nose: Cot to bed safety https://rednose.org.au/downloads/RN3356_Cot_Bed_DL_Oct2018_Online.pdf

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Kelsey Pearce		
POLICY REVIEWED	SEPTEMBER 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	APRIL 2027
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MODIFICATIONS	Restructured for clarity		