SAFE SLEEP POLICY

Purpose

Insight Early Learning (IEL) is committed to ensuring that each child's sleep and rest needs are met in a manner that is safe, responsive and consistent with regulatory requirements.

The service provides a safe, calm and developmentally appropriate environment that supports children's sleep, rest and relaxation, taking into account each child's age, developmental stage, health status and individual needs.

IEL is committed to:

- Providing appropriate and flexible opportunities for sleep, rest and relaxation throughout the day
- Implementing safe sleep and rest practices in accordance with the Red Nose Australia Safe Sleep Guidelines and relevant legislation
- Always ensuring adequate supervision during sleep and rest periods
- Working in partnership with families to support individual sleep and rest routines, while maintaining the safety of children and consistency with the service's Sleep and Rest Policy and Procedures

Scope

This policy applies to all educators, staff, students, volunteers, families, and children enrolled at IEL services.

Legislative Requirements

Education and Care National Law	
Regulation	**Description**
84A	Sleep and rest
84B	Policy and procedures: sleep and rest
84C	Risk assessment for sleep/rest
84D	Prohibition of bassinets
86	Notification to the regulatory authority
103, 105, 115	Safe furniture, premises, and supervision
168 (2)(a)(vii)	Policies for sleep and rest

Relevant National Quality Standard (NQS) Elements

Quality Area 2 – Children's Health and Safety	
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures
2.2.1	Supervision

Individualised Sleep and Rest

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Each child's sleep and rest needs are discussed with families upon enrolment, and reviewed regularly. Cultural and family preferences are respected while prioritising safety and best practices.

IEL will only support requested sleep and rest practices where they align with Red Nose safe sleep recommendations and legislative requirements.

Where a child's home sleep routine cannot be implemented due to safety or regulatory considerations, families will be informed of the reasons. Educators will work in partnership with families to identify safe and appropriate alternatives. Any variation to standard safe sleep practices must:

- Be discussed and agreed with families, and
- Be supported by current written advice from a registered medical practitioner

Bouncers must not be used unless required to meet a child's documented medical or individual needs and prior written approval has been granted by IEL's Quality and Practice Coach. A written request must outline the child's needs, the reason for the proposed use and any relevant supporting advice from a treating health professional. Before use, a documented risk assessment must be completed and approved by the Quality and Practice Coach, and all identified control measures implemented. Written approval must specify the conditions of use and review requirements. All bouncers must comply with applicable ACCC product safety requirements and be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Information and observations relating to each child's sleep and rest patterns are documented and shared with families regularly to support continuity between home and the service.

Students and volunteers must not be left unsupervised and must always be accompanied by an educator during sleep and rest periods.

All educators, including permanent and casual staff, receive training in sleep and rest practices as part of onboarding and induction, with ongoing training provided as required.

Educators will observe children to see signs of tired and readiness for sleep and rest. Experiences and observations regarding sleep will be shared with families on a regular basis.

Sleep Environment Safety

All sleep environments meet Australian Standards and regulatory requirements. The service ensures that:

- Cots, mattresses and beds are clean, firm, well-fitting and well maintained
- Bassinets are prohibited under Regulation 84D and are not used under any circumstance
- Inclined products are not used to support sleep routines
- Prams and car seats are not used for sleep at the service
- Sleep areas are free from hazards, including loose bedding, pillows, soft toys, bumper pads, cords or hanging items
- Children who are under the age of 12 months must not be left asleep with any comforter in their cots. This can only occur when a child has written requirements from a medical practitioner and there is a separate risk Assessment for the purpose of a comforter in their cots. This is only provided on a case-by-case basis.
- Feeding or drinking does not occur in a cot at any time
- Dummies may be used provided they do not have chains, cords or pins attached
- All necklaces (including religious or amber necklaces), clothing and drawstrings are removed prior to sleep
- Children must not be shaken, rocked, or subjected to rattling movements while in cots.
- Where additional settling support is required, educators may use gentle, rhythmic tapping on the mattress, ensuring the child remains in a safe sleep position and is closely supervised at all times.
- Swaddling or wrapping

- Is only used when it is part of the child's regular home routine and requested by families.
- It is consistent with Red Nose Guidelines
- Ceases once a child shows signs of rolling

Supervision and Monitoring
Sleeping children are actively and physically checked at least every 10 minutes.

