

POLICY NO 09: SLEEP, REST AND BEDDING

Key Policy Contact Person: Manager, Our Village Family Childcare

POLICY STATEMENT:

Our Village Family Childcare (OVFC) is committed to ensuring that children will have the appropriate amount of sleep and rest during the day therefor flexible sleep, rest and relaxation options and arrangements are important in meeting the needs of individual children in supporting their growth and development. Providing safe and hygienic cots, beds, and bedding for children in care and a suitable sleeping/resting environment is therefore important.

Regardless of the children’s needs, adequate supervision must be maintained while children are sleeping or resting. All Educators must comply with safe sleeping legislative requirements, standards, recommendations, and current best practice.

In accordance with the Education & Care Services National Regulations, (current version October 2023) Part 4.2 Children’s Health & Safety, Regulation 81, A family day care Educator must take reasonable steps to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by the Educator as part of a family day care service are met, having regard to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of the children.

Our Service’s safe sleep and rest procedures and practices follow the Red Nose Australia guidelines. The service has adopted the sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) as well as Sudden Unexpected Death of an Infant (SUDI) recommendations in relation to sleeping procedures for babies and toddlers.

CRITICAL INFORMATION:

Educators have a duty of care to ensure that all children are provided with a high level of safety when resting or sleeping in care.

At the time of placement Educators will consult with families about their child’s individual need, considering their age, any health care needs and developmental stage. During the consultation discussions surrounding the different values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise that are associated with rest will occur to ensure a safe and secure environment for the child and family.

PRAMS ARE NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR A BED, COT, OR MATTRESS. CHILDREN SHOULD NOT PURPOSELY BE PUT TO SLEEP IN A PRAM.

Contents

POLICY STATEMENT: 1

PURPOSE: 2

SCOPE/RESPONSIBILITIES: 2

STATEMENT OF DIVERSITY 2

DEFINITIONS:..... 2

PROCEDURES:..... 2

REFERENCES: 7

RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES/ WORK INSTRUCTIONS:..... 7

VERSION CONTROL AND LEGISLATION: 8

PURPOSE:

To ensure that children in care are provided with opportunities to sleep and/or rest and that when doing so they are in a safe and hygienic environment.

SCOPE/RESPONSIBILITIES:

This document applies to all Educators, Families, Coordination Unit Staff, Volunteers and Students of OVFC.

STATEMENT OF DIVERSITY

Sunbury and Cobaw Community Health is committed to improving the health of our community and being accessible to all, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, people with a disability, Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQA+) people and other socially vulnerable groups and supporting their communities across the lifespan from birth to older age.

DEFINITIONS:

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)	Sudden and unexpected death of an infant under one year of age with an onset of a fatal episode occurring during sleep, that remains unexplained after a thorough investigation, including performance of a complete autopsy and review of the circumstances of death and the clinical history
Sudden unexpected death in infants (SUDI)	includes all unexpected deaths: those without a clear cause, such as SIDS, and those from a known cause, such as suffocation

PROCEDURES:

There is clear understanding of the shared responsibility between Educators, families and the Coordination Unit ensuring a safe and suitable sleep and rest option for the children in care.

If a family's beliefs and practices conflict with SIDS & Kids Victoria then the service will not support an alternative practice, unless the service is provided with written advice from a medical practitioner. All families will be provided with a copy of Policy No 9 Sleep, rest, and bedding upon enrolment.

Our Village Family Childcare

- Provides SIDS/Safe Sleeping training for all Educators biannually as a group well as a part of the induction process.
- Coordination Unit may have porter cots or mattress available for loan. All equipment provided will be in good condition and meet the Australian and New Zealand Standards (Ref Policy No 15 Equipment and Resources).
- Conducts a Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment Annually or as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect the safety, health, or wellbeing of children during sleep and rest (Early Childhood Education and Care Services National Regulations Current version July 1, 2023). All Risk assessments completed must include:
 - the number, ages and development stages of children being educated and cared for, including at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service.
 - the sleep and rest needs of children at the service (including specific health care needs, cultural preferences, sleep and rest needs of individual children and requests from families about a child's sleep and rest) including at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service.
 - the suitability of staffing arrangements required to adequately supervise and monitor children during sleep and rest periods.
 - the level of knowledge and training of the staff supervising children during sleep and rest periods
 - the location of the sleep and rest areas, including the arrangement of cots and beds within the sleep and rest areas, including at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service
 - the safety and suitability of any cots, beds and bedding equipment and having regard to the ages and developmental stages of the children who will use them.
 - any potential hazards in sleep and rest areas or on a child during sleep and rest periods
 - the physical safety and suitability of sleep and rest environments, including temperature, lighting and ventilation at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service.
 - for FDC service, which provide overnight care to a child, any risks that the overnight care provided at the family day care residence or approved venue may pose to the safety, health, or wellbeing of the child.
 - In the case of overnight Care, a separate Sleep Risk Assessment is completed to ensure the physical safety, suitability of sleep and rest environment (including temperature, lighting, and ventilation) ensuring the safety, health, and wellbeing of the child.
- Keeps records of each risk assessment is kept in each Educators file.

