



POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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SLEEP AND REST – EARLY LEARNING

1. POLICY STATEMENT AND/OR PURPOSE

Catholic Early Learning and Care will ensure that all children have opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their age, development and individual needs, in an environment that is safe, secure and adequately supervised. Sleep is the primary activity of the brain during early development. Sleep and rest are recognised as important requirements for children's growth and wellbeing. All cots and beds provided will comply with the [Australian Standards \(AS/NZS 2172\)](#). The risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) will be minimised by adhering to Health Authority guidelines and practices and following, where possible, all [Red Nose](#) recommendations.

2. APPLICATION

This procedure applies to all Catholic Early Learning and Care Services in the Diocese of Cairns.

3. PROCEDURE

Approved Provider will:

- Ensure sleep and rest policies and procedures are in place.
- Ensure sleep and rest policy and procedure is regularly reviewed and information is current and in line with Red Nose recommendations.
- Ensure relevant stakeholders are made aware of changes made to the policy and procedure, if any.
- Ensure up to date information and training is provided to nominated supervisors and educators their responsibilities in implementing the sleep and rest policy and procedure.

Nominated Supervisors will:

- Ensure adequate supervision and maintain educator ratios during rest periods.
- Assess individual children's needs and current health to consider whether higher supervision levels and checks are necessary.
- Communicate with families regarding their child's sleep and rest requirements.
- Provide the sleep and rest policy along with information and fact sheets from the Red Nose website.
- Acknowledge and respect family preferences regarding sleep and rest. Informing parents/guardians of the sleep and rest policy and procedure and the services commitment to implementing and adhering to current [Red Nose](#) recommendations.

- Inform families that beliefs and requests that conflict with current [Red Nose](#) recommendations will not be endorsed by the service, excluding exceptional medical conditions.
- Medical conditions, written support from the child's medical practitioner will be required.
- Medical conditions, a risk minimisation and communication plan will be created and implemented.
- Remind parents/guardians that no child will be forced to sleep nor prevented from sleep.
- Sleep and rest patterns will be recorded daily.
- Maintain current data on safe sleep practices.
- Will conduct regular safety checks of the sleep and rest environment
- Undertake risk assessments to mitigate any risks of children not being adequately supervised when an Educator is attending to another child's needs.
- Ensure sleep areas are safe and secure.
- Information of safe sleeping practices in accordance with [Red Nose](#) recommendations are prominently displayed in the nursery sleep room.
- Information will be provided to families in their home language, as requested.
- Students or volunteers will not be left unsupervised when settling children for sleep or rest.
- First Aid plans for CPR will be displayed in the nursery sleep room.

Educators' Responsibilities:

Providing Safe Sleep/Rest Periods for All Children:

- Educators will review the environment to provide a safe, restful and calm setting for children to rest/sleep.
- Educators will be respectful of the need for quiet environments and adjust their learning experiences accordingly.
- Visitors and tradespeople to the centre will be encouraged to attend outside the rest periods.
- During orientation and at intervals throughout the year, educators and parents/guardians will review and update children's care plans. When children transition rooms, educators from the first room will share knowledge of children's sleep and rest patterns with educators in the child's new room. This will include learning about each child's rest and sleep routine, ways of settling, comforters and particular cultural practices.
- Educators' routines and practices will recognise that children settle confidently when they have formed bonds with familiar and trusted educators. At rest time, educators will prioritise children's needs for security with a range of different settling techniques.
- Routines and the physical environment should also be flexible enough to support children who do not require a sleep and those who seek rest and relaxation throughout the day.
- Educators will support children to transition towards sleep/rest periods.
- Rest and sleep equipment will be maintained in a safe manner. All cots and mattresses are checked in annual inspection checklist.
- Educators will ensure there are clear pathways and ease of access to all beds/cots at all times during sleep/rest periods.
- Educators will evaluate sleep and rest routine practices annually, reviewing advice from relevant health and safety authorities.
- Educators will record sleep and/rest times for all children of the centre and this information will be available for parents/guardians.
- All children who are resting/sleeping will be monitored ensuring faces are uncovered and supervised as per Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011. Educators will maintain monitoring of all children at all times of the day.

- Regular physical checks – at the bed side, not via CCTV or viewing windows – should be implemented in all circumstances.
- Children who are unwell will be more frequently monitored.
- Educators will provide quiet supervised experiences for children who do not sleep.
- Participate in staff training regarding safe sleep practices.

Requests from Parents/Guardians to limit children's sleep should be made to the Nominated Supervisor. Educators will not stop children from falling asleep naturally. The Nominated Supervisor will provide Parents/Guardians with relevant information on children's requirements for sleep, as requested.

Safe Sleep Practices for Babies:

SIDS is the most common cause of death in babies between one month and one year of age, most babies who die of SIDS are under six (6) months of age. More babies die of SIDS in winter than in summer. Since the introduction of the "Reducing the Risks of SIDS" program in Australia, SIDS deaths have been significantly reduced.

