
SLEEP AND REST FOR CHILDREN POLICY

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

PURPOSE

This policy will provide clear guidelines for the implementation of safe relaxation and rest/sleep practices that meet the individual needs of children attending Yarraman Oaks Primary School Out of School Hours Care Service.

As a sessional Out of School Hours Care Primary School, children attending Yarraman Oaks Primary School Out of School Hours Care Service do not routinely sleep whilst at the service. As such, this policy focuses on ensuring that:

- all children who attend the service are provided with adequate opportunities for rest and relaxation; and
- any child who requests a rest/sleep, or is showing signs of tiredness, is provided with a suitable place to rest/sleep in a safe and supervised environment.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

Yarraman Oaks Primary School Out of School Hours Care is committed to:

- providing a positive and nurturing environment for all children attending the service
- recognising that children have different requirements for relaxation and rest/sleep, and being responsive to those needs to ensure that children feel safe and secure at the service
- 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
- its duty of care (refer to *Definitions*) to all children at Yarraman Oaks Primary School Out of School Hours Care, and ensuring that adequate supervision (refer to *Definitions*) is maintained while children are resting/sleeping or relaxing

- complying with all legislative requirements, standards and current best practice, including recommendations by SIDS and Kids and Kidsafe (refer to *Sources*).

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Persons with Management or Control, Nominated Supervisor, Persons in day-to-day Charge, staff, contractors, volunteers, students on placement, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Yarraman Oaks Primary School Out of School Hours Care, including during offsite excursions and activities.

3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Background

“The early years of life are a peak period for growth and development, and quality rest/sleep is essential during this period”.

Early childhood educators can support parents to establish and maintain good sleep habits in children through the environment provided for sleep and rest:

- Provide a separate, supervised area that is reserved for sleep and rest. This supports the distinction between awake time and sleep time and helps to minimise distractions.
- Direct children who do not want to sleep into quiet, restful activities instead.
- Maintain good levels of communication with parents and other caregivers to ensure that you know of anything that might have disturbed the sleep of children in your care.
- “Let parents and caregivers know about the rest that their child has had that day at your setting” (from *Grow & Thrive* – refer to *Sources*)
- 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 suggest 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.

4. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

Adequate supervision: supervision entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios at all times. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used.

Adequate supervision refers to constant, active and diligent supervision of every child at the service. Adequate supervision requires that educators are always in a position to observe each child, respond to individual needs, and immediately intervene if necessary. Variables affecting supervision levels include:

- number age and abilities of children
- number and positioning of educators
- current activity of each child
- areas in which the children are engaged in an activity (visibility and accessibility)
- developmental profile of each child and of the group of children
- experience, knowledge and skill of each educator
- need for educators to move between areas (effective communication strategies)

Duty of Care: A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury.

Relaxation/Rest: A period of inactivity, solitude, calmness or tranquillity.

5. PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider and Persons with Management or Control are responsible for:

- taking reasonable steps to ensure the rest/sleep and relaxation needs of children at the service are met, with regard to the age of children, developmental stages and individual needs (Regulation 81(1))
- ensuring parents/guardians are consulted about appropriate relaxation and rest/sleep practices for their child
- protecting children from hazards and harm (Section 167)

- ensuring compliance with the recommendations of SIDS and Kids and Kidsafe in relation to safe sleeping practices for children (refer to *Sources*)
- ensuring adequate supervision of children at the service at all times, including during relaxation and rest/sleep
- ensuring that rooms used for rest/sleep and relaxation are well ventilated
- ensuring that adequate spaces in the physical environment are provided for rest and relaxation, including quiet play spaces (i.e. reading corner inside and areas for quiet play outside).

The Nominated Supervisor and Persons in Day-to-Day Charge are responsible for:

- taking reasonable steps to ensure the rest/sleep needs of children at the service are met with regard to the age of children, developmental stages and individual needs (Regulation 81(2))
- ensuring the educational program provides opportunities for each child to rest or engage in appropriate quiet play activities, as required
- protecting children from hazards and harm (Section 167)
- informing the Approved Provider, as soon as is practicable, of any hazards identified in the child's resting/sleeping environment
- ensuring all staff and educators comply with the recommendations of SIDS and Kids and Kidsafe in relation to safe sleeping practices for children (refer to *Sources*)
- ensuring adequate supervision of children at the service at all times, including during relaxation and rest.

All staff are responsible for:

- providing each child with appropriate opportunities for relaxation and rest/sleep according to their needs
- complying with the recommendations of SIDS and Kids and Kidsafe in relation to safe sleeping practices for children (refer to *Sources*)
- developing relaxation and rest/sleep practices that are responsive to:
 - 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 room temperature, lighting, airflow and noise levels
- minimising distress or discomfort for the children in their care

- 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
- informing the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider, as soon as is practicable, of any hazards identified in the child's resting/sleeping environment
- providing adequate supervision (refer to *Definitions*) of all children, including during rest/sleep and relaxation
- supervising children displaying symptoms of illness closely, especially when resting/sleeping (refer to *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*)
- ensuring that artificial heating, such as heat bags and hot-water bottles, is not used to provide
- providing information to families about the service's relaxation and rest/sleep practices.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- discussing their child's relaxation and rest/sleep requirements and practices prior to commencing at the service, and when these requirements change.

Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

6. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources & Legislative References

- *Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia* (EYLF): <http://education.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework>
- *Grow and Thrive, Sleep*, volume 2 number 1, February 2013, Centre for Community Child Health: <http://www.rch.org.au/ccch/growthrive/archives/>
- Kidsafe Fact Sheets at: www.kidsafevic.com.au/resources
- *Ages and Stages* fact sheet series ('Sleeping' section)
- WorkSafe Victoria, *Children's services – occupational health and safety compliance kit*: <http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/forms-and-publications/forms-and-publications/childrens-services-occupational-health-and-safety-compliance-kit>
- *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework* (VEYLDF): <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/edcare/pages/veyladf.aspx>
- Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:
- *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

- Standard 2.1: Each child's health needs are supported
- Element 2.1.2: Each child's comfort is provided for and there are appropriate opportunities to meet each child's needs for sleep, rest and relaxation

Service policies

- *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Interactions with Children Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*

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
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

ATTACHMENTS

- There are no attachments.

AUTHORISATION

Review Date August 2020

Next Review Date August 2023

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AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Yarraman Oaks Primary School in

REVIEW DATE: