



SAFE SLEEP AND REST FOR CHILDREN POLICY

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DIVISION: Sport, Community and Activation

BRANCH: Community Outcomes - Family Day Care

CATEGORY: 3

PART 1 – INTRODUCTION

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Camden Family Day Care (FDC) places the safety, needs and rights of children at the forefront of everything we do. Sleep and rest is an important part of their development and we acknowledge that all children have individual sleep, rest and respite requirements which we need to consider and cater for to ensure their needs are being met. Children need to be supervised in a safe, comfortable and relaxing environment to enable their bodies to rest.
- 1.2 Fortunately, cases of children dying in education and care service settings are very rare. However, some deaths have occurred when a child has been sleeping at a service. Relevant coroners' reports have found that poor sleeping environments and poor supervision are risk factors. While all children need rest and sleep to be happy and healthy, this is an area of service policy and procedure that needs to be very carefully considered, monitored and actively reviewed to ensure risks are appropriately addressed at all times.
- 1.3 The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* require Approved Providers to have policies and procedures in place that ensure children's need for sleep and rest whilst in the service are met, having regard to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of the children.

2. OBJECTIVE

- 2.1 Through this policy and its related procedures Camden FDC aims to ensure FDC educators have information and strategies based on best practice and current research that ensures children are at all times safe and their sleep and rest needs met while attending the service.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This policy applies to:
 - Camden Council FDC Service.
 - Camden Council FDC staff employed by Camden Council.
 - Educators (including educator assistants and relief educators) registered with the service as agents of the Approved Provider - Camden Council.
 - Children enrolled in the service and their families.
 - Students engaged within Camden FDC services.

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **Adequate Supervision** means an educator can respond immediately, particularly when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation and knowing where children are at all times and monitoring their activities actively and diligently.
- 4.2 **Approved Provider** means a person who holds a provider approval *Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW)*. A provider approval authorises a person to apply for one or more education and care service approvals and is valid in all jurisdictions.
- 4.3 **Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)** means the independent national authority that assists governments in administering the National Quality Framework including the provision of guidance, resources, and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.
- 4.4 **Co-ordination Unit** means the Camden FDC principal office and main faculty for running the Service from which Camden FDC employees work.
- 4.5 **Educator** means an individual suitably qualified and registered by Camden FDC to provide education and care and can refer to the FDC educator as the business owner, educator assistant or relief educator.
- 4.6 **Family Day Care (FDC)** means a type of education and care service that is run from the educator's own residence or an approved venue for the purpose of educating and caring for small groups of children aged 0-12 years.
- 4.7 **Family Day Care Service** means the FDC education and care business of each individual educator or reference to Camden Council FDC service.
- 4.8 **Infant** means a young child between the ages of birth and 12 months.
- 4.9 **Nominated Supervisor** means a person appointed by the Approved Provider and who has given consent to be appointed to be in day to day charge of a service and must be contactable during the hours FDC educators are providing education and care.
- 4.10 **Overnight care** means an educator providing education and care to an enrolled child through the night and can include evening, night and early morning.
- 4.11 **Red Nose** means the name of the organisation that is Australia's leading authority on safe sleep.
- 4.12 **Relaxation** means recreation or other activity for bringing about a feeling of calm in your body and mind.
- 4.13 **Rest** means a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness or tranquility, and can include a child being in a state of sleep.
- 4.14 **Risk assessment** means a systematic process of evaluating the potential risks that may be involved in a projected activity or undertaking and determining suitable mitigations.
- 4.15 **Staff** means employees of Camden Council FDC.

- 4.16 **Wellbeing** means a positive emotion that results from the satisfaction of basic needs – the need for tenderness and affection; security and clarity; social recognition; to feel competent; physical needs and for meaning in life. It includes happiness and satisfaction, effective social functioning and the dispositions of optimism, openness, curiosity and resilience.

PART 2 - POLICY STATEMENT

5. PRINCIPLES

- 5.1 Our approach to supporting and promoting children's health and physical activity, including safe sleep and rest, is informed by current recognised guidelines and up-to-date information.
- 5.2 Our FDC service's safe sleep and rest procedures and practice follow Red Nose guidelines, the recognised national authority in this area.
- 5.3 Effective sleep and rest strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and is safe at our service. Safe sleep training is included as a part of induction and ongoing professional development.
- 5.4 Educators, staff and management have a shared 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. Educators are required to assess their sleep/rest environments upon registration and complete a sleep/rest risk assessment, which will be updated as required and reviewed annually.
- 5.5 Educators will ensure they can maintain adequate supervision of sleeping and resting children and will carry out frequent physical visual checks on sleeping children to check the child's breathing and the colour of the child's lips and skin tone.
- 5.6 Child safety is our first priority. Educators can confidently refer to the FDC service's *Safe Sleep and Rest for Children* policy and procedures if families make requests that are contrary to the safety of the child.
- 5.7 Opportunities will be provided to meet each child's sleep, rest and relaxation needs and ensure children feel secure and safe.
- 5.8 We will consult with families about their child's routine for sleep and rest at home and carry this out at the service where possible and safe to do so.
- 5.9 FDC offers families opportunities for flexible hours of care. Educators who choose to provide overnight care must have prior written approval from the Nominated Supervisor, which for new educators will be included in the registration process. Educators must have considerations for the management of overnight care, such as night time sleep environments, included in their sleep/rest risk assessment and will be required to follow the *Overnight Care* procedure. Educators must also indicate their intended hours of care and the fees and charges for this service when completing their annual hours of operation and Fee Schedule.

6. CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Adequate supervision:

6.1.1 Children sleeping and resting will be placed in approved areas accessible to the educator and where they can be adequately supervised so that their safety and wellbeing can be monitored.

6.1.2 A range of factors will determine the ability of the educator to adequately supervise children, including the number and ages of children and the environment layout. Each educator in consultation with the co-ordination unit will develop a *Sleep and Rest* risk assessment that describes how they will manage sleep and rest for children while ensuring adequate supervision is maintained. This risk assessment will be reviewed and amended annually and as required.

6.1.3 The circumstance and needs of each child should be considered to determine any risk factors that may impact on the adequate supervision of sleeping children. For example, babies or children with colds, chronic lung disorders or specific health care needs might require a higher level of supervision while sleeping.

6.1.4 Educators must carry out sleep checks every ten minutes or more frequently (based on risk factors), for the duration of a child's sleep. Educators must physically check the child's breathing and be able to see the colour of the child's lips and skin tone. This will occur in person, not via a window or any type of monitor.

6.1.5 Sleep check times and observations must be recorded on the *Sleep Check Register* for each child at the time of the check, not retrospectively. The register is to be retained as a part of the service records and a copy submitted to the co-ordination unit at the end of each month.

6.1.6 Educators will maintain adequate supervision of sleeping and resting children and will ensure supervision is a priority over all other duties.

6.1.7 Requirements for overnight care are outlined in the *Overnight Care* procedure.

6.2 Considerations for the program:

6.2.1 Educators will plan and implement a program based on the individual needs and developmental stages of children, including the need for sleep and rest, and will ensure activities reflect a balance between active and passive play opportunities.

6.2.2 Certain activities and events such as outings may disrupt children's sleep and rest routines and these needs must be considered in the planning process of such activities.

6.2.3 Family's cultural practices will be included in sleep and rest practices when it is safe to do so. Practices advocated by Red Nose and ACECQA will always prevail when there is a conflict.

6.2.4 Families will be asked about their child's sleep and rest routines and needs at the enrolment stage and discussed between the educator and family as part of ongoing communication about the child's development.

