



RELAXATION AND SLEEP POLICY

Quality Area 2

PURPOSE

This policy will provide clear guidelines for the implementation of safe relaxation and sleep practices that meet the individual needs of children attending Rowen Street Kindergarten Inc

POLICY STATEMENT

Values

Rowen Street Kindergarten Inc. is committed to:

- providing a positive and nurturing environment for all children attending the service
- recognising that children have different requirements for relaxation and sleep, and being responsive to those needs to ensure that children feel safe and secure at the service
- 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
- its duty of care to all children, and ensuring that adequate supervision is maintained while children are sleeping, resting or relaxing
- complying with all legislative requirements, standards and current best practice and guidelines.

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 Rowen Street Kindergarten Inc. including during offsite excursions and activities.

| RESPONSIBILITIES | Approved provider and persons with management or control | Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge | Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff | Parents/guardians | Contractors, volunteers and students |
|---|--|---|--|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted | | | | | |
| Taking reasonable steps to ensure the sleep/rest needs of children at the service are met, with regard to the age of children, developmental stages and individual needs (Regulation 81(1)) | √ | √ | | | |
| Providing information and training to ensure staff are kept informed of changing practices in relation to safe sleep practices for children | √ | | | | |
| Ensuring parents/guardians are consulted about appropriate relaxation and sleep practices for their child | √ | | | | |
| Protecting children from hazards and harm (Section 167) | √ | √ | √ | | |
| Ensuring adequate supervision of children at the service at all times, including during relaxation and sleep | √ | √ | √ | | |
| Ensuring that rooms used for sleep and relaxation are well ventilated | √ | √ | | | |
| Ensuring the educational program provides opportunities for each child to sleep, rest or engage in appropriate quiet play activities, as required | | √ | √ | | |
| Removing any hazards identified in the child's resting or sleeping environment and informing the Approved Provider, as soon as is practicable | | √ | √ | | |
| Providing each child with appropriate opportunities for relaxation and sleep according to their needs | | √ | √ | | |
| Discussing their child's relaxation and sleep requirements and practices prior to commencing at the service, and when these requirements change | | | | √ | |

Background and legislation

BACKGROUND

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) include a focus on social, emotional, spiritual and physical wellbeing and health. Development Outcome 3 in both framework documents refers to a child's ability to take increasing responsibility for their own wellbeing. One of the indicators for this capacity is that children "recognise and communicate their bodily needs (for example thirst, hunger, rest, comfort, physical activity)". The EYLF suggests that to promote this, educators should:

- consider the pace of the day within the context of the community
- provide a range of active and restful experiences throughout the day, and support children to make appropriate decisions regarding participation.

Employers have a responsibility under the Occupational Health and Safety Act to provide a safe and healthy working environment. This duty extends to others present in the workplace, including children and volunteers. Providing a safe environment for children at the service includes complying with current Australian/New Zealand standards in relation to equipment, such as cots and mattresses (refer to Sources).

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
- 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

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au

Definitions

Adequate supervision: (In relation to this policy) entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios at all times. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used.

Adequate supervision refers to constant, active and diligent supervision of every child at the service. Adequate supervision requires that educators are always in a position to observe each child, respond to individual needs, and immediately intervene if necessary. Variables affecting supervision levels include:

- number, age and abilities of children
- number and positioning of educators
- current activity of each child
- areas in which the children are engaged in an activity (visibility and accessibility)
- developmental profile of each child and of the group of children
- experience, knowledge and skill of each educator
- need for educators to move between areas (effective communication strategies).

Duty of care: A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury

Sources and related policies

Sources

- Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF): <https://docs.education.gov.au/documents/belonging-being-becoming-early-years-learning-framework-australia>
- The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne, Grow and Thrive - Sleep, Volume 2 No 1, February 2014, Centre for Community Child Health: https://www.rch.org.au/ccch/publications-resources/grow-thrive/Grow_Thrive_-_Sleep/
- Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (2016), Consumer product safety – a guide for businesses & legal practitioners: <https://www.accc.gov.au/publications/consumer-product-safety-a-guide-for-businesses-legal-practitioners>
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority, Safe sleep and rest practices: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/supporting-materials/infosheet/safe-sleep-and-rest-practices>
- WorkSafe Victoria, Children's services – occupational health and safety compliance kit: <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/resources/childrens-services-occupational-health-and-safety-compliance-kit>
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF): <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/learning/Pages/veyldf.aspx>

Service policies

- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Hygiene Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Interactions with Children Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Supervision of Children Policy

Evaluation

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the approved provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (Regulation 172 (2)).

Attachments

- Nil

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by the Committee of Management of Rowen Street Kindergarten Inc. on 5 September 2022

Review date: September 2026