

Sleep and Rest Policy

Purpose

ECMS recognises the importance of safe, restful, and nurturing environments for children. This policy ensures all children have appropriate opportunities for sleep, rest, and relaxation that reflect their individual needs, while meeting all legislative and best practice requirements for safe sleep.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- The Approved Provider, persons with management or control, Centre Director, Nominated Supervisor, and persons in day-to-day charge.
- Early Childhood teachers, educators, staff, contractors, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others enrolled and participating in ECMS programs and services, including during offsite excursions and activities.
- All ECMS-operated Early Learning Centres and Kindergarten programs.

Policy Statement

ECMS is committed to an anti-bias approach in early childhood. ECMS operates within a framework of social justice and equity - this means we celebrate family and cultural diversity and aim to be supportive, responsive, and inclusive of all children. ECMS is committed to:

- Providing safe and appropriate opportunities for children to sleep, rest, and relax in line with their age, development, and individual needs.
- Following the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* (Regs 84A–84D) and Red Nose safe sleep guidance as recognised by ACECQA.
- Consulting families about children's sleep and rest needs, respecting parenting beliefs, cultural practices, and family preferences whilst aligning to best evidence.
- Ensuring sleep and rest environments are safe, hazard-free, and designed to support continuous active supervision.
- Equipping educators with training, procedures, and resources to implement safe sleep practices.

- Conducting and reviewing annual and situational Sleep & Rest Risk Assessments to ensure safety and compliance.
- Ensure all sleep and rest supervision occurs within required educator-to-child ratios at all times.

Guiding Principles

- Every child has the right to sleep and rest in a safe, respectful, and supportive environment.
- Educators must implement safe sleep practices in line with Red Nose and ACECQA guidance.
- Children's agency will be supported — they will never be forced to sleep but provided with appropriate opportunities for rest.
- ECMS has a duty of care to take all reasonable precautions to protect children from harm and hazards when sleeping or resting.
- Families are key partners — their preferences, values, and cultural beliefs regarding sleep and rest will be respected wherever safe and practicable.
- Sleep and rest times will be actively supervised and documented, including the time children rest, sleep check conducted and waking times.

Roles & Responsibilities

Approved Provider/Executive Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure resources, training, and systems are in place to implement this policy.
Nominated Supervisors/Centre Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee implementation, ensure educators are trained, risk assessments are completed, and sleep/rest procedures are followed.
Educators, Students, Volunteers and Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always apply safe sleep practices, actively supervise, consult with families, and follow the ECMS <i>Sleep & Rest Procedure</i>. • Record sleep and rest checks, maintain documentation to evidence compliance with safe sleep requirements.
Parents/Guardians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide accurate information about their child's sleep and rest needs and collaborate with educators.

Related Legislation, Regulations and Resources

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Section 165, 167
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (Regs 82, 84A-D, 103-115)
- National Quality Framework – Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
- Child Safe Standards – Standard 2
- ACECQA Excursions Policy Guidelines (v. 2.3, Oct. 2024)
- VicRoads: Child Restraint Safety Guidelines

Document Name: Sleep and Rest Policy	Next Review Date: September 2026	Document Version: 6.0
Document Owner: Director of Risk & Compliance	File Location: Inside Play Resources Policy and Procedure	Release date: July 2014 Page 2 of 3

Related Policies and Procedures

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints and Feedback Policy
- Compliance Management Framework
- Child Health and Hygiene Policy
- Emergency and Evacuation Management Policy
- Participation of Students and Volunteers Policy
- Privacy and Confidential Information Policy
- Risk Management Framework
- Supervision of Children Policy

Supporting Procedures

- Sleep and Rest Procedure
- Supervision Risk Management Procedure

Supporting Documents

- Risk Management Plan & Assessment Template

Document Version History			
Version	Reason for Amendment	Approved by	Approval date
6.0	Policy reviewed, consulted and updated	ECMS Executive	September 2025

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