



# Sleep & Rest for Children Policy

Blackburn North Neighbourhood House - Inc A0009540J

## Policy Statement:

The purpose of our *Sleep and rest for children policy* is to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children attending our service and appropriate opportunities are provided to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.

## Background:

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* requires approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for children's sleep and rest.

Our *Sleep and rest for children Policy* provides our educators, management, other staff, families and the community with the information they need to support children's needs for sleep and rest are met while attending the service.

There is research available to inform decisions about safe sleeping environments, including research that identifies poor sleep procedures and inadequate supervision as risk factors, which can result in, or contribute to, serious harm to young children. All children need rest and sleep for their wellbeing and health, and this is an area of service policy and procedure that our service very carefully considers, monitors and actively reviews to ensure risks are appropriately addressed at all times. We value feedback from families and ensure that our policies, procedures, practices and decisions are based on the most up to date advice from recognised authorities, such as Red Nose Australia.

## Scope:

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, educators, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others

The Service Provider is Blackburn North Neighbourhood House. The Approved Provider is Blackburn North Neighbourhood House Inc (BNNH). The Approved Provider delegates its responsibility for the day to day operation of the service to the Nominated Supervisor.

	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Educators, volunteers and all other staff	Parents/guardians
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted				
Ensuring that policies and procedures are in place for managing sleep and rest for children (Regulation 168) and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed.	R			
Taking reasonable steps to ensure the sleep and rest needs of children at BNNH are met, with regard to the age of children, developmental stages and individual needs (Regulation 84A).	R	R	✓	
Conducting a sleep and rest risk assessment at least once every 12 months, and as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect the safety, health or wellbeing of children during sleep and rest (Regulation 84C).	R	R	✓	
Ensuring the risk assessment considers the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number, ages and developmental stages of the children</li> <li>• The sleep and rest needs of children (including health care needs, cultural preferences, individual needs and requests from families about a child's sleep and rest)</li> <li>• The suitability of staffing arrangements to adequately supervise and monitor children during sleep and rest periods</li> <li>• The level of knowledge and training of staff supervising children during sleep and rest periods</li> <li>• The location of sleep and rest areas, including the arrangement of cots and mattresses within the sleep and rest areas</li> <li>• The safety and suitability of any cots, mattresses and bedding equipment having regard to the ages and developmental stages of the children who will use the cots, mattresses and bedding equipment</li> <li>• Any potential hazards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In sleep and rest areas</li> <li>○ On a child during sleep and rest periods</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The physical safety and suitability of sleep and rest environments (including temperature, lighting and ventilation (Regulations 84C) (refer to Sources)</li> </ul>	R	✓	✓	
Ensuring all risk assessments conducted are recorded and stored (Regulation 84C)	R	✓	✓	

Undertaking a risk assessment to mitigate hazardous manual handling (refer to Definitions), such as lifting.	R	✓	✓	
Ensuring all educators, staff and volunteers comply with the recommendations of Red Nose Australia in relation to safe sleeping practices for children (refer to Sources)	R	✓	✓	
Ensuring educators receive information, induction and ongoing training to fulfil their roles effectively, including being made aware of the Sleep and Rest for Children Policy, their responsibilities in implementing this and any changes that are made over time.	R	✓		
Ensuring the premise, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and in good repair (Regulation 103 and National Law: Section 167) including ensuring all equipment used meets any relevant Australian Standards and other product safety standards, such as Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) guidelines (refer to Sources).	R	R	✓	✓
Ensuring the cots, mattresses and bedding equipment being used for sleep and rest are safe and appropriate for the ages and developmental stages of children who will use them	R	R	✓	
Ensuring that rooms used for sleep and relaxation are well ventilated; have adequate natural light; and are maintained at a temperature that ensures the safety and wellbeing of children (Regulation 110)	R	✓	✓	
Ensuring sleep and rest environments are free from cigarette, e-cigarette or tobacco smoke (Regulation 82)	R	✓	✓	
Ensuring that the premises are designed to facilitate supervision	R	R		
Ensuring adequate supervision of children sleeping and resting, being within sight and hearing distance and are monitoring through visual checks of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sleeping position</li> <li>- Skin and lip colour</li> <li>- Breathing</li> <li>- Body temperature</li> <li>- Head position</li> <li>- Airway</li> <li>- Head and face, ensuring they remain uncovered</li> </ul>	R	R	✓	
Ensuring supervision and monitoring procedures are documented, including method and frequency of checking the safety, health and wellbeing of children during sleep and rest periods, as per the risk assessment.	R	R	✓	
Developing relaxation and sleep practices that are responsive to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The individual needs of children at the service</li> <li>- Parenting beliefs, values, practices and requirements</li> <li>- The length of time each child spends at the service</li> <li>- Circumstances or events occurring at a child's home</li> <li>- Consistency of practice between home and the service</li> <li>- A child's general health and wellbeing</li> <li>- The physical environment, including lighting, airflow and noise levels</li> </ul>	R	✓	✓	

