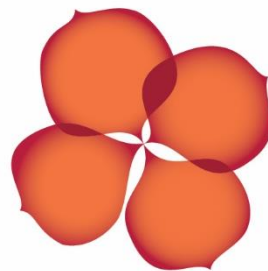


# **POLICY**

## **Sleep and Rest**



**NT**  
CHRISTIAN  
SCHOOLS

## DOCUMENT INFORMATION

**Document Title:** Sleep and Rest Policy  
**Policy Category:** EL - Early Learning  
**Policy Monitor:** ELC Nominated Supervisor  
**Contact:** policy@ntchristianschools.com.au  
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Policy  
Feedback



## AMENDMENT HISTORY

Version	Date	Changes Made
1.0		Version history unrecorded
2.0	09/2022	Addition of information following release of NSW Regulatory Authority Safe Sleep and Rest Regulatory Priority Program, Add Childcare Centre Desktop Resources and Continuous Improvement sections. Link to Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations added in sources.
3.0	10/2023	New information added regarding changes effective Oct 2023. NS/RP section merged into AP/NS sections to reduce repetition. Maintenance of costs and bedding section added. Parent / Family section added. Hyperlinks checked and repaired.
3.1	11/2024	New policy template and Board approved preamble. Hyperlinks checked

# 1 Preamble

NT Christian Schools is an organisation that exists to advance the Christian religion through the provision of high-quality education and training services and religious instruction. A holistic and relational approach to learning for each individual student, underpinned by a biblical world view provides an education for the whole person, for the whole of life.

We believe that the Christian faith is a life-transforming faith that will be authentically evidenced in a believer's actions. The bible exhorts us to pursue godliness and to model biblical standards of behaviour. Everything we do, our practices, our conduct, our use and stewardship of resources is an act of worship to God and a witness to those around us.

All members of the NT Christian Schools community are to be committed to ensuring a safe and caring environment for students, staff and the whole community in a manner that is consistent with the Christian ethos and beliefs of NT Christian Schools.

Employees and those a policy applies to are fully supported by NT Christian Schools in ensuring compliance with these documents.

# 2 Purpose

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* requires approved providers, nominated supervisors and Centre Directors to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for children's sleep and rest having regard to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of the children. Our *Sleep and Rest Policy* will assist management, educators and other staff to ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs whilst attending the service.

Our Services will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs. Safe Sleep practices are informed by Red Nose and guidance from ACEQCA.

We 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. In meeting the Service's duty of care, it is a requirement that all educators implement and adhere to this policy and associated procedures to ensure we respect and cater for each child's specific needs and ensure all risks are appropriately always addressed.

# 3 Policy applies to

This applies to children, families, staff, educators, approved provider, nominated supervisor, visitors, students, volunteers and management of the Service.

The policy is available to all parents, carers, children, students, visitors, volunteers and contractors via the NT Christian Schools website and on request from any office of NT Christian Schools.

The policy is available to all staff and Directors of the Board via the NT Christian Schools *Canvas Policy and Advisory Library*.

## 4 Policy

All children have individual sleep and rest requirements. Our objective is to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation by providing a comfortable, relaxing and safe space to enable their bodies to rest. This environment will also be well supervised ensuring all children feel secure and safe at our Service.

'Children have different sleep, rest and relaxation needs. Children of the same age can have different sleep patterns that Nominated Supervisors and educators need to consider within the Service. As per Standard 2.1 (Element 2.1.1) of the National Quality Standard, each child's comfort must be provided for and there must be appropriate opportunities to meet each child's sleep, rest and relaxation needs.' (ACECQA).

Our Service defines 'rest' as a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness, or tranquility, and can include a child being in a state of sleep. Considering the busy and energetic nature of children's day, we feel that it is important for children to participate in a quiet/rest period during the day to rest, relax, and recharge their body. Effective rest strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and safe in an early childhood environment.

