

Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens

SLEEP AND REST TIME POLICY

CONSIDERATIONS:

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS	1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2 and 7.1
NATIONAL LAW ACT & NATIONAL REGULATIONS	Law: Sections 165, 166, 167 Regulations: 81, 82, 84, 87, 103, 105, 106, 107, 110, 115, 168, 171, 172
OTHER	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Service will ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children are met throughout the program year. The program and service environment will provide opportunities for rest and relaxation across the program day. Where a rest period takes place, staff will ensure that this is a positive experience for children which reflects individual, group and cultural needs. The Service will reflect on the routine of the program throughout the year, adjusting the rest period to be reflective of children and family needs.

Staff will be aware of safe sleep practices and effective supervision to support safety and wellbeing of children whilst they are in care at the Kindergarten.

RELEVANT FORMS/MATERIAL:

- Sleep Record Charts and Family Communication Forms
- Kindergarten Enrolment Form
- Individual Child Risk Minimisation Plans
- Individual Child – Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Behaviour Guidance Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Child Safe Environment Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Child Protection – Prevention and Considerations Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Child Protection – Response and Reporting Processes Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Interactions with Children Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Program Planning and Development Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Responsible Person and Staffing Arrangements Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Medical Conditions Policies
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Safety and Supervision Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Free Environment Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment
- Service Supervision Guidelines
- Service Staff Roster
- Record of Staff Training and Policy Reading in relation to Sleep and Rest Practices

POLICY SPECIFIC SOURCES:

- ACECQA and Queensland Government, Department of Education Early Childhood Education and Care, Sleep and rest for children policy guidelines.
- Qld Government, Department of Education (Early Childhood Education and Care). (2015). SLEEP - Sleep Learning for Early Education Professionals.
- Qld Government, Department of Education (Early Childhood Education and Care). (2017) Sleep health and sleep development – Children aged 3-5 years in ECEC.
- Qld Government, Department of Education (Early Childhood Education and Care). (2017) Meeting children's sleep, rest and relaxation needs in ECEC – Children aged 3-5 years.
- Red Nose – www.rednose.org.au
- Red Nose (August 2023) Best Practice Sleep and Rest Audit Tool for Education and Care Settings.

(Accessed 2024)

POLICY GENERAL SOURCES:

- Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland) Act.
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Australian Government, Department of Education for Ministerial Council, (2022). Belonging, Being and Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. V 2.0 Commonwealth of Australia
- The State of Queensland (Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority), 2024. Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline (QKLG). Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority: South Brisbane

Reviewed: November 2024

Date to be Reviewed: May 2026

IMPLEMENTATION	
RATIONALE AND BACKGROUND WHAT STAFF SHOULD KNOW	• Positive experiences around sleep and rest are important for children's overall well-being. • Young children are active explorers of their world with play and learning being exhausting processes. • Sleep and rest time, therefore, needs to be an opportunity for children to recharge so they can begin new adventures. • Setting the scene for sleep and rest time is essential if staff are to achieve positive experiences for children, meet cultural expectations, provide high quality programs and a relaxing environment for both children and teachers/educators. Information from ACECQA includes • Ensure that children who do not wish to sleep, are provided with opportunities for play, while those children who do wish to sleep are able to do so, without being disrupted. If a child requests a rest, or if they are showing clear signs of tiredness, regardless of the time of day, there should be a comfortable, safe area available for them to sleep or rest. • It is important that opportunities for rest and relaxation, as well as sleep, are provided. • There is a range of strategies that can be used to meet children's individual sleep and rest needs. • Look for and respond to children's cues for sleep (e.g., yawning, rubbing eyes, disengagement from play, crying, decreased ability to regulate behaviour and seeking comfort from adults). • Avoid using settling and rest practices as a behaviour guidance strategy because children can begin to relate the sleep and rest environment, which should be calm and secure, as a negative setting. • Acknowledge children's emotions, feelings and fears and minimise any distress or discomfort with regards to sleep and rest. • Understand that younger children (especially those aged birth to three years) settle confidently when they have formed secure attachments and bonds with familiar educators. The Approved Provider (Executive Committee) and Nominated Supervisor must take reasonable steps to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by the service are met, having regard to the ages, development stages and individual needs of the children. Approved Providers (Executive Committee) must also ensure policies and procedures are in place for managing sleep and rest for children and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed.