- position babies 6 weeks to 2 years on their backs in their cot for sleep
- babies 6 weeks – 6 months will be returned to sleeping on back if they have rolled over onto their stomach.
- Educators will check babies breathing and skin colour every 5 minutes while physically being in the sleep room, not using a supervision window. This will be done up until 12 months old.
- children over 12 months will be monitored every 15 minutes unless care plans are different.
- babies will be positioned side by side in individual cots.
- Educators will monitor children as they sleep/rest and ensure that all children will rest with their face uncovered.
- securely lock cot sides and castors, maintaining safety.
- cots are positioned so educators can move freely between sleeping children.
- sleep room is well ventilated with natural lighting.
- children sleep in appropriate clothing, lightweight and comfortable.
- each child has their own bed linen.
- cots are cleaned as per cleaning schedule.
- Educators are aware of safe manual handling when lifting child out of cot.

Positioning a baby into the cot:

- position baby's feet at the bottom of the cot.
- tuck in bed clothes securely so bedding is not loose.
- ensure doonas, duvets, pillows and cot bumpers are not in the cot.
- ensure cot and mattress are safe.
- maintain checks that baby is positioned correctly.

Safe cots and mattresses:

- check cots meet [Australian Standard \(AS 2172\)](#) before use.
- second hand cots are not to be used in the centre.
- a toddler or baby can get stuck in the gaps between the mattress and the cot sides, make sure there is no more than a 25mm gap between cot and mattress and always make sure the waterproof mattress protector is strong and a tight fit.
- mattresses must be firm and clean.

- bassinets are not allowed within the service premises while education and care is taking place.

Feeding and Sleep:

- Educators must sit with children while they have their bottles.
- where possible, a baby will be held while bottle-feeding.
- If several babies require feeding simultaneously, they will be placed on cushions in front of an educator who will interact and supervise together.
- babies will not be put in their cots with bottles.
- toddlers who use their bottle to fall asleep should be allowed to drink their bottle, but not to fall asleep with it in their mouths (as per recommendations for dental health & SIDS).
- if a child requires any form of comforter to fall asleep, educators will check it poses no risk to the child. i.e. covering their mouth or head and will be monitored to alleviate any risk.
- pillows are not recommended for children under the age of 12 months. Older children requiring pillows may be allowed to fall asleep with the pillow, as long as risk management is maintained.

A child will spend 40% of childhood asleep; it impacts directly on mental and physical development.

AGE	RECOMMENDED	MAY BE APPROPRIATE	NOT RECOMMENDED
Newborns <i>0-3 months</i>	14 to 17 hours	11 to 13 hours 18 to 19 hours	Less than 11 hours More than 19 hours
Infants <i>4-11 months</i>	12 to 15 hours	10 to 11 hours 16 to 18 hours	Less than 10 hours More than 18 hours
Toddlers <i>1-2 years</i>	11 to 14 hours	9 to 10 hours 15 to 16 hours	Less than 9 hours More than 16 hours
Pre-schoolers <i>3-5 years</i>	10 to 13 hours	8 to 9 hours 14 hours	Less than 8 hours More than 14 hours
School-aged Children <i>6-13 years</i>	9 to 11 hours	7 to 8 hours 12 hours	Less than 7 hours More than 12 hours

Maintaining sleep equipment in safe and hygienic manner:

- children’s cots will be made up in accordance to sleep safe guidelines as per Red Nose recommendations.
- Cot sheets will be changed for each individual child. Cots will be cleaned between each individual’s child’s uses. All cots will be cleaned at the end of each week.
- Each child will have their own set of sheets and be stored in sheet bags labelled with the child’s name. Parents/guardians will be asked to launder their child’s sheets at the end of the week.
- When centre sheets are utilised, they are stored separately for each child. Centre sheets are laundered at the centre.
- The sleep room will be maintained in a clean and hygienic manner.
- Sleep monitors will be turned on when a child is sleeping. Educators are to report immediately if sleep monitors are not working.
- Cots will be cleaned after each individual child has finished using the cot across a week.

Parents'/Guardians' Responsibilities:

At orientation and at intervals such as when children are moving rooms, parents/guardians and educators will discuss and review their child's rest and sleep routines. This information will be stored in OWNA.

The service may ask parents/guardians to provide:

- top and bottom sheets and sheet bag.
- will label sheets and sheet bag.
- will launder sheets on a weekly basis and return each week.

4. BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against a person who is found to have breached the requirements contained within this document. Action taken will depend on the nature and circumstance of each breach and could include: an official warning and note on the individual's personnel file; a formal written and/or verbal apology; counselling; demotion; transfer; or suspension or dismissal for very serious matters.

5. ENQUIRIES

Catholic Early Learning and Care Executive Director - admin@ccelc.catholic.org.au

6. SEE ALSO

Legislation:

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- The National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care 2018
- [SIDS and Safe Sleeping Information](#) "Red Nose"
- Staying Healthy: Preventing Infectious Diseases in early childhood education and care services 5th edition

7. APPROVAL



Alison Forster

Director
Catholic Early Learning and Care

Date: 19/01/2024