An educator is nominated as the sleep monitor whenever children are sleeping in a cot room. The sleep monitor will:

- Wear a lanyard identifying responsibility for sleep checks
- Be within sight and sound of children sleeping at all times.
- Record each check on the Sleep register
- Use a timer set at 10-minute intervals (the service iPad is not acceptable for time tracking and should be a separate stopwatch that is connected to the lanyard or attached to the wall.
- Handover responsibility to another educator if leaving the room, including advising of the check schedule
- Each room should have a thermometer which is checked at the same time as each sleep check to ensure temperature is between 18 – 23 degrees.
- The sleep monitor should also be responsible for checking children's clothing and adapting their clothes as required.
- Additional requirements include
  - Sleep areas arranged to allow clear visibility, adequate lighting and safe access
  - Ongoing communication between educators to support consistent monitoring
  - Tailored monitoring plans for children with additional needs to medical conditions
  - Sleep check retained for all Nursery and Tiny Tots rooms

Safe Sleep Guidelines (Red Nose)
IEL follows Red Nose Australia's safe sleep guidelines, including:

- Placing babies on their back to sleep
- Using a firm, flat, well-fitting mattress
- Ensuring sleep environments are smoke-free
- Avoiding use of soft bedding, pillows, toys, or loose blankets
- Prevent overheating
- Supporting breastfeeding where appropriate
- Ensuring wraps allow hop movement and are discontinued when rolling begins.

Roles and Responsibilities
Educators must support children to feel safe, secure and settled during sleep and rest, observe and respond to individual signs of tiredness, and provide alternative quiet activities for children who do not sleep. They must maintain adequate supervision and required educator-to-child ratios throughout sleep and rest periods, complete approved safe sleep training, and ensure sleep equipment and areas are regularly cleaned and maintained.

Educators must not sleep or rest alongside children or use physical force to make a child rest or remain on a bed. Room Leaders and Responsible Persons must maintain current ACECQA-approved qualifications in first aid, anaphylaxis management and emergency asthma management. All educators must follow the IEL Safe Sleep and Relaxation Procedure.

Families' Responsibilities
Families must communicate their child's sleep needs, usual sleep patterns and any changes to educators, and provide updated medical documentation where alternative sleep arrangements are required. Families must collaborate with educators to support transitions in sleep arrangements, including moving from a cot to a bed once their child is 18 months old. For children younger than 18 months, a proposed transition must involve consultation with the family, a

documented risk assessment and prior written approval from the Quality and Practice Coach. If a cot presents an immediate risk to a child's health, safety or wellbeing, educators must take immediate action to protect the child, consult with the family and promptly seek guidance and approval from the Quality and Practice Coach for safe alternative arrangements.

Transition from Cot to Bed
Educators will observe for signs of readiness or safety concerns and consult with families to plan transitions. This will ensure sleep spaces remain safe and developmentally appropriate

Medical Exceptions
Where a child requires an alternative sleep position or environment due to a medical condition, written advice from a registered medical practitioner is required and reviewed regularly

Risk Management
Sleep and rest risk assessments are conducted:

- At least annually, and
- Whenever circumstances change

Risk assessments consider:

- Number, age and needs of children
- Health needs and family requests
- Sleep environment layout and supervision arrangements
- Educator training and rostering
- Product information and purchase dates

Record Keeping and Reporting
Sleep registers must be completed for all children in the Nursery and Tiny Tots rooms. All sleep-related incidents must be documented, communicated to families and promptly reported to the Nominated Supervisor or Area Manager. Serious incidents must be reported to the Regulatory Authority in accordance with applicable reporting requirements. All sleep registers and incident records must be stored securely and managed confidentially.

Cleaning and Hygiene
Bed linen is washed regularly, and costs, beds and Mattresses are cleaned between use. All sleep environments are cleaned and inspected daily to ensure safety.

Training and Professional Development
Educators will be trained in the IEL sleep training. Staff will receive sleep and rest training during induction and ongoing professional development.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier in response to legislative changes, incidents, or identified improvements.

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