

2.19. SLEEP, REST AND RELAXATION

QUALITY AREA 2 | VERSION 6.0

Regulatory Policy & Procedure



Statement of Commitment

Wyndham City Council is committed to safeguarding children younger than 18 and ensuring their active participation as valued members of our community, while fostering a child-safe environment. We focus on early identification of risks to protect children from harm, whether caused by adults, harmful behaviours between children, exposure to family violence, or concerns like grooming, cumulative harm, or neglect.

We encourage the reporting of any concerns or suspicions of child abuse or harm. The Reportable Conduct Scheme improves how organisations respond to allegations of abuse, harm, neglect, and risk to children. Under this scheme, the CEO, or their delegate, must report any allegations of child-related misconduct to the Commission for Children and Young People within a specific timeframe.

All allegations are taken seriously, and reporting does not require agreement on the conduct. Concerns can be reported to a line manager or directly to the Senior Child Safe Advisor. Investigations will be conducted by an external party under the oversight of relevant authorities, including Victoria Police, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, and Child Protection.

Furthermore, Wyndham City Council has also publicly declared its commitment to being a Child Safe Organisation on our external website and recognises the importance of Child Safety in the provision of quality community services. All children and young people who attend services, programs, events, and community spaces have a right to feel safe, be safe, and be heard. We are committed to maintain a child safe environment, and value a culture of safety within council and its operations.

There are also behavioural expectations to recognise the importance of an inclusive and welcoming environment to all children & young people of the wider community including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, culturally and/or linguistically diverse, those with a disability and promoting an environment with no tolerance for racism.



Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children attending our service and appropriate opportunities are provided to meet each child's need for sleep, rest, and relaxation.



Policy Statement

Early Education and Care Services (EECS) is committed to:

- its **duty of care** to all children at EECS and ensuring that **adequate supervision** 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.
- 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 EECS.

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Responsibilities	Approved Provider and EECS Unit	Nominated Supervisors/ Team Leaders	Early Childhood Teacher, Educators, and other staff	Family, parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers, and students
Ensure that 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.	✓				
Take reasonable steps to ensure the sleep and rest needs of children at the service are met, in line with their age, developmental stages and individual needs.	✓	✓	✓		✓
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, or wellbeing of children during sleep and rest. (<i>Appendix 2.19.1: Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment</i>)	✓	✓	✓		
Ensure all risk assessments conducted are recorded and stored.	✓	✓	✓		✓
Undertake a risk assessment to mitigate hazardous manual handling , such as patting and rocking children to sleep for long periods of time.	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ensure all educators, staff and volunteers comply with the recommendations of Red Nose Australia in relation to safe sleeping practices for children (<i>Appendix 2.19.2: Red Nose Australia – Safe Sleeping Practices</i>).	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ensure 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.	✓	✓			
Ensure the premise, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and in good repair, including ensuring all equipment used meets any relevant Australian Standards and other product safety standards, such as Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) guidelines.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensure 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.	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ensure that space 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.	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ensure sleep and rest environments are free from cigarette, e-cigarette, or tobacco smoke.	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ensure that the sleep space is designed to facilitate active supervision.	✓	✓	✓		

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<p>Ensure adequate supervision of children sleeping and resting, being within sight and hearing distance and are monitoring through visually checks of:</p> <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 	✓	✓	✓		✓
<p>Ensure 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.</p>	✓	✓	✓		✓
<p>Develop relaxation and sleep practices that are responsive to:</p> <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. 	✓	✓	✓		✓
<p>Ensure that bassinets, hammocks, prams, and strollers are not used to settle children to sleep.</p>	✓	✓	✓		✓
<p>Conduct regular safety checks of equipment used for sleeping/resting.</p>	✓	✓	✓		✓
<p>Ensure that bassinets are not on the education and care service premises at any time.</p>	✓	✓	✓		✓
<p>Ensure 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.</p>	✓	✓	✓		✓
<p>Remove any hazards identified in the child’s resting or sleeping environment and inform the approved provider, as soon as is practicable.</p>	✓	✓	✓		✓
<p>Ensure that any hanging cords, curtains, and blinds are inaccessible to children who are resting or sleeping.</p>	✓	✓	✓		✓
<p>Ensure that artificial heating, such as heat bags and hot-water bottles, is not used to provide warmth.</p>		✓	✓		✓
<p>Ensure children’s clothing is appropriate during sleep times and does not have any items that are loose, could get tangled and restrict breathing.</p>		✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>Ensure that each child has their own bed linen, and that the Hygiene Policy and procedures are implemented for the cleaning and storage of beds, mattresses, and bedding.</p>		✓	✓		✓
<p>Ensuring that there is adequate space to store bedding in a hygienic manner.</p>	✓	✓	✓		✓

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Ensure compliance with WorkSafe Victoria’s Children’s services – occupational health and safety compliance kit, including in relation to staff lifting children onto beds.	✓	✓	✓		✓
Regularly review practices to ensure compliance with the recommendations of Red Nose Australia in relation to safe sleeping practices for children.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Provide information and training to ensure staff are kept informed of changing practices in relation to safe sleep practices for children.	✓	✓			
Provide information to families about the service’s relaxation and sleep practices.		✓	✓		✓
Ensure parents/guardians are consulted about appropriate relaxation and sleep practices for their child.		✓	✓		✓
Educating families about evidence-based safe sleeping practices.	✓	✓	✓		✓
Assess 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 .	✓	✓	✓		
Implement 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.	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Provide a written medical report if their child is not to be placed on their back during sleep. Parents/guardians must communicate alternative resting practices to staff.				✓	
Ensure the educational program provides opportunities for each child to sleep, rest or engage in appropriate quiet play activities, as required.	✓	✓	✓		✓
Supervise children displaying symptoms of illness closely, especially when resting or sleeping.		✓	✓		✓
Encourage children’s independence in identifying their need for rest and relaxation.		✓	✓	✓	✓



Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy.

Hazardous Manual Handling: Manual handling is work where you must 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.

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Red Nose Australia (formerly SIDS and Kids): Recognised national authority on safe sleeping practices for infants and children.

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.



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
- Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for household use – Safety Requirements (AS/NZS 2172:2010)
- 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



Related Appendices & Documents

- Appendix 2.19.1: Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment
- Appendix 2.19.2: Red Nose Australia – Safe Sleeping Practices



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



Authorisation and Version Control

Version	Objective ID	Action	Date	Endorsement date	Next Review Date
3	A1701195	Minor changes - wording	30/10/2018	KK – 19/3/19	Aug, 2020
4	A3850194	Addition – Wyndham City’s Statement of Commitment – Child Safe Standards. Addition of Legislation and Standards	27/09/2022	TP - 29/09/2022	Aug, 2024
5	A4673323	Update to included newly legislated responsibilities. Risk assessment developed to accompany policy.	22/09/2023	TP – 23/02/2024	Aug, 2025
6	A4673323	Updated Wyndham City’s Statement of Commitment to a Child Safe Organisation – as per Wyndham City’s Child Safe Management page	20/06/2025	TP <i>T. Papaicamov</i>	Aug, 2025

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