

---

<b>Document Name:</b>	Sleep and Rest Policy
<b>Document Type:</b>	Policy
<b>Document Number:</b>	22.00
<b>Domain:</b>	Meli Kindergarten Services
<b>Regulation:</b>	National Quality Framework
<b>Regulatory Area:</b>	Quality Area 2
<b>Version:</b>	1.00
<b>Document Status:</b>	Approved
<b>Approved On:</b>	10/12/2025
<b>Effective Date:</b>	10/12/2025
<b>Review Date:</b>	10/12/2028
<b>Approver:</b>	CEO
<b>Custodian:</b>	Executive Director - Services

---

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear, evidence-based guidelines that promote the safety, health, and wellbeing of all children attending Meli Kindergarten Services during sleep, rest, and relaxation periods.

This policy ensures that practices are developmentally appropriate, culturally responsive, and consistent with the National Quality Framework (Quality Area 2), relevant legislation, and the latest recommendations from Red Nose Australia. It supports educators in creating nurturing environments where children feel secure and are able to rest and relax according to their individual needs, while maintaining high standards of supervision and safety.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all workplace participants involved in the delivery of education and care at Meli Kindergarten Services. It ensures sleep and rest practices are consistently implemented across all service environments, in accordance with legislative requirements, best practice guidelines, and the individual needs of children. Specifically, the policy covers:

- All management, staff and educators.
- Students, volunteers, and contractors
- Families
- Other individuals who participate in or are present during Meli Kindergartens programs and activities.

The policy ensures that:

- Sleep and rest practices are implemented consistently across all service environments.
- Practices comply with legislative requirements and best practice guidelines.
- The individual needs of children are respected and supported.

## 3. Background

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations, early education providers are required to have policies and procedures in place to support safe sleep and rest practices for children. These requirements are part of the broader National Quality Framework (NQF), specifically Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety, which emphasises the importance of promoting and protecting children's wellbeing.

Both the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) highlight the significance of physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing. Outcome 3 in these frameworks encourages children to take increasing responsibility for their own health and wellbeing, including recognising and communicating their bodily needs such as rest, comfort, and relaxation.

To support this, educators are expected to:

- Consider the rhythm and pace of the day in the context of the community.
- Provide a balance of active and restful experiences.
- Support children in making appropriate decisions about their participation in these experiences.

In addition, Meli Kindergartens has a duty under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 to provide a safe and healthy environment for all individuals in the workplace, including children and volunteers. This includes ensuring that sleep environments and equipment (such as cots and mattresses) meet current Australian/New Zealand Standards and are maintained in accordance with Red Nose Australia recommendations for safe sleeping practices.

This policy reflects Meli's commitment to a holistic approach to children's wellbeing, ensuring that sleep and rest practices are safe, respectful, and responsive to each child's individual needs.

#### **4. Policy**

Meli Kindergarten Services is committed to ensuring that all children have access to safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate opportunities for sleep, rest, and relaxation. This commitment is underpinned by compliance with all relevant legislation, regulations, and best practice guidelines, including the recommendations of Red Nose Australia.

In implementing this policy, Meli will:

- Ensure compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, the National Quality Standard (Quality Area 2), and other applicable standards and guidelines.
- Maintain a duty of care to all children, ensuring adequate supervision is provided during sleep, rest, and relaxation periods.
- Consult with families to understand and respect each child's individual sleep and rest needs, cultural practices, and family preferences.
- Create a safe and responsive environment that supports children's wellbeing, allowing them to rest, relax, or sleep according to their individual needs.
- Empower children to make choices about their rest and relaxation, fostering independence and self-awareness.
- Provide a physically safe environment, including appropriate sleep equipment and monitoring practices, in line with current Australian/New Zealand Standards and Red Nose Australia recommendations.
- Support educators and staff through training, supervision, and resources to implement safe sleep and rest practices effectively.

This policy reflects Meli's holistic approach to children's health and wellbeing, recognising the importance of responsive relationships, engaging experiences, and a safe and healthy environment.

#### **5. Definitions**

**Hazardous manual handling** - refers to any task that involves lifting, carrying, pushing, pulling, or moving objects or people in a way that could cause injury. This includes:

- Using a lot of force
- Working in awkward or uncomfortable positions
- Repeating the same movements often
- Handling heavy, unstable, or hard-to-hold items
- Moving children or animals

These tasks can lead to muscle strain, back injuries, or other physical problems if not done safely.

