

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 St Mary's Pre-School and appropriate opportunities are provided to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.



POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

St Mary's Pre-School 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 St Mary's Pre-School, 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 and sleep 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 St Mary's Pre-School.

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
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R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensuring that policies and procedures are in place for managing sleep and rest for children (<i>Regulation 168</i>) and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed (<i>Regulation 170</i>)	R				
Taking reasonable steps to ensure the sleep and rest needs of children at St Mary's Pre-School are met, with regard to the age of children, developmental stages and individual needs (<i>Regulation 84A</i>)	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 (<i>Regulation 84C (a)(b)</i>)	R	R	√		
Ensuring the risk assessment considers the following: <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 sleep and rest periods the level of knowledge and training of staff supervising children during sleep and rest periods the location of sleep and rest areas, including the arrangement beds within the sleep and rest areas the safety and suitability of any cots, 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 sleep and rest areas on a child during sleep and rest periods the physical safety and suitability of sleep and rest environments (including temperature, lighting and ventilation) (<i>Regulations 84C</i>) (<i>refer to Sources</i>) 	R	√	√		√
Ensuring all risk assessments conducted are recorded and stored (<i>Regulation 84C (4)</i>)	R	√	√		√
Undertaking a risk assessment to mitigate hazardous manual handling (<i>refer to Definitions</i>), such as patting and rocking children to sleep for long periods of time	R	√	√		√
Ensuring all educators, staff and volunteers comply with the recommendations of Red Nose Australia in relation to safe sleeping practices for children (<i>refer to Sources</i>)	R	√	√		√
Ensuring educators receive information and induction training to fulfil their roles effectively, including being made aware of the sleep and 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</i>	R	R	√	√	√

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 (<i>Refer to Sources</i>).					
Ensuring the beds, bedding 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 (<i>Regulation 110</i>)	R	√	√		√
Ensuring sleep and 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 sleeping and 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 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"> • 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	√	√		√
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 mattresses (<i>Regulation 103 and National Law: Section 167</i>)	R	R	√		√
Ensuring that bassinets are not on the education and care service premises at any time (<i>Regulation 84D</i>)	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 each child has their own bed linen, and that the <i>Hygiene Policy</i> and procedures are implemented for the cleaning and storage of mattresses and linen			√	√	√
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 relation to staff lifting children into and out of beds.	R		√	√	√
Regularly reviewing practices to ensure compliance with the recommendations of Red Nose Australia in relation to safe sleeping practices for children (<i>refer to Sources</i>)	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 circumstances family beliefs conflict with current recommended evidence-based guidelines for safe sleeping practices	R		√	√	√
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 (<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 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.		√	√		√

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 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
- 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

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)).



ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment



AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of St Mary’s Pre-School in May 2024

REVIEW DATE: May 2024

ATTACHMENT 1. SLEEP AND REST RISK ASSESSMENT

Child Safety: Rest & Relaxation Risk Assessment & Action (Procedures) Plan

Quality Area 2:

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, coordinators, other staff, families, and the community with the information they need to ensure children's needs for sleep and rest are met while attending the service.

There is now much 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.

Other Considerations:

The ages of children licensed for care at St Mary's Preschool are 3 – 5 years old. Our 3YO and 4YO groups are separate and attend on different days. Each group has 22 children in total.

There is no need for cots. St Marys provides sleeping mats for each child if needed. The mats are child sized, easy to clean and carry.

Our 3YO group have a rest time with sleeping mats, individual pillows and sheets (provided by parents). Children can choose to rest/sleep or do a quiet activity in their own space.

Our 4YO group have a 'quiet time', with relaxing music and quite activities to choose from. Children are encouraged to choose a quiet activity, with limited movement around room. Mattresses are available for rest/ relaxation if required.

Our room is well ventilated, and is heated through the cooler months. Lighting can be altered when needed. In our analysis of risk and needs, we also consider and refer to the following:

Child Safe Standard 3 – children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

Child safe standard 4 – Families and communities are informed in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

Identified potential hazards that require mitigation and procedural practices.

1. Number of children requiring rest/relaxation – Groups of 22
2. Safe floor Space for comfortable resting/sleeping
3. Storage of pillows/sheets for Hygiene / Safety
4. Supervision of sleeping children / versus awake children doing quiet activities
5. Special considerations of a sick child.

Practices that involve families:

1. Discussion of these potential hazards with committee of Management
2. Families are asked on enrolment about their child’s usual resting patterns, and these are followed up regularly throughout the year.
3. Sleep and rest strategies/policy are shared with families through our Parent information provided at start of year.
4. Our Koala group (3YO) are asked to provide a clearly named pillow/sheet that are stored in individual bags that hang on hooks in our locker room.
5. Discussions around appropriate size/comfort rest toys if needed by children.