Ensuring cots provided at the service comply with the most current Australian/New Zealand Standards (refer to Sources and Attachment 1)	R	✓		
Ensuring that bassinets, hammocks, prams and strollers are not used to settle children to sleep	R	R	✓	
Conducting regular safety checks of equipment used for sleeping/resting, such as cots and mattresses (regulation 103 and National Law: Section 167)	R	R	✓	
Ensuring that bassinets are not on the education and care service premises at any time (Regulation 84D)	R	R	✓	
Ensuring that if a child is brought to the service in a pram or bassinet, the child is transferred into the service's own sleep equipment.	R	R	✓	
Removing any hazards identified in the child's resting or sleeping environment and informing the approved provider, as soon as is practicable	R	R	✓	
Ensuring that any hanging cords, mobiles, curtains and blinds are inaccessible to children who are resting or sleeping	R	R	✓	
Ensuring that artificial heating, such as heat bags and hot-water bottles, is not used to provide warmth.		✓	✓	
Ensuring children's clothing is appropriate during sleep times and does not have any items that are loose, could get tangled and restrict breathing (including but not limited to bibs and jewellery)		✓	✓	✓
Ensuring that families provide fresh bed linen for their child which is then sent home with the child at the end of the day.		✓	✓	✓
Ensuring the Hygiene Policy and procedures are implemented for the cleaning and storage of cots and , mattresses		✓	✓	
Ensuring that there is adequate space to store bedding in a hygienic manner (refer to Hygiene policy)	R	✓	✓	
Ensuring compliance with WorkSafe Victoria's Children's Services – occupational health and safety compliance kit (refer to Sources), including in relation to staff lifting children into and out of cots.	R	✓	✓	
Regularly reviewing practices to ensure compliance with the recommendations of RedNose Australia in relation to safe sleeping practices for children (refer to Sources)	R	✓	✓	✓
Providing information and training to ensure staff are kept informed of changing practices in relation to safe sleep practices for children	✓	✓		
Providing information to families about the service's relaxation and sleep practices	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensuring parents/guardians are consulted about appropriate relaxation and sleep practices for their child	✓	✓	✓	✓
Educating families about evidence-based safe sleeping practices	✓	✓	✓	✓
Assessing whether there are exceptional circumstances for alternative practices where family beliefs conflict with current recommended evidence-based guidelines for safe sleeping practices, seek written support from a medical practitioner and develop a risk management plan	R	✓	✓	✓
Implementing the documented sleep regime and risk management strategies where in exceptional	R	✓	✓	

circumstances family beliefs conflict with current recommended evidence-based guidelines for safe sleeping practices				
Providing a written medical report if their baby/child is not to be placed on their back during sleep. Parents/guardians must communicate alternative resting practices to staff				✓
Ensuring the educational program provides opportunities for each child to sleep, rest or engage in appropriate quiet play activities as required	R	✓	✓	
Ensuring that resting and sleeping practices are not used as a behaviour guidance strategy (refer to Interactions with Children Policy)		✓	✓	
Providing a range of opportunities for relaxation throughout the day		✓	✓	
Supervising children displaying symptoms of illness closely, especially when resting or sleeping		✓	✓	
Documenting and communicating children's rest and sleep times to co-workers during shift changes		✓	✓	
Developing communication strategies to inform parents/guardians about their child's rest and sleep patterns, including times and length of sleep		✓	✓	✓
Encouraging children's independence and assisting children with dressing as needed		✓	✓	

## Legislation and Standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Australian Consumer Law and Fair-Trading Act 2012
- Australian Consumer Law and Fair-Trading Regulations 2012
- Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for household use – Safety Requirements (AS/NZS 2172:2010)
- Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for day nursery, hospital and institutional use – Safety Requirements (AS/NZS 2130:1998)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victoria Law Today: [www.legislation.vic.gov.au](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au)
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: [www.legislation.gov.au](http://www.legislation.gov.au)

## Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms e.g. Approved provider, Nominated supervisor, Notifiable complaints, Serious incidents, Duty of care, etc. refer to the Definitions file of the PolicyWorks catalogue.

*Hazardous Manual Handling:* Manual handling is work where you have to lift, lower, push, pull, carry, move, hold or restrain something. It's hazardous manual handling if it involves:

- repeated, sustained or high force
- sustained awkward posture
- repetitive movements
- exposure to sustained vibration
- handling people or animals
- loads that are unstable, unbalanced or hard to hold.

*Red Nose Australia* (formerly SIDS and Kids): Recognised national authority on safe sleeping practices for infants and children (refer to Sources)

*Relaxation:* Relaxation or other activity for bringing about a feeling of calm in your body and mind

*Rest:* A period of inactivity, solitude, calmness or tranquillity, and can include a child being in a state of sleep.

*SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome):* The sudden and unexpected death of an infant under one year of age with an onset of a fatal episode occurring during sleep, that remains unexplained after thorough investigation, including performance of a complete autopsy and review of the circumstances of death and the clinical history.

*Sudden and Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI):* A broad term used to describe the sudden and unexpected death of a baby for which the cause is not immediately obvious.

