



Sleep and Rest Policy

Overview

Clarence Park Community Kindergarten is required to follow the Department for Education's [safe sleeping and resting for infants and young children procedure](#) (department procedure) which aims to ensure appropriate opportunities are provided to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.

The Clarence Park Community Kindergarten Safe Sleep and Rest Procedure must be read alongside the department procedure. Together, these procedures address the requirements in regulation 168 of the National Regulations for education and care services to have sleep and rest procedures in place for children.

A copy of this procedure, which includes a link to the department procedure, will be kept in the Policies and Procedure folder, on our Website and in our Induction folder.

Rationale

It is important that young children can rest and relax when needed. Children choose to rest or relax in different ways and at different times. Sometimes children will fall asleep at kindergarten. It is important that children's health and safety is maintained during periods of rest, relaxation and sleep.

In accordance with Regulation 84 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations relating to sleep and rest and the National Quality Standards, we recognise our duty to meet the needs for sleep and rest of children attending our kindergarten, having regard to their age, development stages and individual needs. Each child's comfort must be provided for. We provide planned opportunities to meet each child's need for rest and relaxation throughout the day, including the provision of safe spaces for children to rest, relax, regulate and sleep.

Meeting sleep and rest needs

Our program and daily schedule include regular times and opportunities for rest and relaxation including:

- Lunch and after-lunch book-browsing/quiet sitting time
- Relaxation time at the end of the day including activities for regulating breathing and yoga/stretching exercises.

In addition, children are encouraged to listen to and get to know their body's needs and educators support children to meet those needs including those of feeling tired and unwell and also other interoception techniques (the internal sensory system in which the internal physical and emotional states of the body are noticed, recognised/identified and responded to).

Our lunch and after-lunch experience is planned to allow a reasonable block of time for children to rest. As a rest time is part of our schedule immediately following eating lunch, children are encouraged to take their time eating as there is no rush to get back to 'play'. This also encourages positive eating habits as well as encouraging children to listen to the needs of their body. A large timer is used to provide visual guidance for the children to see the period of rest time.

In addition, our environment is planned and organised in a way that there are always areas and opportunities for quiet learning and relaxation which may include the inside and outside book reading areas, mats with cushions, a hammock and a quiet/calming tent.

Our program and daily schedule does not include a time designated for sleeping. However, occasionally a child does fall asleep at kindergarten and we may encourage children to rest based on both our daily observations or in consultation with families.

Procedures

The following procedures address matters required under regulations 84B and 84C of the National Regulations.

[If a child falls asleep at preschool:](#)

- On the floor/ground either inside or outside, the other children will be asked to respect the child's space and to be aware of the sleeping child.
- Educators may need to ensure that children playing in close proximity to a sleeping child are supervised to allow adequate supervision.
- An educator will remain within sight and hearing distances of the sleeping child and make sure that there are no hazards, including electrical, choking and strangulation hazards, around the child.
- The educator who is within sight will be responsible for checking on the sleeping child every 10 minutes, including checking the child's breathing and the colour of their skin and ensuring that the child's face is not covered.
- If a child falls asleep an Incident/Injury/Illness Form will be written up and the times of checking on the child and the length and time of the sleep will be recorded on the form. The child's family will be informed of all these details and the form signed at collection. The only exception to this will be if a child falls asleep during the planned relaxation period at the end of the day. In these circumstances, the child will be monitored and the child's family will be verbally informed of the length of the child's sleep.

[If a child requests to rest or sleep at preschool:](#)

- The general health and well-being of the child will be assessed by the educator(s)
- A safe rest or sleeping place will be arranged for the child, the location of which will be based on the nature of the child's general health and well-being; the time of day; how the learning environment has been set up for the day. For example if the child is complaining of, and appears to be unwell, a safe rest/sleeping place may be positioned away from other children for the child to be isolated until a parent or caregiver can come to collect them, and in that instance, an educator will check on the child on a more frequent basis than 10 minute intervals, the time to be based on the educator's knowledge and expertise depending on the nature of the child's illness. These observations will be documented in an Incident/Injury/Illness form.
- If the child's request for sleep is assessed as being due to the child feeling unwell or otherwise not able to complete their day at kindergarten (having regard to the child's age, circumstances and other factors known about them) the child's caregiver(s) will be contacted and advised of the situation with a request for the child to be collected from kindergarten.
- If the child's request for sleep is assessed as being a natural need for rest and relaxation then the procedures outlined above under "If a child falls asleep at preschool" will be followed. Even if a child does not fall asleep, they will continue to be monitored regularly as part of our general supervision of children. The timing of this monitoring will not be written down.

[If an educator believes a child should be encouraged to rest at preschool:](#)

The educators may assess that a child may benefit from rest based on cues such as yawning, rubbing eyes, disengagement from activities, crying, decreased ability to regulate behaviour and seeking comfort from adults. In those instances, the child will be encouraged to use strategies to assist with their well-being, which may include going to a quiet place designated for rest.

[How children will be protected from risks](#)

To protect children from risks during sleep and rest, educators will follow the 'safe sleep and rest practices' outlined in the department procedure:

- children sleep and rest with their face uncovered
- a quiet place is designated for rest and sleep, away from interactive groups (and if designated for rest, the space allows for a calm play experience)

- sleep and rest environments and equipment are safe and free from hazards including:
 - potential hazards that may result in falls, drowning, strangulation, entrapment or poisoning.
 - dangling cords and strings are out of reach as they could get caught around a child's neck.
 - heaters, electrical appliances and access to power points are kept well away to avoid the risk of overheating, burns and electrocution
- children are adequately supervised and monitored during sleep and rest.

To ensure educators are aware of and follow the safe sleep and rest practices:

- the Director will ensure that this local procedure, together with the annual risk assessment and links to the department's safe sleep practices are incorporated in induction and training for educators, including for relief staff
- the staff team will ensure that the needs of children to sleep, rest and relax are part of their critical reflection, particularly when there have been instances of children needing to sleep or have calm spaces
- the site leader will ensure that educators are kept abreast of any changes to requirements about safe sleep and rest practices and risk assessment requirements

Meeting health care needs and the individual needs of children

To ensure children's health care needs are met:

- as required by the department procedure, educators will ensure that, for a child who has a medical condition or additional needs which relates to their sleep or rest, a health care plan authorised by a medical practitioner is in place which outlines the safest sleep and rest practices to be implemented
- families are asked to answer questions about their child's health care needs through questions in enrolment documents including the Department preschool enrolment form and our site's detailed questionnaire. The information completed by families is considered by the Director and other staff and families are asked for additional information as necessary.

To ensure the individual needs of children are met:

- Discussions will be held with children's families if it appears that a child is requiring more sleep or rest than other children of a similar age within the preschool.
- We will document and share with all educators any conversations with families regarding their cultural preferences relating to sleep and rest.
- Children's agency is important and the procedures if children need or want to sleep or rest are outlined earlier in this document.

Partnership with families

As with all aspects of our practice we work in partnership with families. This includes obtaining information about the individual needs of a child both prior to enrolment and on an on-going basis, as well as communicating clearly and regularly with families.

As we do not have a designated sleep time, we would work with families who require their child to rest over and above our planned rest times, on an individual basis. In those instances, we will make a record of any parent communication concerning requests to vary rest practices, and decisions made in relation to such requests.

Our sleep and rest procedures will be made available to families in hard copy and on our website.

Sleep and rest environment

To ensure all children are provided with a safe sleep and rest environment, educators will follow the 'providing a safe sleeping environment' procedures in the department procedure.

Our rest and relaxation areas, and areas used for a child to sleep if required due to their individual circumstances, will follow the guidelines of safe sleeping environment and in particular that there is adequate lighting of sleep and rest areas to enable effective supervision, that sleep and rest areas are well ventilated and that they are free from hazards.

The Director will ensure that periodic work health and safety checks are undertaken of the physical environment, furniture and resources of the service

[Reviewing sleep and rest practices](#)

To ensure sleep and rest practices of the service remain current and implement best practices:

- the site leader will ensure sleep practices and environments are reviewed every 12 months
- educators will ensure that safe sleep practices and any changes to service procedures are discussed as a regular meeting agenda item

[Training and induction for educators](#)

To ensure best practices and recommendations for safe sleep and rest are met:

- the site leader will ensure that training and induction for educators (including casual and relief staff) covers the requirements in the department procedure and the procedures in this document

Risk assessment

A Risk assessment will be undertaken in accordance with the department procedure, which addresses requirements under regulation 84C of the National Regulations. Risk assessments will be conducted using the [template for sleep and rest risk assessment](#).

The Director will ensure that, as soon as practicable after a risk assessment is completed, any necessary updates to this procedure will be made.

A copy of all completed risk assessments will be kept by the service.

The Clarence Park Community Kindergarten's Sleep and Rest Policy will be shared with all new staff and families and is available to view in the Kindergarten's Policies Folder, Induction Folder and on the Kindergarten's website.

Endorsed and ratified by Governing Council parents and staff at Governing Council

Approval date: June 2024

Review Date: June 2026