6.2.5 If a child has an individual *Medical Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan*, educators will ensure sleep and rest routines are included as a part of the assessment. Variations to the management plan must be discussed with the child's parent/guardian and the plan adjusted if required. Changes to the child's sleep/rest routine must be communicated to the child's parent/guardian/authorised person at pickup.

6.3 Considerations for the physical environment and equipment:

6.3.1 Where possible FDC environments will have a designated resting space to allow children the choice of participating in active play, quiet play or rest and respite.

6.3.2 Sleep and rest environments must be set up within the FDC 'approved' areas for use and considerations for how educators will maintain adequate supervision must be addressed.

6.3.3 Sleep and rest environments must have adequate ventilation and lighting that enables the educator to see the child's skin tone and lip colour during physical checks.

6.3.4 All equipment is to meet the relevant Australia Safety Standards, including:

Mandatory Australian Standard for cots	AS/NZS 2172
Mandatory Australian Standard for portable/ foldable cots	AS/NZS 2195

6.3.5 Equipment will only be used as originally intended and consideration given to its placement in the environment to ensure safety.

6.3.6 The *Educator Residence Risk Assessment* will address the management of sleep/rest environments and equipment and will be completed upon registration and reviewed annually or as required thereafter.

6.3.7 Educators will have a *Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment* that address' all risks and includes management strategies specific to each FDC service residence with consideration to sleep/rest spaces, supervision, sleep checks, requirements for various ages and grouping of children, program, routine and individual needs of children where appropriate such as a child with a medical condition and management of overnight care. This must be checked and signed off by the co-ordination unit annually as a part of the annual residence audit visit. These risk assessments will be reviewed and updated annually and as required to address changes in practice reflective of service needs and current best practice recommendations.

6.3.8 Daily safety checks will be implemented prior to the children starting and are to include sleep/rest environments and equipment.

6.3.9 Portable cots must be included as a part of the daily safety check to ensure they remain safe and in good repair.

6.3.10 Cot mattresses where possible must be the manufacturer's recommended mattress for the cot. It must fit well with no more than a 20mm gap between the mattress sides and ends, and should always be in good condition, clean, firm and flat, never elevated or tilted.

- 6.3.11 For portable cots, only the mattress supplied with the cot is to be used. Additional or alternate mattresses are not permitted.
- 6.3.12 Light bedding that meets Red Nose recommendations will be used for each child and will be clean, comfortable and appropriate to the climate.
- 6.3.13 Bassinets, hammocks, and prams/strollers are not considered safe equipment to sleep in and cannot be considered a substitute for a cot.
- 6.3.14 Pillows, doonas/quilts, bumpers and loose bedding should be removed from cots.
- 6.3.15 Requirements for overnight care are outlined in detail in the *Overnight Care* procedure.

6.4 Safe Sleeping:

- 6.4.1 Educators must be aware of and follow the guidelines and recommended safe methods for sleeping babies and children to ensure their safety and avoid the risk of injury or death. These include but are not limited to:
- Placing babies on their back to sleep from birth not on their side or tummy.
 - Ensure babies head and face are uncovered and their feet positioned at the bottom of the cot.
 - Using baby safe sleeping bags, remove loose bedding and pillows.
 - Removing restrictive clothing or items that could pose a choking or overheating hazard such as hooded tops/jumpers, bibs, dummy cords, necklaces or teething beads.
- 6.4.2 As per the Red Nose recommendation, Children under the age of 7 months will not be permitted to have material comforters for sleep. Examples include but are not limited to teddy bears, soft toys, or blankets.
- 6.4.3 Children from 7 months of age will be permitted to have one material comfort item for sleep, which must be reasonably proportioned in size to ensure it will not suffocate or choke a child. Sleep checks should include the re-positioning or removal of comforters as required to ensure a child's safety.
- 6.4.4 Bottle feeding in cots is not permitted.
- 6.4.5 Educators intending to provide overnight care must notify this intent in their Fee Schedule and demonstrate they will manage safe sleep arrangements for all age groups through their *Educator Residence Risk Assessment* and *Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment*.
- 6.4.6 If overnight care is not provided on a regular basis but educators are set up to do so, educators must also notify the co-ordination unit with as much notice as possible, of their intention to work outside of their usual hours of operation (overnight care) so that the co-ordination unit can ensure a responsible person is contactable at all times children are in care.

6.5 Other considerations

6.5.1 Information about safe sleep will be provided to educators upon registration and training included as a part of their ongoing professional development requirements.

6.5.2 Educators are responsible for familiarising themselves with and implementing this policy, its related procedures and the Red Nose safe sleep guidelines and recommendations for babies and children.

6.5.3 Families will be provided with information about safe sleep practice recommendations for children and infants.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 Approved Provider:

- Ensure that obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law* and *Education and Care Services National Regulations* are met.
- Ensure the *Safe Sleep and Rest for Children* policy and related procedures are in place.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, FDC educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures.
- Ensure the Nominated Supervisor and co-ordination unit staff have access to appropriate resources for the development, implementation, training and ongoing management of this policy and its related procedures.
- Ensure educators receive information and induction training to fulfil their roles effectively, including being made aware of the sleep and rest policies, their responsibilities in implementing these, and any changes that are made.
- Ensure the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by the service are met, having regard to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of the children.
- Ensure educators notify the service of their intent to provide overnight care in their fee schedule, can demonstrate how they will manage safe sleep in this circumstance and provide the co-ordination unit with reasonable notice to ensure someone is contactable whilst children are in care.
- Ensure copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers, and available for inspection.
- Consider best practice guidelines for safe sleeping environments and equipment when undertaking assessments and reassessments of FDC residences and approved FDC venues.
- Notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will affect the fees and charges and/or significantly impact the service's education and care of children or the family's ability to utilise the service.

7.2 Nominated Supervisor/Team Leader:

- Ensure they conduct themselves and the service practices in accordance with all legislative requirements and Camden FDC policy and procedures and as directed by the Approved Provider.
- Implement the *Safe Sleep and Rest for Children* policy and procedures.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that educators, staff, volunteers and students understand and follow the policy and procedures.
- Guide and mentor educators and staff in ensuring safe sleep environments and practices for children.
- Ensure procedures are tailored individually for each FDC service residence.
- Consider best practice guidelines for safe sleeping environments and equipment when undertaking assessments and reassessments of FDC residences and approved FDC venues.
- Consult with educators to ensure their *Educator Residence Risk Assessment* and their *Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment* adequately identify and manage all risks associated with safe sleep and considerations including environment, equipment and practices for each age group and individual children where required and ensure these risk assessments are signed off by the co-ordination unit.
- Ensure that communication between educators, the co-ordination unit and parents/guardians is adequate to ensure that all parties are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to legislative requirements and Camden FDC policy and procedures and they have the opportunity to provide their input into the Service.

7.3 Co-ordination unit staff:

- Ensure they conduct themselves and the service practices in accordance with all legislative requirements and Camden FDC policy and procedures and as directed by the nominated supervisor.
- Ensure the implementation of the *Safe Sleep and Rest for Children* policy and procedures.
- Monitor, guide, support and mentor educators to ensure their FDC service environments and practices are at all times compliant with legislative requirements and Camden FDC policy and procedures.
- Review the risk assessments of educators related to sleep and rest and monitor their implementation of the management strategies.
- Monitor the *Sleep Check Register* of educators and address issues of non-compliance.

7.4 Educators:

- Ensure they conduct themselves and their FDC service practices in accordance with all legislative requirements and Camden FDC policy and procedures and as directed by the nominated supervisor.