## Sources and Related Policies

### Sources

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority, Safe sleep and rest practices: [www.acecqa.gov.au/resources](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources)
- Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (2016), Consumer product safety – a guide for businesses & legal practitioners: [www.accc.gov.au](http://www.accc.gov.au)
- Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF): [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- Current Australian/New Zealand Standards for cots is available on the SAI Global website at: [www.saiglobal.com](http://www.saiglobal.com)
- Red Nose Australia: [www.rednose.org.au](http://www.rednose.org.au)
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF): [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)

- WorkSafe Victoria, Children's services – occupational health and safety compliance kit: [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au)
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority, Sleep and rest risk assessment Template - Sleep Rest Risk Assessment Template
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority, Risk Assessment and Management Tool - [www.acecqa.gov.au/media/32166](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/media/32166)
- Kids Safe Australia - [www.kidsafe.com.au](http://www.kidsafe.com.au)
- Compliance code: Hazardous manual handling - <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/resources/compliance-code-hazardous-manual-handling> • Hazardous manual handling risk assessment and control tool – [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au)

### Related Policies

- Administration of First Aid
- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
- Emergency and Evacuation
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Hygiene
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Interactions with Children
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Staffing
- Supervision of Children

### **Evaluation**

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the approved provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (Regulation 172 (2)).

### **Authorisation:**

This policy was adopted by Blackburn North Neighbourhood House Inc on 19 April 2024.

## ATTACHMENT 1. COTS

Household cots usually have a lower base and mattress, and WorkSafe Victoria have expressed concern for staff in relation to the manual handling risks posed when working with cots at a lower height. The Institutional Cot Standard allows for cots with a higher base and mattress, but requires these cots to be made of metal, and to have a drop side that can be lowered to the level of the mattress. The early childhood sector has expressed concerns in relation to the safety of cots with sides that lower to the level of the mattress.

Services should investigate options either for:

- cots that meet the Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for household use – Safety Requirements (AS/NZS 2172:2010) and have a higher base and mattress, or
- cots that meet the Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for day nursery, hospital and institutional use – Safety Requirements (AS/NZS 2130:1998).

No alterations should be made to purchased cots under any circumstances, as this may have serious consequences in relation to liability in the event that an incident occurs.

ELAA does not recommend that services use portable or folding cots, as they present an increased risk of injury or death to a child if erected incorrectly. Portable cots also pose an increased risk of manual handling injuries to staff. If a service requires an extra cot to be available for occasional use, it is possible to purchase a cot that meets the Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for household use, and folds flat for easy storage.

Further information on portable or folding cots is available as outlined below:

- Red Nose: <https://rednose.org.au/article/portable-cots>
- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission: [www.productsafety.gov.au](http://www.productsafety.gov.au)





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## ATTACHMENT 2. RISK ASSESSMENT

### Risk Matrix

		Likelihood					
Consequences	Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost Certain		
	Major	Moderate	High	High	Critical	Critical	Critical
Significant	Moderate	Moderate	High	High	Critical	Critical	
Moderate	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High	High	High	
Minor	Very low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	
Insignificant	Very low	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	

### Likelihood

When thinking about likelihood prioritise actions based on ensuring compliance with the minimum legislative standards, particularly those standards relating to the safety, health and wellbeing of children.

Rare	Very unlikely – the event may occur only in exceptional circumstances
Unlikely	Improbable – the event is not likely to occur in normal circumstances
Possible	Potential – the event could occur at some time.
Likely	Probable – the event will probably occur in most circumstances.
Almost Certain	Very likely – the event is expected to occur in most circumstances.

**Consequence**

The risk matrix includes five levels of consequences. This considers the potential impact and how it might affect the safety and wellbeing of children, families, staff and the wider community.

**Risk Assessment**

Activity	Hazard identified	Risk Assessment	Elimination/control measures	Who	When
The number, ages and development stages of children being educated and cared for.					
The sleep and rest needs of children - inc specific health care needs, cultural preferences, sleep and rest needs of individual children and requests from families about a child's sleep and rest.					
The suitability of staffing arrangements required to adequately supervise and monitor children during sleep and rest periods.					
The level of knowledge and training of the staff supervising children during sleep and rest periods.					
The location of the sleep and rest areas, inc the					

arrangement of bedding.						
The safety and suitability of any beds and bedding equipment and having regard to the ages and developmental stages of the children who will use them.						
Any potential hazards in sleep and rest areas or on a child during sleep and rest periods.						
The physical safety and suitability of sleep and rest environments, inc temperatures, lighting and ventilation.						
Work practices of staff are compliant with safe lifting practices etc.						

**Plan and Review**

Risks identified from this risk assessment have been addressed within policy and procedure (regulation 84C) as well as other matters required under regulation 84C.

Risk assessment, plan and review undertaken by:	Full name	Date
	Signature	
	Role/position	
Prepared in consultation with:	Full name	Date

	Signature	
	Role/position	
Communicated to all relevant Staff:	Yes	Comment
Next sleep and rest risk assessment to be conducted before: *AND as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect the safety, health and wellbeing of children during sleep and rest.		Date: