



Sleep and Rest

POLICY STATEMENT

Lake Mac Newy OOSH recognises that adequate rest and sleep are essential for children's well-being, ensuring they feel safe, secure, and comfortable within the service environment. The service defines 'rest' as a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness, or tranquillity. While most school-age children accessing our service may not require sleep, it is essential to accommodate rest needs as required, including for children who are unwell, tired from excursions, or have additional needs.

This policy aligns with National Quality Standards (NQS) 2.1 and 2.2 (Elements 2.1.1 and 2.2.1) and incorporates best practice guidelines from ACECQA and Red Nose Australia.

The safety, well-being, and best interests of children are the paramount consideration in all decisions and practices relating to sleep and rest. Where family preferences, operational needs or routines conflict with a child's safety or wellbeing, the child's safety and best interests will prevail.

The service recognises that safe sleep and rest practices are a critical component of child safety and are implemented to minimise risks of harm, injury or unsafe situations.

PROCEDURES

Safe Sleep and Rest Practices

In accordance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, Lake Mac Newy OOSH ensures that children's sleep and rest needs are met by considering their age, developmental stage, medical conditions, and individual preferences in consultation with families:

- The service's Sleep and Rest Policy is guided by evidence-based practices outlined by ACECQA.
- Annual sleep and rest risk assessments will be conducted to control potential hazards in sleep/rest areas, following Red Nose and ACECQA guidelines.
- Families will be consulted about their child's individual needs and beliefs regarding sleep and rest, ensuring cultural sensitivity.
- Children will be supported to make choices about their rest and relaxation, and educators will respond to children's cues, needs and preferences in a respectful and responsive manner.
- If family preferences conflict with evidence-based practice, the service will only endorse an alternative with written medical advice.
- Educators are required to implement and adhere to the Sleep and Rest Policy to maintain high safety standards.
- Children will be supported to rest in positions that are comfortable and safe for their age and developmental stage.
- Children will rest with their faces uncovered at all times.
- The sleep/rest environment will be free from hazards, cigarette or tobacco smoke.
- Ensure that children who are sleeping or resting are closely monitored and that all sleeping or resting children are within hearing range and are observed. This involves physically checking/inspecting sleeping children at regular 10-minute intervals and ensuring that they are always within sight and hearing distance of sleeping and resting children so they can easily monitor a child's breathing and the colour of their skin. It is recommended that educators will not perform administrative duties that would take their attention away from sleeping/resting children. Active supervision during rest periods is maintained to ensure children's safety and to minimise risks of harm or unsafe situations.



- Sleep and rest periods will be documented and communicated through the OWNA checklist with families
- The safety and suitability of beds and bedding equipment, regarding the ages and developmental stages of the children who will use any bed and bedding equipment. The service does not use cots due to the age of the children in our care.
- The safety and suitability of beds and bedding equipment will be considered in relation to the age and developmental stage of children. The service does not use cots due to the age of the children in our care.
- Sleep and rest practices form part of the service's broader commitment to providing a child-safe environment, in line with the NSW Child Safe Standards.

Rest for School-Age Children

- A designated quiet area will be available for children who request rest, away from the main group.
- Children will not be required or forced to sleep or rest.
- Quiet, solitary activities such as reading or drawing will be provided for children seeking relaxation.
- Safe rest practices for school-age children include regular monitoring, uncovered faces, and adequate supervision.
- Children resting in hazardous clothing (e.g., scarves, hoodies with cords) will be encouraged to remove such items.
- The program will incorporate a balance of active and restful experiences, supporting children's individual preferences.

Safe Resting Practices for Unwell Children

- Refer to the Incident, Illness, Injury, and Trauma Policy for additional guidance.
- Unwell children will be encouraged to rest in a quiet, comfortable space and assume a safe sleeping position.
- Children who are unwell (and waiting for collection from a parent /guardian) will be given the highest supervision priority and monitored constantly (5-minute intervals), especially if the child has a high temperature, vomits or receives minor trauma to their head. For example, a child who has received a ball to the head while playing sport. This involves physically checking sleeping children and ensuring that they are always within sight and hearing of educators so they can be monitored for breathing and the colour of their skin.
- Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately to collect unwell children.
- Unwell children sleeping or resting will be documented and communicated through the OWNA checklist with families or regulatory bodies as needed.

Rest/Sleep Environment and Equipment

- A designated rest space (e.g., cushions, beanbags, lounge chairs) will be available.
- Rest areas and equipment will be checked regularly for safety and hygiene.
- Bedding materials (e.g., blankets, pillowcases) will be washed frequently, especially after illness.
- The service will ensure comfortable room temperature, airflow, lighting, and noise control in rest areas.
- Children with additional needs may rest in wheelchairs or modified strollers with supervision and proper restraint checks.



SLEEP AND REST-SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENT

Lake Mac Newy OOSH will conduct annual risk assessments or upon identifying new risks. The assessment will consider:

- Number, age, and individual needs of children.
- Cultural preferences and medical conditions affecting sleep/rest needs.
- Staffing arrangements to ensure adequate supervision.
- Training and knowledge of educators on safe sleep practices.
- Physical environment, including safe sleep areas, bed/bedding arrangements, temperature, lighting, and ventilation.
- Potential hazards, including children's clothing, jewellery, and the suitability of rest areas.

Risk assessments will be documented, stored securely, and retained for three years.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations.
- Conduct and review annual sleep/rest risk assessments.
- Ensure staff are trained in safe sleep/rest practices.
- Provide families with Rest Policy information upon enrolment.
- Ensure sleep and rest decisions reflect the paramountcy of children's safety, wellbeing and best interests.

Educators will:

- Follow the service's safe sleep and rest guidelines.
- Consult with families on children's rest needs and include children's agency in decision-making.
- Maintain adequate supervision and child ratios.
- Encourage children to dress appropriately for room temperature, removing shoes, jackets, and bulky clothing.
- Monitor room conditions to ensure comfort.
- Maintain a smoke-free environment.

Families will:

- Be informed of the Rest Policy during enrolment.
- Provide updates on their child's sleep/rest preferences.



CONSIDERATIONS:

Education and Care Services National Law & Regulations	National Quality Standards & Elements	Links to other service policies	Other documentation/ evidence
(S165, S167, R81, R84A-C, R103, R110, R115, R170-176)	Standards 2.1 and 2.2, 3.1,3.2 Elements 2.1.1 and 2.2.1, 3.1.1, 3.1.2 3.2.1 Child Safe Standards 1,2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10	- Administration of First Aid policy - Enrolment policy - Incident, Illness, Injury and Trauma, - Death of a Child at the service policy - Providing a Child Safe Environment, - Child Protection policy - Communication with families policy - Risk Assessment - Staffing arrangements policies. - Health and Safety policy - Interactions with Children, Family and Staff policy - Interactions with children policy	- My Time, Our Place. - Safety checks - Risk assessments - Evidence-base practice – www.acecqa.gov.au/sheets/safe-sleep-and-rest-practices - Active supervision practices - Sleep and rest risk assessment documentation - Staff training records (child protection and safe sleep practices) - Supervision plans and environmental risk assessments - Child Safe Environment implementation practices - Red Nose Australia safe sleep guidelines

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

Approval date: May 2026

Date for Review: May 2027