- Must be aware of and implement the *Safe Sleep and Rest for Children* policy and procedures.
- Educators are aware of and understand that in the case of a FDC education and care service the obligation of an Approved Provider is also the obligation of the FDC educator.
- Have an agreed and documented practice for the supervision of sleeping children, tailored to the unique layout and safety considerations of their FDC residence or venue, as well as the ages and developmental stages of the children in their care e.g., considerations of how they will supervise and conduct physical checks of sleeping children, whilst also maintaining adequate supervision of other children in their care. Discuss their individual plan and situation with the Nominated Supervisor or FDC Co-ordinator.
- Sleep children according to the recommendations for best practice and Camden FDC policy and procedures.
- Carry out checks of sleeping children every 10 minutes, physically check life signs and record the times and observations at the time on the *Sleep Check Register*. Retain a record of the register and submit to the co-ordination unit monthly.
- In the event of an emergency with a sleeping child activate the emergency response procedure.
- Identify and suggest potential improvements to service policy and procedures and practices.
- Consult families to gather information about individual children's needs and preferences.
- Be aware of the individual needs of children and their families and ensure these considerations are included in planning routines and programed activities including excursions/outings.
- Notify the service of their intent to provide overnight care upon registration and in their annual Fee Schedule.
- Communicate with families about the individual routines and needs for each child's sleep and rest.
- Document information relevant to each child's sleep and rest needs, routines and patterns as a part of their individual record.
- Model and promote safe sleep practices and make information available to families.
- Ensure that animals do not have access to areas where children sleep.

7.5 Families

- Be aware of the *Safe Sleep and Rest for Children* policy and procedures and implement the required practices as directed by the educator and the FDC Service.

- Keep the FDC educator informed on their child's sleeping routines and patterns.
- Provide informal updates on the previous night's sleep to assist with sleeping during the day.
- Provide specified bedding if required by the service.
- Dress child appropriately for the weather conditions and provide additional clothing.

8. INDUCTION AND ONGOING TRAINING

- 8.1 Induction and ongoing professional development will be implemented for all educators and staff, focusing on this policy and related procedures.
- 8.2 FDC educator induction will be implemented prior to registration and will include:
- A focus on educator responsibilities under the national regulations to ensure safe sleep for children.
 - Safe sleep information for educators and access to resources.
 - Assessment of the FDC environment including approved spaces for sleep/rest.
- 8.3 Review of service environments and practices will occur annually at the time of re-registration and as a need is identified.
- 8.4 Educators will be required to participate in ongoing training of safe sleep practices, and this will be included in the professional development calendar. This training will ideally be sourced through Red Nose.
- 8.5 Information about safe sleep practices will be shared with educator assistants and relief educators on induction and as relevant to the environments that they are working in, their shift responsibilities and the children in their care.

9. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

- 9.1 This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this policy every three years.
- 9.2 Families, educators, and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.
- 9.3 In accordance with Regulation 172 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

10. SOURCES AND RESOURCES

- [ACCC product safety keeping-baby-safe-a-guide-to-infant-and-nursery-products](#)
- [ACECQA Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
- [Red Nose article/safe-sleep-practices-save-lives](#)
- [Red Nose resources/education](#)
- [Red Nose Website](#)
- [Standards Australia](#)

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RELEVANT LEGISLATIVE INSTRUMENTS: *Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW)*
Education and Care Services National Regulations
National Quality Standard | Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)

RELATED POLICIES, PLANS AND PROCEDURES: Beds and linen procedure
Emergency and evacuation policy
Enrolment and orientation policy
Interactions with children policy
Monitoring and recording sleep checks and routines procedure
Overnight care procedure
Providing a child safe environment
Safe sleep environment procedure
Staffing policy
The administration of first aid policy

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR: Director Sport, Community and Activation

APPROVAL: General Manager through the Executive Leadership Group.

HISTORY:

Version	Approved by	Changes made	Date	EDMS Number
1		New	March 2017	
2			June 2019	
3	ELG	Major amendments Name changed from Sleep and rest for children and infants	14/04/2022	22/178314