

POLICY – SLEEP AND REST FOR CHILDREN

1.	National Quality Standards	1
2.	Purpose	1
3.	Scope	2
4.	Policy Statement	2
5.	Implementation	2
6.	Feedback	5
7.	Approval and Review Details	5
	Appendix	6

1. National Quality Standards

Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety		
Area	Concept	Descriptor
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.
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.

Quality Area 3: Physical Environment		
Area	Concept	Descriptor
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.

The National Education and Care Services Regulations are included in the appendix.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 Baringa Early Learning Centre (Baringa) will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs. The risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) for infants will be minimised by following practices and guidelines set out by health authorities.

3. Scope

3.1 This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, and visitors of Baringa.

4. Policy Statement

- 4.1 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)
- 4.2 Baringa defines 'rest' as a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness, or tranquillity, 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 in order 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.
- 4.3 Baringa 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.
- 4.4 If a family's beliefs and requests are against current recommended evidence-based guidelines, Baringa will need to determine if there are exceptional circumstances that allow for alternate practices. Alternative practices will only be implemented if written advice, and the contact details of a registered medical practitioner are provided, accompanied by a risk assessment and risk minimisation plan for individual children. 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 Baringa's duty of care, it is a requirement that all educators implement and adhere to this policy to ensure we respect and cater for each child's specific needs.

5. Implementation

5.1 Management will ensure:

- a) Reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated for by Baringa are met, having regard to the ages, developmental stages, and individual needs of each child.
- b) There are adequate numbers of cots and bedding available to children that meet Australian Standards.
- c) Areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated and have natural lighting where practicable.
- d) Supervision windows will be kept clear to ensure safe supervision of sleeping infants.
- e) Professional Development regarding safe sleep practices is provided to staff and these principles are documented and shared with families. Nominated Supervisors 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.
- f) Parents who wish for their child to use a comforter or dummy attached to a comforter whilst sleeping at Baringa will be required to provide consent to allow this practice.

5.2 The Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person will:

- a) Take reasonable steps to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by Baringa are met, having regard to the ages, development stages and individual needs of the children.
- b) Maintain up to date knowledge regarding safe sleeping practice and communicate this information to educators and families.
- c) Ensure there are 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 where practicable, for relaxation and quiet activities.
- d) Ensure that sleeping infants are closely monitored and that all sleeping children are within hearing range and observed.
- e) Negotiate sleep and rest routines and practices with families to reach an agreement on how these occur for each child at Baringa.
- f) Ensure 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.
- g) Ensure the child's safety is always the priority.
- h) Ensure children who are sleeping or resting have their face uncovered at all times.
- i) Sleep and rest environments will be safe and free from hazards including cigarette, e-cigarette and tobacco smoke.
- j) Provide information to parents and families about Safe Sleep practices (see [Red Nose](#)).

5.3 Educators will:

- a) Communicate with families about their child's sleep and rest needs and Baringa's policy regarding sleep and rest times. Pre-school aged children will be included in the decision-making about sleep and rest needs.
- b) Be sensitive to each child's needs so that sleep and rest times are a positive experience. Children will only be woken after a certain period of time on the request of their parent/guardian.
- c) Ensure there are appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest, and relaxation and that each child's comfort is provided for.
- d) Ensure that cots/beds/mattresses and bed linen are clean and in good repair.
- e) Each child uses individual sleeping bibs and/or linen during rest times. If children are sharing beds, mattresses and/or cots sheets are swapped to cater to this.
- f) When beds/mattresses and linen are used by one child and then another, ensure beds and mattresses are wiped over with warm water and neutral detergent or vinegar solution and bed linen is washed between children's uses.
- g) Arrange children's beds and cots to allow easy access for children and staff.
- h) Ensure where possible that children rest/sleep with their beds/mattresses head to toe to minimise the risk of cross infection.
- i) Create a relaxing environment for sleeping/resting children by ensuring an appropriate temperature, playing relaxation music, reading stories, cultural reflection, turning off lights, and ensuring children are comfortably clothed.
- j) Sit near children who are resting and encourage them to relax and/or listen to music.
- k) Maintain adequate supervision and educator ratios throughout the sleep period.

- l) Respect family preferences regarding sleep and rest and consider these while ensuring children feel safe and secure in the environment. Sleep and rest patterns will be recorded daily for families.
- m) Encourage children to dress appropriately for the room temperature and faces remain uncovered when resting or sleeping. Lighter clothing is preferable, with children encouraged to remove shoes, jumpers, jackets and bulky clothing.
- n) 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.
- o) Consider a vast range of strategies to meet children's individual sleep and rest needs.
- p) Respond to children's individual cues for sleep (yawning, rubbing eyes, disengagement from activities, crying etc) and acknowledge children's emotions, feelings, and fears in regard to sleep/rest time.
- q) Develop positive relationships with children to assist in settling children confidently when sleeping and resting.
- r) Encourage children in Acacia, Banksia, Grevillea and Hibiscus Rooms who do not wish to sleep to rest their bodies and minds for 20-30 minutes, at the conclusion of which they can return to the play area for quiet activities.

