



## Safe Sleep, Rest and Relaxation Policy

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

### Policy Statement

Tathra Preschool recognises that children have individual sleep and rest requirements. Children need a comfortable relaxing environment to enable their bodies to rest. This environment must be safe and well supervised to ensure children are safe, healthy, and secure in their environment.

"The Art of relaxation at Tathra Preschool" is a policy statement developed by staff that recognises the importance of 'down time' for children's emotional well-being. Intentional teaching and planning for the rhythm of the day embraces the philosophy that learning how to relax is a key element in the "development of resilient, competent children to become well equipped to face and overcome the changes of an increasingly stressful world" (Hayes, P. 2007, piii). All curriculum decision making at Tathra Preschool prioritises the needs of the child in collaboration with families.

### Policy Goals

Tathra Preschool will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs. Approved providers, nominated supervisors and educators have a duty of care to ensure children are provided with a high level of safety when sleeping and resting and every reasonable precaution is taken to protect them from harm and hazard.

## Strategies: How will it be done?

Teachers, Educators, and the Director have a shared duty of care to ensure all children are provided with a high level of safety when sleeping and resting, including adequate lighting to enable effective supervision by staff and ventilation for children, and every reasonable precaution is taken to protect them from harm and hazard.

### **Supervision during sleep and rest**

- The space used for sleep and rest will have adequate light and ventilation so that educators can supervise each child.
- Children, sleeping and resting, will always be within sight and hearing distance so that educators can monitor children's safety and wellbeing and respond immediately when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation.
- Children will be physically checked/ inspected at least every 10 minutes by inspection of the child's:
  - » sleeping position
  - » skin and lip colour
  - » breathing
  - » body temperature
  - » head position, airway head and face, ensuring they remain uncovered.
- The sleep check will be documented and signed by the observer (date, time, signature recorded)
- Our preschool will not use CCTV, audio monitors or heart monitors to replace physical checks.
- We will take into consideration the risk for each individual child, such as considering the age of the child, medical conditions, individual needs and history of health and/or sleep issues.
- Educators will maintain active supervision, and will not perform programming or administrative duties that would take their attention away from sleeping and resting children.

### **Assessing risk for sleep and rest times**

- Our preschool will conduct a risk assessment to identify and mitigate risks associated with sleep and rest. These will include the individual needs of children, the location of the sleep and rest space, the environment, the equipment used for sleep and rest, supervision practices, ventilation, lighting, beds and linen and staff understanding of the preschool's sleep and rest policy and procedures.
- Our preschool will conduct 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 and wellbeing of children during sleep and rest. Our preschool will make any necessary updates to the sleep and rest policies and procedures as soon as practicable after conducting the sleep and rest risk assessment and keep a record of each sleep and rest risk assessment conducted.
- Please refer to ACECQA's sleep and rest risk assessment template.

### **Communicating with families about safe sleep practices**

- Our preschool will communicate with families about our safe sleep practices, on enrolment and when any changes are made.
- Our preschool will consult with families about their child's routine for sleep and rest at home and carry this out at the service where possible and safe to do so, in line with the prevailing safe sleep practices recommended by Red Nose Australia.
- Our preschool will consult families about their child's individual needs and will be sensitive to different values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise, associated with sleep and rest.

### **Safe Equipment**

Bassinets, hammocks, and prams/strollers are not considered safe equipment to sleep in and cannot be considered appropriate for sleeping.

### **Yoga Mats**

All yoga mats will be covered and individually named to maintain good health and hygiene practices and reduce the risk of cross-contamination with other children. They will be replaced immediately if a child soils the mat.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### The Approved Provider will:

- “Take reasonable steps to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by the preschool are met, having regard to the ages, development, stages and individual needs of the children (regulation 84A). The approved provider must also ensure there are policies and procedures 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). “
- Undertake a risk assessment to ensure adequate supervision and monitoring of children during periods of sleep and rest is conducted and documented, including the method and frequency of checking children’s safety, health and wellbeing.
- Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met.
- Ensure educators (including casual/relief staff) 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.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures.
- Ensure the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by the preschool are met, having regard to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of the children.
- Ensure the premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and in good repair. Ensure the cots, 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 (considering for example, if the children might roll, climb out of a cot, fall from a high sleep surface, become trapped between a sleep surface and wall, become trapped face down in bedding, are over the recommended weight limit for

sleeping surfaces, or if children's breathing might become impeded from weighted sleep products).

- Ensure that each child has access to sufficient furniture, materials and developmentally appropriate equipment suitable for the education and care of that child.
- Ensure that the indoor spaces used by children are well ventilated; have adequate natural light; and are maintained at a temperature that ensures the safety and wellbeing of children.
- Ensure sleep and rest environments are free from cigarette or tobacco smoke.
- Ensure that the premises are designed to facilitate supervision.
- Ensure children are supervised during periods of sleep and rest. This should include ensuring clear procedures and processes are in place for regular physical bed-side checks of children and recording all checks at the time they occur.
- Ensure copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, educators, staff, and volunteers, and available for inspection.

**The Nominated Supervisor /Responsible Person will:**

- Ensure that children's safety, health and well-being are upheld at all times.
- Maintain up to date knowledge and training regarding safe sleeping practice and communicate this information to educators and families.
- Support all educators to have the knowledge, training and practical skills to implement safe sleep and rest practices, develop secure attachments with children and provide sensitive and responsive care.
- Ensure there is a procedure for educators to record the time and observation of physical checks of children sleeping and resting.

### **Educators will:**

- Communicate with families about their child's sleeping or rest times and the preschool policy regarding sleep and rest times.
- Consult with families about children's rest needs. Educators will be sensitive to each child's needs so that rest times are a positive experience. Respect family preferences regarding sleep and rest and consider these daily while ensuring children feel safe and secure in the environment. Conversations with families may be necessary to remind families that children will neither be forced to sleep nor prevented from sleeping.
- Ensure that mats are clean and in good repair.
- Arrange mats to allow easy access for children and staff.
- Create a tranquil and calm environment for both educators and children.
- Be actively involved in teaching the 'art of relaxation'
- Ensure optimum educator ratios throughout the relaxation period.
- Provide a quiet learning environment to encourage children to rest their bodies and minds by playing relaxing music, reading stories, cultural reflection, turning off lights and ensuring children are comfortably clothed with consideration to the room temperature to ensure maximum comfort for all.
- Ensure children are not 'patted' to sleep. By providing a quiet, tranquil environment, children will choose to sleep if their body needs it.
- Assess each child's circumstances and current health to determine whether higher supervision levels and checks may be required.
- Ensure children will rest with their face uncovered.
- If a child falls asleep and remains asleep when relaxation time is finished, an educator will remain within eyesight to ensure active supervision, checking children at least every ten minutes to see the rise and fall of each child's chest and the colour of their skin and lips.
- Encourage children to dress appropriately for the room temperature when resting or sleeping. Lighter clothing is preferable, with children encouraged to remove shoes, jumpers, jackets, and bulky clothing. The room temperature will be considered to ensure maximum comfort for the children.

**Families will:**

- Regularly update the preschool on their child’s sleeping routines and patterns.
- Provide informal updates on the previous night’s sleep to assist with sleeping during the day.
- Dress their child appropriately for the weather conditions and provide additional clothing.
- Review the preschools policies and procedures.

### Monitor, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the preschool will review this Policy every 3 years.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the preschool will ensure that families of children enrolled at the preschool are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the preschool; a family’s ability to utilise the preschool; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

**Relevant  
Legislation**

- Education and Care Services National Regulations: 84 A,B,C 103, 105, 110, 115,168
- Guidelines for SIDS and Kids Safe Sleeping in Childcare Facilities
- Australian Consumer Law 2011 – Australian Competition and Consumer Commission

- The NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011 & the NSW Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011
- National Quality Standard Links. Quality area 2: Children’s Health and Safety. Standards 2.2.2,2.2,2.2.1,3.1.

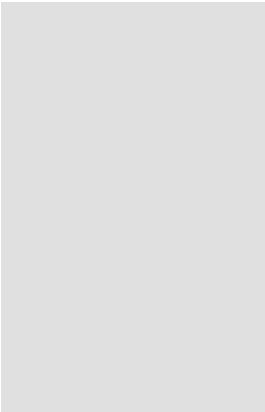
### Guidelines, Standards and Frameworks

- Early Years Learning Framework V2.0 [EYLF] (DEEWR, 2022)
- Guidelines for SIDS and Kids Safe Sleeping in Childcare Facilities

### Sources and References

- The Art of Relaxation at Tathra Preschool Policy Statement
- Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) : [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- Feb 16, 2019 - The *Shanker* Self-Reg; Knowledge Series: The MEHRIT Centre Team. [Info Sheets - Self-Reg with Dr. Stuart Shanker: https://self-reg.ca/self-reg/self-regknowledge-series/](https://self-reg.ca/self-reg/self-regknowledge-series/)
- Early Childhood Australia (ECA). Code of Ethics [www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our.../eca-code-ethics/code-of-ethics-core-principle](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our.../eca-code-ethics/code-of-ethics-core-principle)
- Guide to the National Quality Standard (3) ACECQA (2017)
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulation
- SIDS & Kids Safe Sleeping Kit – [www.sidsandkids.org](http://www.sidsandkids.org)
- Standards Australia – [www.standards.org.au](http://www.standards.org.au)
- 2021, Community Early Learning Australia (CELA).





- ACCC Product Safety Australia -  
[www.productsafety.gov.au/publication/keeping-baby-safe-a-guide-to-infant-and-nursery-products](http://www.productsafety.gov.au/publication/keeping-baby-safe-a-guide-to-infant-and-nursery-products)
- Thomas, P. (2007), the magic of relaxation. NSW: Pademelon Press
- Stuart G. Shankar: Enhancing your Child’s Self-Regulation. Books and on-line resources

**Updated**

April 2024

**Review Date**

2027 or when procedure, practice or legislation changes.