INFANTS AND SAFE SLEEP	Long Day Care Services or programs which provide care to infants, hold a specific Safe Sleep for Infants up to 12 Months Policy. For reference of Kindergarten Staff in relation to knowledge of safe sleep practices for infants, the information below is shared and families should seek further information from Red Nose and the service their infant is attending. In the first 12 months, when there is a risk of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI), including Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), a key concern is to ensure that sleep environments are safe. This requires attention to the baby's sleep positioning, the sleep environment, supervision and existing medical conditions in particular respiratory conditions. To reduce the risks of Sudden Unexpected Deaths in Infancy (SUDI), including SIDS and Fatal Sleep Accidents 1. Sleep baby on the back from birth, not on the tummy or side. 2. Sleep baby with head and face uncovered. 3. Keep baby smoke free before birth and after. 4. Provide a safe sleeping environment night and day. No soft surfaces or bulky bedding. 5. Sleep baby in their own safe sleeping place in the same room as an adult care-giver for the first six months. 6. Breastfeed baby. Do not: • Do not put doonas, loose bedding or fabrics, pillows, lamb's wool, bumpers or soft toys in cot with baby. • Use a bassinet to sleep baby in. All bassinets are prohibited in early childhood education and care services under regulation 84(d). Importance of supervised tummy time Tummy time supports children to develop strength in their neck, shoulder, arm and back muscles. Tummy time must always be supervised and should be offered when the child is awake at least three times a day. Children should always be placed on the back (supine) to sleep. In a sessional kindergarten program, resources used in play, such as dramatic play area of home corner, should not include bassinets, unless the service can provide documentation that this is specifically a toy and has been purchased from an early childhood provider and is not used for sleep and rest.
STRATEGIES WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO	Elements that need to be considered in 'setting the scene' for sleep or rest are: • meeting individual and group needs for rest, comfort and self-help. • the use of space for the creation of atmosphere. • cultural perspectives. • health care needs of individual children. Not all children need to sleep while at the Service, some children may only need a quieter time to rest and relax.

While parents/guardians may request that their child does not sleep, they may understand that their child sleeps at the Service because of the environment that is created with a quieter time. Individual and Group Needs • Teachers/educators should create a pattern leading up to rest time. This should be established over time and set a supportive mood for sleep or resting. • Children's preferences and styles for relaxation and sleep should be recognised. • Teachers/educators will respect and accommodate each style and preference as far as it is possible to manage. Use of Space and Atmosphere Teachers/educators will view sleep and rest time as a positive part of the overall learning environment. They will: • Plan for sleep and rest time and set it for success. • Create a calm environment both physically and socially. • Focus on the senses to relax e.g., quiet music, relaxing sights, trees rustling, soft lighting, temperature, quiet voices. • Trust children to succeed and encourage where necessary. • Position beds in a way which provides safe access and supports supervision (clear exit pathways to designated exit doors must always be provided across the program including the rest period). • Ensure lighting in the room supports supervision and safety (in some contexts window coverings may need to be left slightly open to provide a suitable level of light. The transition of children, families or staff from outside or other areas of the Service should be considered in adjusting to light levels). Teachers/educators should identify and accommodate those children who: • sleep easily and quickly in a quiet area. • need time to unwind by reading, listening to a story or singing. • prefer adults nearby. • prefer to rest rather than sleep. • sleep for short periods. Children who do not rest will have quiet areas for play or invitations for learning while peers sleep. In meeting individual preferences and needs, those children who rest rather than sleep, will have the option to have resources such as books, drawing resources or quiet bags (these can be a small collection of suitable construction resources, card sets, sorting sets etc.). The use of resources such as these will be discussed with the children and undertaken in a way which continues to provide a relaxing environment, for those children who do sleep, and supports the safety of all children. Through the planning and development of the program each day, staff will ensure that there is the opportunity to engage in quieter experiences or rest and relaxation, as relevant to each individual child's needs. Those children who need to sleep outside of the routine time, will have the opportunity to do so. A bed is to be offered for the child in this situation and placed in a quieter part of the environment, while also supporting the safety and supervision of the child.
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	Teachers/educators model and respect children's quiet time. Teachers/educators see the rest or sleep time as one that is child-centred, positive and an important part of the overall learning environment. Staff will reflect on the opportunities for rest and relaxation throughout the year including the timing of transitions to these experiences and use of language which supports positive relationships, children's understanding of why slowing down may support their health and wellbeing and ways in which children's agency is supported. In recognition of the development of kindergarten aged children, the Service will reflect on the routine of the program throughout the year, adjusting the rest period to be reflective of child and family needs. Families should provide sheets for their child throughout the year. Where the Service discusses with families that rest and relaxation is changing, the Service is to ensure that there are adequate spare sheets available in the instance a child requests a bed, and their individual sheets are not available. For health and hygiene, Service cushions and pillows should not be used during the rest period. In the exceptional circumstance that these are used, the Service must have a cleaning process in place before they are available again for general use in the program.
COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO	On enrolment and through regular communication staff will gather information from parents/guardians about their child's specific rest or sleep preferences. This communication will respect and support cultural perspectives, where possible, within the context of the Kindergarten environment. Staff will work with families to ensure there is feedback about sleep and rest routines. Services will share with families if their child has slept during the program e.g., sleep record chart or children who slept today list. Families will be informed of changes to the program such as quiet experiences being provided, and a bed only being offered for children at individual preference as their need for sleep, rest and relaxation changes. Children's sleep needs can change on a daily basis dependent upon factors such as family lifestyle or emergencies, the home environment, illness and extra-curricular activities (e.g., sport or social events).
SAFETY WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO	In supporting the safety of each child during the rest period, necklaces (including amber) will be removed and placed in a suitable location. Children's clothing and bedding must be suitable to sleep in and reflective of weather conditions. Children and staff will discuss resting with your face uncovered. Where a child places their sheets/bedding over their head staff will respectfully reposition the linen or child as appropriate. Weighted blankets or resources including heavy cushions should not be used when children are sleeping. Staff will, if needed, support a child to change clothing such as removing an item of clothing with a fixed 'hood' prior to sleep for an alternative layer of clothing and offer a spare service shirt or sheet. Staff will, if needed, offer