Babies and Toddlers

- 5.4 Babies will be placed on their back in a cot to sleep when first being settled. They can be left to find their own preferred sleep or rest position (this is usually around 5–6 months of age).
 - a) If a medical condition exists that prevents a baby from being placed on their back, the alternative practice should be confirmed in writing with Baringa, by the child's medical practitioner.
 - b) Babies over four months of age can generally turn over in a cot but may not always be able to roll back again. Babies of this age will be placed in a safe baby sleeping bag (i.e., with fitted neck and arm holes, but no hood). To prevent a baby from wriggling down under bed linen, they should be positioned with their feet at the bottom of the cot.
- 5.5 Children in sleep rooms will be observed at 15-minute intervals. Educators must physically observe babies breathing and check the colour of their skin. The educator will then officially record this on a Safe Sleep Record.
- 5.6 Rooms may be air conditioned to maintain an appropriate temperature.
- 5.7 If being used, a dummy should be offered for all sleep periods. Dummies must not be attached to a chain at any time. If a dummy falls out of a baby's mouth during sleep, it should not be re-inserted.
- 5.8 Babies or young children should not be moved out of a cot into a bed too early; they should also not be kept in a cot for too long. Use of a bed or a cot is decided in consultation with each individual family.
 - a) Ensure there is no soft bedding in baby's sleep environment (pillows, doonas, loose bedding, lambswool or soft toys). Comforters and comforters with a dummy attached may be used in the case that parents sign a waiver, as described in 5.6.
 - b) Ensure any bed linen is securely tucked underneath the mattress so it cannot ride up and cover the baby's chest or cover his/her head.
 - c) If a baby is wrapped when sleeping, consider the baby's stage of development. Leave their arms free once the startle reflex disappears at around three months of age and discontinue the use of a wrap when the baby can roll from back to tummy to back again (usually four to six months of age). Use only lightweight wraps such as cotton or muslin.

- d) Ensure children are not put in cots or in beds with bottles as per the *Dental Health Policy*.
- e) Securely lock cot sides into place to ensure children’s safety.
- f) Be aware of manual handling practices when lifting babies in and out of cots.

5.9 Remove plastic packaging and ensure mattresses are kept in good condition; they should be clean, firm, and flat, and fit the cot base with not more than a 20mm gap between the mattress sides and ends. A firm sleep surface that is compliant with the new AS/NZS Voluntary Standard (AS/NZS 8811.1:2013 Methods of testing infant products – Sleep surfaces – Test for firmness) should be used.

- a) Mattresses must not be elevated or tilted.
- b) Mattresses are aired on a regular basis without any bedding on it.
- c) Ensure that waterproof mattress protectors are strong, not torn, and a tight fit.

6. Feedback

Families and staff may provide feedback about this document by emailing admin@baringa.org.au.

7. Approval and Review Details

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Management
Administrator	Centre Director
Next Review Date	31 October 2024

History	Details
Original Approval Authority/Revision Date	31 October 2021
Amendment Authority and Date	19 May 2023
Modifications made	Title updated to meet National Regulations guidelines. 5.3 (e) updated to reflect practice from ‘When beds/mattresses and linen are used by one child and then another, ensure beds and mattresses are wiped over with warm water and neutral detergent or vinegar solution and bed linen is washed between children’s uses’ to ‘Each child uses individual sleeping bibs and/or linen during rest times. If children are sharing beds, mattresses and/or cots sheets are swapped to cater to this.

Appendix

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Education and Care Services National Regulations	
81	Sleep and Rest
103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
105	Furniture, materials and equipment
110	Ventilation and natural light
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority

Source

ACECQA. (n.d.). Safe sleep and rest practices: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/information-sheets/safe-sleep-and-rest-practices>

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC). (2013). Find out more: Keeping baby safe: https://www.accc.gov.au/system/files/639_Keeping%20Baby%20Safe_text_FA4-WEB%20ONLY.pdf

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).

Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2011)

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).

Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2018). (Amended 2020).

Red Nose: <https://rednose.com.au/section/safe-practices>

Red Nose: <https://rednose.com.au/section/safe-sleeping>

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

Standards Australia – www.standards.org.au

The NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011

The NSW Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011