Children’s voices/choices:

1. Children can bring a soft toy for comfort, rest or sleeping.
2. Children are actively involved in preparing / packing their rest mattress, pillow and sheet.
3. Quiet/Restful activities are available for children to choose from.
4. Children are involved in discussions around expectations they have around rest times. Choosing their own quiet time activities, and whether they want to sleep or rest. Respecting the need of others to have a quiet space to rest/relax or sleep.

Practices to support Child Safety at sleep, rest, and relaxation times:

- Staff communication and professional development
- All staff have current first aid certificates.
- Staff support children’s relaxation in a variety of ways: ie: by telling stories, playing music for relaxation, quiet games/activities
- We provide quiet restful areas in our learning environment i.e. comfortable couches, soft carpets.
- As best practice, two staff members are always in the resting/relaxing area supporting and supervising children.
- After 30mins the children can pack away their pillow/sheet into a protective named bag and place the mattress back on the trolley. Staff will support children in doing this.
- Sleeping children are regularly checked whilst they sleep every 5-10 mins minimum. With staff paying attention to visual signs of sleeping position, breathing, skin/lip tone, breathing, body temperature, head position and having a clear airspace
- Pillowcases/sheets are washed at each end of term, and more frequently by the parents if children have illness or soil these.
- Temperatures taken if a child awakens unwell. Care as required. Parents are notified to collect.
- Procedures and Policy discussed and reflected upon at Team meetings, and at the end of each kinder year

Risk Assessment					
Activity	Hazard Identified	Risk Assessment	Strategies:	Who?	When?
Number of children requiring rest and relaxation – group size 22	Ensuring all children have a safe space to sleep/rest/ relax . That furniture is stable, resources secure, with no hanging chords.	Low	Space out mattresses (3YO) Ensure that furniture/resources are safely situated, and secure.	Staff With support of children	When preparing the room for Quiet time.

	That children are able to sleep / rest without interference from their peers		<p>Take into consideration whole room when setting quiet time activities. Activities away from areas that children are sleeping</p> <p>Discussion with children about the importance of rest time for their health and wellbeing, and respecting the choices of their peers.</p> <p>Staff to check children's clothing if choosing to sleep, or lie down.</p>		
Storage of pillows/sheets for Hygiene / Safety	<p>Cross contamination of germs</p> <p>Insects/ spiders</p>	Low	<p>Individual bags for storage of pillows/sheets – clearly named</p> <p>Regular washing each term, and when required by parents</p> <p>Hooks on walls for bags to hang on, evenly spaced and off the floor.</p>	Staff	<p>Prior to, and completion of Quiet time</p> <p>Or When needed</p>

Supervision of sleeping children / versus awake children	<u>Sleeping:</u>	Low	Set room / mattresses according to children's individual needs. Children that need sleep up one end of room, children choosing quieter activities down the other end.	Staff	At Quiet time.
	Safe area to sleep free from moving furniture/resources		Ensure furniture is stable and resources secure. No hanging chords.	& Children	
	Children are sleeping safely – and breathing		As best practice, two staff to supervise, one each side of room.		
	Mats are clean and safely stored.		Discussion with children what Quiet time is? – making our own choices and respecting those of others.		
	That children's clothing is appropriate to sleep/ rest in. No items that restrict movement or breathing when sleeping		All staff first Aid trained		

			<p>Check children's clothing to ensure it is suitable to sleep in.</p> <p>Active monitoring of children's sleep: Sleeping position, skin and lip colour, breathing, body temperature, head position and clear airway.</p>		
	<p><u>Awake:</u></p> <p>Unsafe play</p> <p>Moving around room – disturbing areas where children are asleep</p> <p>Injury / choking in play</p>				
Special considerations of a sick child.	If a child wakes up unwell: fever, vomiting .	Low	<p>All staff first aid trained</p> <p>Care taken of child</p> <p>Parent notified for child collection</p>	<p>Staff</p> <p>Families</p>	If required.

Risk Matrix

Very Low
Low
Moderate
High
Critical

PLAN AND REVIEW

PLAN PREPARED BY	NAME	Emma Rowe
	POSITION	Educational Leader
	DATE	May-24
PLAN PREPARED IN CONSULTATION WITH		All Staff
COMMUNICATED TO RELEVANT STAFF?		YES

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, including:

- the number, ages and development stages of children being educated and cared for, including at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service
- the sleep and rest needs of children at the service (including specific health care needs, cultural preferences, sleep and rest needs of individual children and requests from families about a child's sleep and rest) including at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service
- 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, including the arrangement of cots and beds within the sleep and rest areas, including at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service
- the safety and suitability of any cots, 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, including temperature, lighting and ventilation at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service