Our Service will consult with families about their child's individual needs, ensuring all parties are aware of the different values, cultural, and parenting beliefs and practices, or opinions associated with sleep requirements.

### 4.1 Sleep and Rest Specific Risk Assessment

The approved provider, in conjunction with educators of the service, will conduct a comprehensive risk assessment to ensure all potential hazards are identified and specify how any risks identified are managed and minimised in sleep and rest areas in line with Red Nose and ACECQA guidelines (reg. 84A).

The risk assessment will be reviewed at least annually or after being aware of an incident or circumstance where the health, safety or wellbeing of children may be compromised during sleep or rest. All risk assessments will be regularly assessed and evaluated as to facilitate continuous improvement in our service. If a risk concerning a child's safety during sleep and rest is identified during the risk assessment, the approved provider must update the *Sleep and Rest Policy* and procedure as soon as possible. The risk assessment must be stored safely and securely and kept for a period of 3 years.

Our risk assessment will consider and include the following information:

- the number, age, developmental stages and individual needs of children
- the sleep and rest needs of individual children being educated and cared for (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)
- the suitability of staffing arrangements to adequately supervise and monitor children during sleep and rest periods

- the level of knowledge and training of staff supervising children during sleep and rest periods
- the location of sleep and rest areas, including the arrangement of mattresses within the sleep and rest areas
- the safety and suitability of any bedding equipment, having regard to the ages and developmental stages of the children who will use bedding equipment
- any potential hazards
- in sleep and rest areas
- on a child during sleep and rest periods (such as jewelry, clothing)
- the physical safety and suitability of sleep and rest environments (including temperature, lighting and ventilation) (ACECQA 2023)

## 4.2 Bassinets

Effective 1 October 2023, approved providers and nominated supervisors must ensure bassinets are not kept on the education and care service premises. (Regulation 84D). There are no Australian Standards for bassinets and risks include the bassinet tipping over or suffocation. All staff and educators will be made aware of this regulation and policy as part of their induction process. Our Service will ensure no bassinets are used or stored within the service. Families will be informed children will not be accepted into care in a bassinet and under no circumstances will a bassinet be permitted to remain on the premises.

## 4.3 Use And Maintenance Of Bedding

Ensure beds and mattresses are used for the correct purpose of sleep and rest only.

Ensure all equipment and furniture is safe, clean and in good repair (reg. 103, 105).

Sleep surfaces are checked for firmness in accordance with Australian Standard AS/NZS 8811:1:2013.

Plastic packaging is removed from mattresses.

Mattresses are not elevated or tilted and have no exposed sharp edges.

Banned/recalled products are removed immediately from the service if required.

Ensure there are no choking hazards- cords, strings, bunting in the sleep environment.

Mattresses are wiped over with warm water and neutral detergent or vinegar solution between each use.

Children's beds are arranged to allow easy access for children and staff.

Mattresses are stored safely.

Bed linen is used by an individual child and is washed before use by another child.

Children rest/sleep with their beds/mattresses head to toe to minimise the risk of cross

infection- consider positioning of cots, mats, cushions etc.

## 5 Roles and responsibilities

### 5.1 Approved Provider / Centre Director / Nominated Supervisor

The approved provider, centre Director, Nominated Supervisor will ensure:

- that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met;
- educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure;
- all new employees are provided with a copy of this policy as part of their induction process;
- families are aware of the *Sleep and Rest Policy*;
- a sleep and rest specific risk assessment is conducted at least annually to ensure all potential hazards are controlled in sleep or rest areas in line with Red Nose and ACECQA guidelines;
- every reasonable precaution has been taken to protect children from harm and from hazards likely to cause injury. Hazards posing a risk of suffocation, choking, crushing or strangulation risk to children must be removed from the sleep and rest environment. (Sec. 167);
- up to date knowledge regarding safe sleeping practices is maintained and information communicated to educators and families;
- reasonable steps are taken 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, developmental stages and individual needs of each child;
- up to date knowledge regarding safe sleeping practices is maintained and information communicated to educators and families;
- ongoing training is provided on safe sleep practices for all educators and a record of all such training is kept;
- to provide appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation including providing children with comfortable spaces away from the main activity area for relaxation and quiet activities;
- to provide children with safe sleeping equipment and environment, including adequate ventilation and adequate lighting to enable effective supervision;
- they receive information and training to fulfil their role effectively, including being made aware of the sleep and rest policies, their responsibilities in implementing these, and any changes that are made over time;

- the child's safety is always the priority;
- children who are sleeping or resting have their face always uncovered;
- to provide information to parents and families about Safe Sleep practices (see Red Nose);
- educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures;
- all equipment and furniture used are safe, clean and in good repair (Reg. 103, 105);
- there are adequate numbers of cots and bedding (including mattresses) available to children that meet Australian Standards to be used only for sleep and rest purposes;
- all cots used in our Service will meet the current mandatory Australian Standard for Cots (AS/NZS 2172) and will carry a label to indicate this;
- all portable cots used in our Service will meet the current mandatory Australian Standard for children's portable folding cots, AS/NZS 2195, and will carry a label to indicate this;
- bassinets are not used or stored within the service;
- educators follow the Administration of First Aid Policy if the child's face/body appears blue and the child is not breathing, initiate first aid immediately including calling an ambulance and beginning resuscitation;
- the Centre Director will ensure an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record is completed in its entirety;
- the Centre Director/Nominated Supervisor will ensure the parent, and the regulatory authority are notified as soon as possible and within 24 hours of a serious incident;
- sleep surfaces are checked for firmness in accordance to Australian Standard AS/NZS 8811:1:2013;
- a safe indoor environment is provided for children that is well ventilated, has adequate natural light and can be maintained at a temperature that ensures children's safety and wellbeing (Reg.110);
- sleep and rest environments will be safe and free from all hazards including cigarette and tobacco smoke;
- areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated and have natural lighting;
- safe sleep practices are documented and shared with families;
- to negotiate sleep and rest routines and practices with families to reach agreement on how these occur for each child at the Service;

Centre Directors and educators are not expected to endorse practices requested by a family if they differ from Red Nose safe (formerly SIDS and Kids) sleeping recommendations. If any requirements differ from Red Nose sleeping recommendations, written authorisation from a medical practitioner will be required and shared with educators.

## 5.2 Educators

Educators will:

- have a thorough understanding of the Service's policy and practices and embed practices to support safe sleep into everyday practice;
- ensure children's safety is paramount;
- consult with families about children's sleep and rest needs;
- be sensitive to each child's needs so that sleep and rest times are a positive experience;
- ensure there are appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation;
- ensure that each child's comfort is provided for;
- ensure that beds/mattresses are clean and in good repair;
- ensure mattresses are used for the correct purpose of sleep and rest only;
- ensure beds and mattresses are wiped over with warm water and neutral detergent or vinegar solution between each use;
- ensure beds and mattresses are stored safely in storage areas, with bedsheets/pillows;
- ensure that bed linen is clean and in good repair;
- ensure bed linen is used by an individual child and is washed before use by another child;
- arrange children's beds and cots to allow easy access for children and staff;
- ensure children rest/sleep with their beds/mattresses head to toe to minimise the risk of cross infection - consider positioning of mats, cushions etc;
- bassinets are not used or stored within the service;
- children are not accepted into care in a bassinet;
- create a relaxing environment for sleeping children by playing relaxation music, reading stories, cultural reflection, turning off lights, and ensuring children are comfortably clothed;
- ensure there are no loose aspects of clothing that could entangle the child during sleep/rest (including bibs);
- ensure the environment is tranquil and calm for both educators and children;
- sit near children who are resting and encourage them to relax and/or listen to music;
  - *Remember that children do not **need** to be "patted" to sleep. By providing a quiet, tranquil environment, children will choose to sleep if their body needs it.*
- maintain adequate supervision and maintain educator ratios throughout the sleep period;



- ensure supervision is active, effective and frequent, referring to Service procedures;
- ensure they are not engaged in other duties that will take their attention away from actively supervising sleeping and resting children;
- physically check that the child is breathing by checking the rise and fall of the child's chest and the child's lip and skin colour, head position and airway from the side of the floor mattress, ensuring their face remains uncovered;
- ensure physical checks of a sleeping child occur at least every 10 minutes (Note: CCTV, audio monitors or heart monitors do not replace the need for physical checking/inspecting sleeping children);
- consider the circumstances and any risk factors that may mean physical checks need to be more frequent for some babies or children (e.g.; children with colds, chronic lung disorders or specific health care needs that may require higher level of supervision);
- consider higher levels of supervision and conduct more frequent checks on children with colds, chronic lung disorders or specific health care needs;
- if the child's face/body appears blue and the child is not breathing, initiate first aid immediately including calling an ambulance and beginning resuscitation;
- ensure an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* is completed in its entirety following an incident;
- ensure a record is maintained recording the time and observation of each physical check immediately after checks are made on the *Sleep Record*;
- ensure sleeping spaces are not dark- there needs to be sufficient light to allow supervision and to physically check children's breathing, lip and skin colour;
- ensure that all sleeping children are within hearing range and observed;
- assess each child's circumstances and current health to determine whether higher supervision levels and checks may be required;
- communicate with families about their child's sleeping or rest times and the Service policy regarding sleep and rest times;
- respect family preferences regarding sleep and rest and consider these daily while ensuring children feel safe and secure in the environment. [Any sleep requirements that differ from Red Nose recommendations must be supported by a medical certificate]. Conversations with families may be necessary to remind families that children will neither be forced to sleep nor prevented from sleeping. Sleep and rest patterns will be recorded daily for families;
- 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;
- monitor the room temperature to ensure maximum comfort for the children;

- ensure that children who **do not** wish to sleep are provided with alternative quiet activities and experiences, whilst those children who **do** wish to sleep are allowed 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 rest. It is important that opportunities for rest and relaxation, as well as sleep, are provided;
- consider a vast range of strategies to meet children's individual sleep and rest needs - consider inclusion of all children and adjustments that may need to be implemented;
- respond to children's individual cues for sleep (yawning, rubbing eyes, disengagement from activities, crying etc);
- acknowledge and support children's agency, emotions, feelings and fears regarding sleep/rest time;
- develop positive relationships with children to assist in settling children confidently when sleeping and resting;
- record sleep and rest patterns to provide information to parents/families.

### 5.2.1 Children Aged 3-5

Educators will:

- be respectful for children's individual sleep and rest requirements;
- discuss children's sleep and rest needs with families and include children in decision making (children's agency);
- provide a tranquil and calm environment for children to rest by turning off lights, playing relaxing music, reading stories, cultural reflection;
- ensure children are comfortably clothed;
- encourage children to rest their bodies and minds for 20-30 minutes;
- introduce relaxation techniques into rest routine- use of a relaxation tape;
- ensure children sleep with their face uncovered;
- closely monitor sleeping and resting children;
- provide quiet activities for children- puzzles, books, drawing if they do not fall asleep;
- record sleep and rest patterns to provide information to parents/families via Service Sleep Record;

## 5.3 Parents / Families

Parents / families will:

- be informed during orientation of our *Sleep and Rest Policy* and procedure;
- be provided with regular information and communication about safe sleep practices from Red Nose and any changes to our policies or procedures;

- be informed that if any requirements for sleep for their child differs from Red Nose sleeping recommendations, written authorisation from a medical practitioner will be required;
- be requested to provide educators with regular updates on their child's sleeping routines and patterns;
- be required to provide specific bedding for their child each day (as detailed in enrolment information).

## 6 The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority

### 6.1 National Quality Standard (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: Children's Health and Safety		
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's needs for sleep, rest and relaxation.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
QUALITY AREA 3: Physical Environment		
3.1	Design	The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service.
3.1.2	Upkeep	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.

### 6.2 Education and Care Services National Regulations and Law

Regulation	Definition
Section 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Section 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazard
82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment
84A	Sleep and Rest
84B	Sleep and rest policies and procedures
84C	Risk assessment for purposes of sleep and rest policies and procedures
84D	Prohibition of bassinets

87	Incident, injury, trauma and illness record
103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
105	Furniture, materials and equipment
106	Laundry and hygiene facilities
107	Space requirements-indoor space
110	Ventilation and natural light
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority

## 7 Definitions and acronyms

The following terms used throughout this policy are defined as follows:

Term	Definition
<b>ACECQA- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority</b>	The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.
<b>Adequate supervision</b>	Adequate supervision means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>that an educator can respond immediately, particularly when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation;</li> </ul> knowing where children are always and monitoring their activities actively and diligently
<b>Continuous supervision</b>	Ensure an educator is always in sight and hearing of a sleeping child-representing best practice (Red Nose)
<b>Infant</b>	A young child between the ages of birth and 12 months
<b>Rest</b>	A period of inactivity solitude, calmness or tranquility and can include a child being in a state of sleep.
<b>Rest</b>	A period of inactivity solitude, calmness or tranquility and can include a child being in a state of sleep.
<b>Relaxation</b>	Relaxation or other activity for bringing about a feeling of calm in your body and mind.
<b>Red Nose</b>	Red Nose is Australia's leading authority on safe sleep and safe pregnancy advice.

<b>Sudden and Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI)</b>	A broad term used to describe the sudden and unexpected death of a baby for which the cause is not immediately obvious- (SIDS or Fatal sleeping accident)
<b>Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)</b>	The 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.

## 8 Resources For Families

- Red Nose: <https://rednose.org.au/section/safe-practices>
- Red Nose: Cot to Bed safety [https://rednose.org.au/downloads/RN3356\\_Cot\\_Bed\\_DL\\_Oct2018\\_Online.pdf](https://rednose.org.au/downloads/RN3356_Cot_Bed_DL_Oct2018_Online.pdf)

## 9 Continuous Improvement Reflection

Policies will be reviewed regularly and updated when need identified in consultation with families, staff and management.

## 10 Related Resources – NTCS PAL / Childcare Desktop

- Sleep and Rest Procedure
- Safe Sleep Audit
- Safe Sleep Record
- Safe Sleep Practices Risk Assessment Action Plan

## 11 Related legislation and policy

### 11.1 NT Christian School policies and procedures

- Administration of First Aid Policy
- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- Emergency and Evacuation Policy
- Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy

### 11.2 Legislation

- ACECQA. (n.d.). Safe sleep and rest practices:

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/supporting-materials/infosheet/safe-sleep-and-rest-practices>

- Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).
- Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2023)
- Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (Amended 2023).
- Revised National Quality Standard. (Amended 2023).

### 11.3 Other relevant resources

- ACECQA. (2023). [\*Sleep and Rest for Children. Policy Guidelines.\*](#)
- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC). (2013). Find out more: [Keeping baby safe](#)
- NSW Department of Education. (2022). [\*Sleep and rest for children-Policy guidelines for early childhood education and care services. \(updated\)\*](#)
- Red Nose: <https://rednose.org.au/section/safe-practices>
- Red Nose: Cot to bed safety [https://rednose.org.au/downloads/RN3356\\_Cot\\_Bed\\_DL\\_Oct2018\\_Online.pdf](https://rednose.org.au/downloads/RN3356_Cot_Bed_DL_Oct2018_Online.pdf)

### 11.4 Acknowledgement

Policy adapted from Childcare Centre Desktop © 2024