

Bute Early Learning and Primary School

Safe sleep and rest procedure



Overview

Bute Early Learning and Primary School (ELC) is required to follow the Department for Education's [safe sleeping and resting for infants and young children procedure](#) (department procedure) which aims to ensure appropriate opportunities are provided to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.

The Bute Early Learning and Primary School Safe sleep and rest procedure must be read alongside the department procedure. Together, these procedures address the requirements in regulation 168 of the National Regulations for education and care services to have sleep and rest procedures in place for children.

A copy of this procedure and the department procedure will be kept in the Bute Early Learning and Primary School (ELC) Policy folder and accessible on the site's website.

Procedures

Your procedures need to be clear and specific. For example, if procedures provide that sleep checks must be undertaken regularly, such as every 10 minutes, the procedures need to be specific about what is required for a check, how it is to be recorded and where documentation will be kept. Specific step-by-step procedures for separate age groups (a 'how-to' guide) should also be included where relevant.

The following procedures address matters required under regulations 84B and 84C of the National Regulations. An extract of those regulations is at Appendix A.

How children will be protected from risks

National Regulations to address in this section include:

- 84B(a) – how children will be protected from risks identified in a risk assessment
- 84B(f) – how sleep and rest practices are consistent with current health guidelines on best practices to ensure safety of children during sleep and rest
- 84C – requirements for risk assessment

To protect children from risks during sleep and rest, educators will follow the 'safe sleep and rest practices' outlined in the department procedure.

To ensure educators are aware of and follow the safe sleep and rest practices:

- *the site leader will ensure that the department's safe sleep practices are incorporated in induction and training for educators, including for casual and relief staff*
- *the site leader will ensure that educators engage in refresher training every year, which will cover safe sleep and rest practices and risk assessment requirements*

For sleeping infants, educators will protect infants against overheating by ensuring:

- infants' face and head are uncovered
- infants are placed on their back to sleep
- infants are dressed according to whether it is summer or winter, whether there is heating or cooling, and where the infant is sleeping

Risk assessment

A Risk assessment will be undertaken in accordance with the department procedure, which addresses requirements under regulation 84C of the National Regulations. Risk assessments will be conducted using the [template for sleep and rest risk assessment](#).

Site leaders will ensure that, as soon as practicable after a risk assessment is completed, any necessary updates to this procedure will be made.

A copy of all completed risk assessments will be kept by the service.

Meeting sleep and rest needs

National Regulations to address in this section include:

- 84B(b) – meeting sleep and rest needs
- 84B(d) – how requests from families and cultural preferences are considered
- 84B(h) – location and arrangement of sleep and rest areas

To ensure children's individual sleep and rest needs are safely met, educators will:

- Provide a quiet, safe sleep environment free from any foreseeable hazards and risks (absence of hanging cords, curtains, electrical appliances etc.)
- Ensure all children are placed individually in cots
- Always place infants to sleep on their back; never on their tummy or side
- Once an infant is over 6 months of age and is competently rolling, they must still be placed in the cot on their back, but can be allowed to find their own position
- No loose bedding, quilts, doonas, pillows, cot bumpers, sheepskins or soft toys are permitted in the cot as they pose a suffocation risk

- Children have their bedclothes tucked in securely or are placed in a safe sleeping bag, that is correct fitting and suitable for the room temperature
- Undertake Safe Sleep and Rest Physical Checks every 15 minutes and document these checks using the Red Nose Template (12 months and younger or with increased risk of SUDI)
- Undertake Safe Sleep and Rest Physical Checks every 15 minutes and document these checks using the Bute ELC general template (Children beyond 12 months of age).
- Make sleep/rest times a positive, pleasant experience within the Centre and staff will make every effort to provide a relaxing and comfortable sleep environment for all children within sight and hearing whilst sleeping.
- If a family's beliefs and practices are in conflict with Red Nose Safe Sleeping guidelines, then the service will not endorse an alternative practice, unless the service is provided with written advice from a medical practitioner. Only in rare medical conditions is it necessary for an infant to sleep on their stomach or side.
- Comforters and or security toys may be brought in for sleep/rest periods for children 7 months and older; however, such items must not impact on the safety of children whilst sleeping (no cords attached etc)
- Provide inclusive and supportive environments for women who wish to breastfeed (but also for those who are bottle feeding)
- Children will not be forced to sleep at any time. Quiet activities will be made available for children to experience whilst other children sleep