Prohibition of bassinets

Prams with a built-in bassinet or a bassinet fitting are required to meet the Australian standards for prams and strollers. If a bassinet fitting is removed from the pram, it is no longer considered a pram or part thereof and is taken to be a bassinet.

Regulation 84D requires approved providers, nominated supervisors and family day care educators to ensure that bassinets are not on the education and care service premises at any time that children are being educated and cared for by the service. **All bassinets are covered by this prohibition.** (Early Childhood Education and Care Services National Regulations Current version July 1, 2023).

Educators

Educators have a duty of care to ensure that all children are provided with a high level of safety when resting or sleeping in care.

At the time of placement Educators will consult with families about their child's individual need, considering their age, any health care needs and developmental stage. During the consultation discussions surrounding the different values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise that are associated with rest will occur to ensure a safe and secure environment for the child and family.

When providing a sleep and rest environment for the children All Educators will

- A range of opportunities for rest and relaxation throughout the day.
- Suitable and approved standard furniture (cots, porta cots, mattresses etc.)
- An environment free from cigarette or tobacco smoke as detailed in the Environmental Health and Hygiene Policy.
- A quiet area or space that includes other suitable furniture (for example couch, floor pillows) and other items such as blankets, cushions etc. to support each child's comfort should they feel the need to rest or sleep.
- Quiet areas both indoors and outdoors that allow children to take time out and engage in calm and restful activities.
- Equipment that is checked regularly to ensure safety and cleanliness cots, beds and mattresses that meet the Australian and New Zealand Standards (Ref Policy No 15 Equipment and Resources).
- Ensure one cot, bed or mattress for each child that is age and culturally appropriate.
- consider room temperature, airflow, and lighting during rest periods. This can include how music or language can assist children to rest in calm and relaxing environment ensuring rest time is a positive experience.
- Ensure the rest environment, equipment and materials will be safe and free from hazards.
- Ensure Educators actively supervise resting and sleeping children checking on them at regular intervals and monitoring their breathing and skin colour.
- Ensure all new and second-hand cots sold in Australia must meet the Australian Standards for Cots and be labelled AS 2172. Portable cots should meet the Australian Standard (AS 2195).
- Cots that do not meet the Australian Standards will not be used by the Family Day Care Educator.

Protective behaviours and practices and supervision of resting children

- An additional mattress (other than the original mattress provided with the cot) must never be added.
- The area set up for sleeping and rest should be calm, free of noisy disruptions and the Educator must remain within hearing range (and where appropriate, in sight of) the sleeping or resting child.
- Babies/children must not be put to bed with bottles.
- Babies are placed to bed on his/her back.

- Babies are positioned with his/her feet at the end of the cot to help prevent the baby sliding under the covers.
- Babies head is to remain uncovered whilst baby is sleeping.
- Mattresses should be firm.
- Pillows, doona covers, cot bumpers, lambswool, soft toys and cot restraints should not be used.
- All children who are resting will be supervised and within sight /hearing range of the Family Day Care Educator.
- Family members and other visitors to the home will not be left unsupervised with the child when children are resting.
- All children who have fallen asleep while in care will be monitored regularly with specific attention to breathing patterns and skin colour.
- Adults will not rest or sleep in the same environment as a child or group of children.
- Cots are to be placed in a safe place away from:
 - Dangling cords or strings from such things as electrical appliances and blind cords
 - Heaters, power sockets or other electrical appliances
 - Windows
- Appropriate sleep wear:
 - Consider using a safe baby sleeping bag (one with fitted neck, armholes or sleeves and no hood).
 - Dress children/babies for sleep and add/remove lightweight blankets to ensure children/babies back or tummy feels comfortably warm to the touch.
 - Remove hats, bonnets, beanies, and hooded clothing from baby's head as soon as baby is indoors.
 - Remove children's jackets, hooded clothing, and shoes before putting them to bed.

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Children may fall asleep in a pram or stroller while on a routine outing or excursion. In this circumstance:

- Children will be restrained correctly at all times using a 5-point harness when in a pram or stroller, this includes resting or sleeping as loose restraints are a safety risk and may lead to choking or hanging.
- The frame of the pram is securely locked in place and is stable.
- The brakes are engaged and secure.
- Any gaps which could trap a child's head, fingers, arms, or legs are not present.
- Children are not left unattended in prams or strollers.
- When at the Educators home, children are not to be placed in a pram or stroller to sleep.

Hygiene Practices

- Cots, Porta cots, mattresses and teddy beds are to be kept clean and aired regularly.
- Each child in care will have his/her own bed linen. Laundering will take place at least on a weekly basis.
- Other resting materials such as cushions, will be kept clean.

Parents and Guardians

- Parents/families will adhere to and support Educators in adhering to the Sleep Rest and bedding policy.
- Discussing their child's relaxation and sleep requirements and practices with Educators prior to commencing at the service, and when these requirements change.
- Communicating to Educators if their child's sleep has been disturbed during the night or an event that has occurred that may affect/change the day's routine.

Safe Rest/Sleep Practices

Safe rest/sleeping practices for babies.

- Babies will be placed on their back to rest.
- If a medical condition exists that prevents a child from being placed on their back, the alternative resting practice must be directed in writing by the child's medical practitioner.
- If older babies turn over during their sleep, allow them to find their own sleeping position, but always lay them on their back when first placing them to rest.
- At no time will a baby's face be covered with bed linen.
- To prevent a baby from wriggling down under bed linen, they will be placed with their feet closest to the bottom end of the cot.
- Quilts, duvets, pillows, soft toys, lamb's wool, and cot bumpers will not be used as bed linen.
- Light bedding is the preferred option, which must be tucked in to prevent the baby from pulling bed linen over their head.

Wrapping babies

- Use only lightweight wraps such as cotton or muslin (bunny rugs and blankets are not safe alternatives as they may cause overheating).
- For wrapping to be effective, the wrap needs to be firm but not too tight.
- Techniques that use tight wrapping with legs straight and together increase the risk of abnormal hip development, while loose wraps are also hazardous as they can cover baby's head and face.
- Ensure that the baby is not over dressed under the wrap.
- Use only nappy and singlet in warmer weather and dress baby in a lightweight grow suit in cooler weather.

When not to wrap babies

- If you wrap your baby, consider the baby's stage of development. Leave arms free once the startle reflex disappears around 3 months.
- Most babies eventually resist being wrapped. Wrapping style should be appropriate for the baby's developmental stage.
- It is essential to discontinue wrapping as soon as the baby starts showing signs that they can begin to roll, usually between 4-6 months of age but sometimes younger.
- Babies must not be wrapped if sharing a sleep surface with another person.
- Baby should not be wrapped while sleeping in a baby sleeping bag.
- Waterbeds or beanbags are not used for a baby to sleep in.

Safe rest/sleeping practices for toddlers.

- Toddlers will be placed on their back to rest, unless otherwise directed in writing by the child's medical practitioner.

- If toddlers turn over during their sleep, allow them to find their own sleeping position, but always lay them on their back when first placing them to rest.
- At no time will a toddler's face be covered with bed linen.
- If using a cot, toddlers will be placed with their feet closest to the bottom end of the cot to prevent them from wriggling down under bed linen.
- Quilts, duvets, pillows, soft toys, lamb's wool, and cot bumpers will not be used as bed linen.
- Light bedding is the preferred option, which must be tucked in to prevent the toddler from pulling bed linen over their face.
- Sleeping bags with a fitted neck and arm holes are an alternative option to bed linen and encourage a toddler to rest on their back. If parents/guardians request to continue using the sleeping bag option when the toddler rests on a mattress, then the service will comply.
- Quiet experiences may be offered to those toddlers who do not fall asleep.

Safe rest/sleeping practices for a child who is unwell.

- A child will be placed on their back to rest/sleep when displaying signs of being unwell.
- All children will rest with their face uncovered.
- Children who are unwell will be given the highest supervision priority and monitored constantly especially if the child has: a high temperature vomited or received minor trauma to their head.

When using a portable cot, the Educator will follow the manufacturer's instructions on the cot e.g., notice must be taken and practiced around the weight and height restrictions of children for the use of the cot.

No child is to be sleeping in a porta cot if their weight or height exceeds the manufacturer's recommendations.

Plastic wrapping is to be removed from any new mattress prior to use.

REFERENCES:

- Education and Care Services National Regulations, (current version October 2023) – Regulation 84A, 84B, 84C, 84D, 168
- [Red Nose](#)
- [Sleep and rest legislative Requirements - ACECQA](#)
- Home and Vehicle Safety Check – Including Sleep and rest risk assessment.

RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES/ WORK INSTRUCTIONS:

- Occupational Health and Safety – 28
- Equipment and Resources Policy – 15
- Active Supervision – 52
- Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy – 24
- SCCH Client Empowerment Policy and Procedure
- Home and Vehicle Safety Check Work Instruction
- Assessment, Approval and Reassessment of Family Day Care Residence – 2
- Monitoring, Support and Supervision of FDC Educators Work Instruction
- Monitoring, Support and Supervision of FDC Educators – 21
- Orientation of FDC Educators Work Instruction
- Our Village Family Childcare Playgroups Work Instruction

VERSION CONTROL AND LEGISLATION:

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