

SLEEP AND REST

QUALITY AREA 2 | ELAA VERSION 1.2



PURPOSE

This policy will provide clear guidelines to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children attending Middle Park Kindergarten and appropriate opportunities are provided to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.



POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Middle Park Kindergarten is committed to:

- complying with all legislative requirements, standards and current best practice and guidelines, including recommendations by Red Nose Australia (*refer to Sources*)
- its duty of care (*refer to Definitions*) to all children at Middle Park Kindergarten, and ensuring that adequate supervision (*refer to Definitions*) is maintained while children are sleeping, resting or relaxing
- consulting with parents/guardians about their child's individual relaxation requirements/practices, and ensuring practices at the service are responsive to the values and cultural beliefs of each family
- providing a positive and nurturing environment for all children attending the service
- allowing children to be actively involved in decision making, to provide an environment that encourages them to reach their potential
- providing a safe environment where children feel comfortable and safe to play, talk, or relax
- children's safety and wellbeing will be fostered through responsive relationships, engaging experiences and a safe and healthy environment.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Middle Park Kindergarten.

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
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 (Regulation 170)	R				
Taking reasonable steps to ensure the sleep and rest needs of children at Middle Park Kindergarten 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 (a)(b))	R	R	√		
<p>Ensuring the risk assessment considers the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the number, ages, and developmental stages of the children • 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) • the suitability of staffing arrangements to adequately supervise and monitor children during rest periods • the level of knowledge and training of staff supervising children during rest periods • the location of rest areas, including the arrangement of beds or similar within the rest areas • the safety and suitability of any beds and bedding equipment, having regard to the ages and developmental stages of the children who will use the bed and bedding equipment • any potential hazards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ in rest areas ○ on a child during rest periods • the physical safety and suitability of sleep and rest environments (including temperature, lighting and ventilation) (Regulations 84C) (<i>refer to Sources</i>) 	R	√	√		√
Ensuring all risk assessments conducted are recorded and stored (Regulation 84C (4))	R	√	√		√

Undertaking a risk assessment to mitigate hazardous manual handling (<i>refer to Definitions</i>), such as furniture removal for rest space	R	√	√		√
Ensuring educators receive information and induction training to fulfil their roles effectively, including being made aware of the rest policies, their responsibilities in implementing these, and any changes that are made over time	R	√			
Ensuring the premise, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and in good repair (<i>Regulation 103 and National Law: Section 167</i>) including ensuring all equipment used meets any relevant Australian Standards and other product safety standards, such as Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) guidelines (<i>Refer to Sources</i>).	R	R	√	√	√
Ensuring the beds, bedding and bedding equipment being used for rest are safe and appropriate for the ages and developmental stages of children who will use them	R	R	√		√
Ensuring that rooms used for relaxation are well ventilated; have adequate natural light; and are maintained at a temperature that ensures the safety and wellbeing of children (<i>Regulation 110</i>)	R	√	√		√
Ensuring rest environments are free from cigarette, e-cigarette, or tobacco smoke (<i>Regulation 82</i>)	R	√	√		√
Ensuring that the premises are designed to facilitate supervision	R	R			
Ensuring adequate supervision of children resting, being within sight and hearing distance and are monitoring through visually checks of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sleeping position • skin and lip colour • breathing • body temperature • head position • airway • head and face, ensuring they remain uncovered 	R	R	√		√
Ensuring supervision and monitoring procedures are documented, including method and frequency of checking the safety, health and wellbeing of children during rest periods, as per the risk assessment	R	R	√		√
Developing relaxation practices that are responsive to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the individual needs of children at the service • parenting beliefs, values, practices and requirements • the length of time each child spends at the service • circumstance or events occurring at a child's home • consistency of practice between home and the service • a child's general health and wellbeing • the physical environment, including lighting, airflow and noise levels 	R	√	√		√
Conducting regular safety checks of equipment used for resting, such as mattresses (<i>Regulation 103 and National Law: Section 167</i>)	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	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 rest times and does not have any items that are loose, could get tangled and restrict breathing (including but not limited to jewellery)		√	√	√	√
Ensuring that each child has their own rest mats etc, and that the <i>Hygiene Policy</i> and procedures are implemented for the cleaning and storage of rest mats etc		√	√		√
Ensuring that there is adequate space to store bedding in a hygienic manner (<i>refer to Hygiene Policy</i>)	R	√	√		√
Ensuring compliance with WorkSafe Victoria’s Children’s services – occupational health and safety compliance kit (<i>refer to Sources</i>), including in removing furniture	R	√	√		√
Providing information and training to ensure staff are kept informed of changing practices in relation to safe rest practices for children	√	√			
Providing information to families about the service’s relaxation practices	√	√	√		√
Ensuring parents/guardians are consulted about appropriate relaxation practices for their child	√	√	√	√	√
Educating families about evidence-based rest practices	√	√	√	√	√
Assessing whether there are exceptional circumstances for alternative practices where family beliefs conflict with current recommended evidence-based guidelines for rest practices, seek written support from a medical practitioner and develop a risk management plan	R	√	√	√	√
Implementing the documented rest regime and risk management strategies where in exceptional circumstances family beliefs conflict with current recommended evidence-based guidelines for safe sleeping practices	R	√	√	√	
Providing a written medical report if their child is not to be placed on their back during rest. Parents/guardians must communicate alternative resting practices to staff.				√	
Ensuring the educational program provides opportunities for each child to rest or engage in appropriate quiet play activities, as required	R	√	√		√
Ensuring that resting practices are not used as a behaviour guidance strategy (<i>refer to Interactions with Children Policy</i>)		√	√		√
Providing a range of opportunities for relaxation throughout the day		√	√		√
Supervising children displaying symptoms of illness closely, especially when resting		√	√		√

Documenting and communicating children’s rest times to co-workers during shift changes		√	√		√
Encouraging children’s independence and assisting children with dressing as needed.		√	√		√

BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION



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.

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework* (VEYLDF) include a focus on social, emotional, spiritual and physical wellbeing and health. Development Outcome 3 in both framework documents refers to a child’s ability to take increasing responsibility for their own wellbeing. One of the indicators for this capacity is that children “recognise and communicate their bodily needs (for example thirst, hunger, rest, comfort, physical activity)”. The EYLF suggests that to promote this, educators should:

- consider the pace of the day within the context of the community
- provide a range of active and restful experiences throughout the day, and support children to make appropriate decisions regarding participation.

Holistic approaches recognise the importance of physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing. Educators who provide a range of active and restful experiences throughout the day support children’s individual requirements for health, nutrition, sleep, rest and relaxation.

Employers have a responsibility under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* to provide a safe and healthy working environment. This duty extends to others present in the workplace, including children and volunteers. Providing a safe sleeping environment for children at the service includes complying with current Australian/New Zealand standards in relation to equipment, such as cots and mattresses (*refer to Sources*).

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
- 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 – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: 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 a 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
- Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (2016), Consumer product safety – a guide for businesses & legal practitioners: www.accc.gov.au
- Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF): www.acecqa.gov.au
- Current Australian/New Zealand Standards for cots is available on the SAI Global website at: www.saiglobal.com
- Red Nose Australia: www.rednose.org.au
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF): www.acecqa.gov.au
- WorkSafe Victoria, Children's services – occupational health and safety compliance kit: 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
- Kids Safe Australia - 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

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
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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)).
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ATTACHMENTS

- Nil
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AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Middle Park Kindergarten on 23 May 2024.

REVIEW DATE: May 2026