Opportunities for rest and relaxation will be provided by:

- The service consults with families (ENROLMENT QUESTIONNAIRE) about their child's individual needs and to be aware of the different values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise that are associated with rest.
- Staff will provide opportunity for children to sleep/rest
- Staff will encourage children to sleep and/or rest in order to meet their individual needs.
- Children will not be forced to sleep at any time. Quiet activities will be made available for children to experience whilst other children sleep

Meeting health care needs

National Regulations to address in this section include:

- 84B(c) – how health care needs of individual children are met
- 84B(d) – how requests from families and cultural preferences are considered

To ensure children's health care needs are met:

- as required by the department procedure, educators will ensure that, for a child who has a medical condition or additional needs which relates to their sleep or rest, a health care plan authorised by a medical practitioner is in place which outlines the safest sleep and rest practices to be implemented
- Families will be asked to answer a questionnaire about their child's health care needs through questions in enrolment documents

Partnership with families

National Regulations to address in this section include:

- 84B(d) – how requests from families and cultural preferences are considered
- 84B(m) – communication of the sleep and rest policies and procedures to a parent

To implement the procedures for facilitating ‘a collaborative partnership with families’ and for addressing ‘requests to vary sleep practices’, as set out in the department procedure:

- Upon enrolment, educators will inform families of the service’s sleep and rest policy and procedures and will provide families information about safe sleep recommendations
- The service’s sleep and rest procedures and policy will be made available to families in hard copy AND on the service’s website
- Educators will make a record of any parent communication concerning requests to vary sleep practices, and decisions made in relation to such requests
- The Site Leader will ensure that educators have appropriate training to address families’ requests which are contrary to the safe sleep guidance
- If a family's beliefs and practices are in conflict with Red Nose Safe Sleeping guidelines, then the service will not endorse an alternative practice, unless the service is provided with written advice from a medical practitioner. Only in rare medical conditions is it necessary for an infant to sleep on their stomach or side.

To implement the department’s procedures for ‘promoting and modelling safe infant care practices’:

- The site leader will ensure safe sleeping information is displayed and available for families, including by providing resources in different languages and using easy-to-read posters.

Supervision and monitoring

National Regulations to address in this section include:

- 84B(e) – supervision and monitoring, including method and frequency of checking, and documentation of sleep and rest periods
- 84B(j) – management of potential hazards in sleep and rest areas and on a child during sleep and rest periods

To ensure all children are appropriately supervised and monitored, educators will follow the ‘supervision and monitoring’ procedures in the department procedure.

To implement the department procedure:

- The site leader will ensure that supervision and monitoring requirements for sleep and rest are incorporated into induction and training for educators, including casual and relief staff.
- Educators will complete a daily record of sleeping and resting which will include the time the child is checked, and the initial/signature of the educator
- Once completed, educators will file the daily record in the Safe Sleep Folder
- Educators will ensure that playing children are supervised in close proximity to sleeping children to allow supervision of both groups
- eg educators will ensure that the physical environment facilitates effective supervision (ie windows not blocked and adequate space to move around to physically check on individual children)

Sleep and rest environment

National Regulations to address in this section include:

- 84B(h) – location and arrangement of sleep and rest areas
- 84B(i) – safety and suitability of cots, bedding and bedding equipment
- 84B(k) – physical safety and suitability of environment, including temperature, lighting and ventilation

In developing your local procedures you may wish to refer to:

- Red Nose guidance – [What is a safe room temperature for sleeping baby](#)
- Queensland Government’s resource – [Sleep and rest physical environment considerations](#)
- ACCC product safety resource [Your First Steps](#)
- Red Nose [Cot to Bed Safety brochure](#).

To ensure all children are provided with a safe sleep and rest environment, educators will follow the ‘providing a safe sleeping environment’ procedures in the department procedure.

To implement the department procedures:

- the site leader will ensure that requirements for ensuring a safe sleep and rest environment are incorporated into induction and training for educators
- educators will use a safe sleep environment checklist to ensure that:
 - there is adequate lighting of sleep and rest areas to enable effective supervision
 - sleep and rest areas are well ventilated
 - there is an unobstructed gap between cots and beds to allow free movement by an educator and to ensure children cannot physically disturb one another while sleeping and resting
 - cots and beds are positioned away from heaters to avoid overheating
 - cots and beds are kept away from hanging cords, mobiles, electrical appliances and curtains

Sleep and rest equipment

National Regulations to address in this section include:

- 84B(h) – location and arrangement of sleep and rest areas
- 84B(i) – safety and suitability of cots, bedding and bedding equipment

In developing your local procedures you may wish to refer to:

- Red Nose [Portable or Folding Cots article](#)
- Red Nose [Cot to Bed Safety brochure](#).
- Red Nose [What is a Safe Cot? article](#)
- ACCC information on [Mandatory standard for folding cots](#)
- ACCC information on [Mandatory standard for household cots](#)
- ACCC resource on [Baby product safety and safe sleep](#)
- [Red Nose what is a safe mattress](#) (includes a link to a video resource about testing a mattress’s firmness)
- Infant mattress safety information published by the [Education Standards Board](#).

To ensure all children are provided with safe sleep and rest equipment:

- The Site Leader will ensure that periodic work health and safety checks are undertaken of the physical environment, furniture and resources of the service
- The Site Leader will check manufacturer standards of sleep and rest equipment upon purchasing, including for cots (which must comply with AS/NZS 2172) and folding or portable cots (which must comply with AS/NZS 2195)

- If using a safe sleeping bag, educators will ensure it is the correct size for the infant with a fitted neck, arm holes (or sleeves), and no hood, so that the infant cannot slip inside the bag and become completely covered
- Educators will assess which sleep surface (cot, mattress or bed) is appropriate for the child, including by taking into account the child's age, development (ie the ability for the child to climb over the sides of a cot), the family's views and practices at home.

Prams, pushers and bassinets

From 1 October 2023, the National Regulations prohibit the presence of bassinets on education and care services' premises.

As required by the department procedure, all staff will ensure that prams, pushers, bouncinettes and rockers are not used unsupervised, and are not used as a sleeping environment for children.

The presence of bassinets at the service is prohibited under the National Regulations. All staff will ensure that bassinets are not present at the service for any purpose.

Wraps, slings and carriers

This content is only relevant to infants and should be deleted if your service does not care for infants.

National Regulations to address in this section include:

- 84B(d) – requests from families about a child's sleep and rest and cultural preferences
- 84B(m) – communication of sleep and rest policies and procedures to a parent

In developing your local procedures you may wish to refer to:

- Red Nose [Wrapping or swaddling babies](#)
- [ACCC safety alert – what you need to know about: baby slings](#)
- ACCC product safety resource [Your First Steps](#)

Educators will follow the 'wrapping infants' and 'baby slings and carriers' procedures in the department procedure, which require educators to follow best practice recommendations.

To ensure compliance with those procedures:

- The site leader will ensure that best practice recommendations for wrapping infants, and use of baby slings and carriers, are incorporated into induction and training for educators
- Prior to using wraps, slings or carriers, educators will discuss relevant risks with the family

Reviewing sleep and rest practices

National Regulations to address in this section include:

- 84B(f) – how sleep and rest practices are consistent with current health guidelines on best practices to ensure safety of children during sleep and rest
- 84B(g) – the induction, training and knowledge of educators in relation to best practices for children's sleep and rest

To ensure sleep and rest practices of the service remain current and implement best practices:

- The Site Leader will ensure sleep practices and environments are reviewed every 12 months or as necessary if procedures or regulations change

- Educators will ensure that safe sleep practices and any changes to service procedures are discussed as a regular meeting agenda item

Training and induction for educators

National Regulations to address in this section include:

- 84B(f) – how sleep and rest practices are consistent with current health guidelines on best practices to ensure safety of children during sleep and rest
- 84B(g) – the induction, training and knowledge of educators in relation to best practices for children’s sleep and rest

To ensure best practices and recommendations for safe sleep and rest are met:

- The Site Leader will ensure that training and induction for educators (including casual and relief staff) covers the requirements in the department procedure and the procedures in this document and will use relevant tools for ensuring compliance (ie checklists)
- The Site Leader will ensure that training and induction for educators addresses knowledge and understanding of risks of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- The Site Leader will ensure educators are provided with opportunities to attend formal training courses on safe sleep and rest at least once in a 12 month period.