	spare service linen and talk with the child's family, if the bedding which they are bringing from home is such that the child is consistently wanting to cover their face / be under the 'hood' section such as a sleeping bag. Where a child has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and sensory resources or experiences such as a weighted resource are used during other parts of the program day, in a way which supports their rights and dignity, in supporting safety and wellbeing, these weighted resources are not used once the child is asleep. Staff will discuss with the family and share strategies to support the child to settle to sleep (if needed for their individual needs and wellbeing) and note these on the IEP. Children who prefer to have a weighted blanket/resource to support them to settle and relax, are able to use this resource, at their preference, as long as there is a staff member in close proximity and effective supervision, while it is in use, and if the child falls asleep, the item is removed. Lighting of the environment throughout the program and particularly during any rest period, will be sufficient to support safety and supervision. The room temperature should be maintained at levels that keep children visibly comfortable. When relevant to their medical condition, a child will have their bed positioned in the room to be clearly visible to staff throughout the rest period/ an alternative space will be provided to support quiet experiences for children who don't sleep, as per the requirements of their Risk Minimisation Plan. A smoke free environment will be maintained at all times. Supervision of sleeping and resting children will be maintained at all times and will include regular bed-side checks for those children asleep. Staff will consider the layout of the room in relation to the ability to easily supervise children during this part of the program. Where children are positioned in different spaces within the room, according to their needs, the Service Supervision Guidelines should reflect the ability of staff to supervise each area and how they will position themselves within the physical space or regularly move throughout the space in supporting effective supervision. Staff will discuss with children respect for peers throughout the program, including during a period of rest. Children should only approach another child who is sleeping with staff supervision and when essential, for example the conclusion of the rest period / program day is approaching, and it is time to respectfully wake the child.
RISK ASSESSMENT WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO	A Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment will be developed to ensure adequate supervision and monitoring of children during the rest period is conducted and documented. This will be reviewed at least every 12 months 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. The Risk Assessment must consider the following: • The number, ages and developmental stages of children in attendance. • The sleep and rest needs of children (including specific health care

	needs, cultural preferences, and requests from families about their child's sleep and rest). • The suitability of staffing arrangements required to adequately supervise and monitor children during the sleep and rest period. • The level of knowledge and training of staff supervising children during rest periods. • Location of beds and furniture within sleep and rest areas. • The suitability of beds and bedding (in relation to bedding for sessional kindergarten programs, a Service may reflect on information shared with families regarding bedding suitable in supporting safety and wellbeing in the kindergarten environment and spare linen being available). • Any potential hazards in sleep and rest areas or on a child during sleep and rest period. • The physical safety and suitability of sleep and rest environments, including temperature, lighting and ventilation. The Service and Approved Provider must keep a record of each Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment conducted. The Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment and Service Supervision Guidelines will be reviewed with the opportunity for all staff to provide feedback, at least every 12 months. When reviewing the Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment, the Service may use resources such as Red Nose (August 2023) Best Practice Sleep and Rest Audit Tool for Education and Care Settings or other relevant publications / correspondence from the sector in reviewing practice and further identifying possible harm and hazards. As soon as practicable after conducting a risk assessment for sleep and rest under regulation 84C, the Approved Provider of an education and care service, must make any necessary updates to the sleep and rest procedures for the individual service. The Service will have a process by which the Sleep and Rest Time Policy, Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment and Supervision Guidelines are provided to and discussed with staff during induction and at least annually, following induction being completed.
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