

RELAXATION AND SLEEP POLICY

Mandatory – Quality Area 2

PURPOSE

This policy will provide clear guidelines for the implementation of safe rest and relaxation practices that meet the individual needs of children attending Farm Road Pre-school.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

Farm Road Pre-school is committed to:

- providing a positive and nurturing environment for all children attending the service
- recognising that children have different requirements for rest and relaxation, and being responsive to those needs to ensure that children feel safe and secure at the service
- consulting with parents/guardians about their child's individual rest and relaxation requirements/practices, and ensuring practices at the service are responsive to the values and cultural beliefs of each family
- its duty of care (refer to *Definitions*) to all children at Farm Road Pre-school, and ensuring that adequate supervision (refer to *Definitions*) is maintained while children are resting or relaxing
- complying with all legislative requirements, standards and current best practice and guidelines. (refer to *Sources*).

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Persons with Management or Control, Nominated Supervisor, Persons in day-to-day Charge, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Farm Road Pre-school.

3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Background

The *Early Years Learning Framework* (EYLF) and the *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework* (VEYLDF) include a focus on social, emotional, spiritual and physical wellbeing and health. Development Outcome 3 in both framework documents refers to a child's ability to take increasing responsibility for their own wellbeing. One of the indicators for this capacity is that children "recognise and communicate their bodily needs (for example thirst, hunger, rest, comfort, physical activity)". The EYLF suggests that to promote this, educators should:

- consider the pace of the day within the context of the community
- provide a range of active and restful experiences throughout the day, and support children to make appropriate decisions regarding participation. Examples of restful experiences include the regular practice of "Mindfulness" with the children, and the provision of quiet spaces where children can enjoy periods of peace and reflection.

Employers have a responsibility under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* to provide a safe and healthy working environment. This duty extends to others present in the workplace, including children and volunteers. .

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Australian Consumer Law and Fair-Trading Act 2012*
- *Australian Consumer Law and Fair-Trading Regulations 2012*

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

4. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

Adequate supervision: (In relation to this policy) entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times including during toileting, rest and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios at all times. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used.

Adequate supervision refers to constant, active and diligent supervision of every child at the service. Adequate supervision requires that educators are always in a position to observe each child, respond to individual needs, and immediately intervene if necessary. Variables affecting supervision levels include:

- number, age and abilities of children
- number and positioning of educators
- current activity of each child
- areas in which the children are engaged in an activity (visibility and accessibility)
- developmental profile of each child and of the group of children
- experience, knowledge and skill of each educator
- need for educators to move between areas (effective communication strategies).

Duty of care: A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury.

Relaxation/rest: A period of inactivity, solitude, calmness or tranquillity.

Sources and related policies

Sources

- Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF):
<https://www.education.gov.au/>
- a guide for businesses and legal practitioners: <https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/>
- Victoria, Children's services – occupational health and safety compliance kit:
<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/>
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF):
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

Service policies

- *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- *Hygiene Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Interactions with Children Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- taking reasonable steps to ensure the rest and relaxation needs of children at the service are met, with regard to the age of children, developmental stages and individual needs (Regulation 81(1))
- ensuring parents/guardians are consulted about appropriate rest and relaxation for their child
- protecting children from hazards and harm (Section 167)
- consulting with staff in relation to OHS issues when purchasing new equipment for the service
- ensuring adequate supervision of children at the service at all times, including during rest and relaxation
- ensuring that rooms used for rest are well ventilated

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- taking reasonable steps to ensure the rest and relaxation needs of children at the service are met with regard to the age of children, developmental stages and individual needs (Regulation 81(2))
- ensuring the educational program provides opportunities for each child to rest or engage in appropriate quiet play activities, as required
- protecting children from hazards and harm (Section 167)
- removing any hazards identified in the child's resting and relaxation environment and informing the Approved Provider, as soon as is practicable
- ensuring adequate supervision of children at the service at all times, including during rest and relaxation.

Educators and other staff are responsible for:

- providing each child with appropriate opportunities for rest and relaxation according to their needs
- developing rest and relaxation practices that are responsive to:
 - the individual needs of children at the service
 - parenting beliefs, values, practices and requirements
 - the length of time each child spends at the service
 - a child's general health and wellbeing
 - the physical environment, including room temperature, lighting, airflow and noise levels
- minimising distress or discomfort for the children in their care
- ensuring that resting and relaxation practices are not used as a behaviour guidance strategy (refer to *Interactions with Children Policy*)
- providing a range of opportunities for relaxation throughout the day
- providing input in relation to OHS issues when new equipment is purchased for the service
- removing any hazards identified in the child's rest or relaxation environment and informing the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider, as soon as is practicable
- ensuring that any hanging cords, mobiles, curtains and blinds are inaccessible to children who are resting or relaxing
- providing adequate supervision (refer to *Definitions*) of all children, including during rest and relaxation
- supervising children displaying symptoms of illness closely, especially when resting or relaxing (refer to *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*)
- documenting and communicating children's rest and relaxation times to co-workers during shift changes – e.g. to relief lunch-time carer
- providing information to families about the service's rest and relaxation practices

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- providing information on the child's enrolment form if the child requires special items while resting or relaxing e.g. a comforter or soft toy

Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures unless a lesser period is necessary because of a risk.

ATTACHMENTS – NIL**AUTHORISATION**

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Farm Road Pre-school on 3rd April 2019.

REVIEW DATE: 3RD APRIL 2021