Procedure creation and revision record

Local procedures must be regularly reviewed and maintained to ensure they remain relevant and up-to-date with important developments in evidence-based practices for safe sleep and rest. Any revisions to the policy should be communicated to staff and families, and access to electronic and hardcopies of older versions should be removed.

Duplicate (copy/paste) the below table to record each version change.

Version:	1
Approved by site leader:	Richard Hall
Date of approval:	November, 2023
Date of next review:	November, 2026
Amendments(s):	Nil

APPENDIX A: Extract of regulations 84B and 84C of the National Regulations

[Education and Care Services National Regulations \(2011 SI 653\)](#)

84B Sleep and rest policies and procedures

The sleep and rest policies and procedures required under regulation 168(2)(a)(v) must address—

- (a) how children will be protected from any risks identified in a risk assessment conducted under regulation 84C
- (b) how the sleep and rest needs of children being educated and cared for by the service are met, including how the ages, developmental stages and the sleep and rest needs of individual children are considered
- (c) how the health care needs of individual children being educated and cared for by the service are met
- (d) how requests from families about a child's sleep and rest and cultural preferences are considered
- (e) supervision and monitoring during sleep and rest periods, including –
 - (i) the method and frequency of checking the safety, health and wellbeing of children during sleep and rest; and
 - (ii) the documentation of sleep and rest periods
- (f) how the sleep and rest practices at the service are consistent with any current health guidelines on the best practices to adopt to ensure the safety of children during sleep and rest
- (g) the induction, training and knowledge of staff who educate and care for children at the service in relation to best practices for children's sleep and rest
- (h) the location and arrangement of sleep and rest areas at the service and how this meets the sleep and rest needs of children being educated and cared for by the service
- (i) safety and suitability of cots, bedding and bedding equipment, having regard to the ages and developmental stages of children who will use the cots, bedding and bedding equipment
- (j) management of potential hazards –
 - (i) in sleep and rest areas; and
 - (ii) on a child during sleep and rest periods
- (k) management of physical safety and suitability of sleep and rest environments (including temperature, lighting and ventilation)
- (l) communication of the sleep and rest policies and procedures to a parent.

84C Risk assessment for purposes of sleep and rest policies and procedures

- (1) The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that a sleep and rest risk assessment is conducted in accordance with this regulation—
 - (a) at least once every 12 months; and
 - (b) as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect the safety, health or wellbeing of children during sleep and rest.Penalty: \$2200.
Note - A compliance direction may be issued for failure to comply with subregulation (1).
- (2) a risk assessment must consider the following:
 - (a) the number, ages and developmental stages of children being educated and cared for –
 - (i) by the education and care service; or
 - (ii) in the case of a family day care service, at each family day care residence or approved family day care venue of the service;
 - (b) the sleep and rest needs of children being cared for (including health care needs, cultural preferences, sleep and rest needs of individual children and requests from families about a child's sleep and rest) –
 - (i) by the education and care service; or
 - (ii) in the case of a family day care service, at each family day care residence or approved family day care venue of the service;
 - (c) the suitability of staffing arrangements to adequately supervise and monitor children during sleep and rest periods
 - (d) the level of knowledge and training of staff supervising children during sleep and rest periods
 - (e) the location of sleep and rest areas, including the arrangement of cots and beds within the sleep and rest areas
 - (i) at the education and care service; or
 - (ii) in the case of a family day care service, at each family day care residence or approved family day care venue of the service;
 - (f) the safety and suitability of any cots, beds and bedding equipment, having regard to the ages and developmental stages of children who will use the cots, bed and bedding equipment
 - (g) any potential hazards
 - (i) in sleep and rest areas; or
 - (i) on a child during sleep and rest periods;
 - (h) the physical safety and suitability of sleep and rest environments (including temperature, lighting and ventilation) –
 - (ii) at the education and care service; or
 - (iii) in the case of a family day care service, at each family day care residence or approved family day care venue of the service;
 - (i) in the case of a family day care service that provides overnight care to a child, any risks that the overnight care provided at the family day care residence or approved family day care venue of the service may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of the child.
- (3) As soon as practicable after conducting a risk assessment under this regulation, the approved provider of an education and care service must make any necessary updates to the sleep and rest policies and procedures.
- (4) The approved provider must keep a record of each risk assessment conducted under this regulation.