**Red Nose Australia** – refers to a nationally recognised authority on safe sleeping practices for infants and children, formerly known as SIDS and Kids. Their guidelines are evidence-based and widely adopted across early childhood services.

**Relaxation** – means activities or practices that promote a sense of calm and wellbeing in the body and mind. This may include quiet play, mindfulness, or other calming routines.

**Rest** – means a period of inactivity, solitude, or tranquility. Rest may include sleep or simply a quiet time where a child is not actively engaged in play or learning.

**SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)** – refers to the sudden and unexplained death of an infant under one year of age, typically occurring during sleep, and remaining unexplained after a thorough investigation including autopsy and review of clinical history.

**SUDI (Sudden and Unexpected Death in Infancy)** – refers to a broader term encompassing all sudden and unexpected deaths of infants, including those where the cause is not immediately apparent.

## 6. Delegations and Responsibilities

The **CEO** is responsible for:

- Ensure Meli maintains organisational compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, and all relevant standards relating to sleep and rest.
- Approve the Sleep and Rest Policy and ensure it aligns with Meli's strategic objectives and child safety commitments.
- Promote a culture of safety, accountability, and continuous improvement in relation to children's health and wellbeing.

The **Executive Director Services** is responsible for:

- Provide operational leadership to ensure sleep and rest practices are implemented consistently across all Meli Kindergarten Services.
- Oversee the development, implementation, and review of sleep and rest procedures, risk assessments, and staff training.
- Monitor compliance with sleep and rest requirements through internal audits, incident reporting, and service-level reviews.

The **Program Director and Managers** are responsible for:

- Implement and monitor safe sleep and rest practices in daily operations.
- Ensure staff and volunteers have appropriate knowledge and training in safe sleep practices, including Red Nose Australia recommendations.
- Maintain records of sleep and rest risk assessments and any incidents related to sleep and rest.
- Communicate with families about sleep and rest expectations, including cultural preferences and individual child needs.

- Ensure risk management plans are developed and implemented where family beliefs conflict with evidence-based safe sleep guidelines.

**Early Childhood Teachers, Educators and All Other Staff** are responsible for:

- Maintain supervision of sleeping and resting children including regular physical bed-side checks including visual inspection of the child's:
  - sleeping position
  - skin and lip colour
  - breathing » body temperature
  - head position
  - airway
  - head and face, ensuring they remain uncovered
- Have a good understanding of the service's policy and procedures and embed practices that support safe sleep into everyday practice.
- Identify and suggest any potential improvements to service procedures and practice
- Identify and remove potential hazards from sleep environments
- Document children's sleep and rest needs and provide information to families about their child's sleep and rest patterns.
- Consult families to gather information about individual children's needs and preferences.
- Model and promote safe sleep practices and make information available to families.
- Ensure the needs for sleep and rest of the children being educated and cared for by the service are met, considering the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of the children.
- Conduct and document visual checks of sleeping children, including breathing, skin colour, and head position.
- Ensure sleeping spaces have adequate light to allow supervision.
- Prevent the use of unsafe sleep equipment (e.g. bassinets, hammocks, prams) and remove hazards from sleep areas.
- Ensure children's clothing is appropriate during sleep times and does not have any items that are loose and could get tangled and restrict breathing (including but not limited to bibs and jewelry).
- Complete induction and ongoing training in sleep and rest procedures, including manual handling risk mitigation.

**Parents/Guardians** are responsible for:

- Provide informal updates on the previous night's sleep to assist with sleeping during the day.
- Provide written medical advice if alternative sleep positions are required.
- Collaborate with educators to support consistent sleep and rest practices between home and the service.

**Contractors, Volunteers and Students** are responsible for:

- Comply with this policy and follow staff instructions when assisting with sleep and rest routines.
- Complete basic induction or training as required.
- Report any sleep and rest risks or incidents to a staff member immediately.

## 7. Policy Application

To ensure the values and objectives of this policy are achieved, Meli Kindergarten Services will:

- Seek regular feedback from educators, staff, families, and other stakeholders on the effectiveness and clarity of sleep and rest practices.

- Monitor implementation and compliance, including the handling of incidents, complaints, and concerns related to sleep and rest.
- Investigate any sleep-related safety issues, such as breaches of supervision, equipment faults, or inconsistent practices, and take appropriate corrective action.
- Review and update the policy to reflect changes in legislation, sector guidance, research, and best practice in early childhood sleep and rest.
- Undertake scheduled policy reviews as part of the service's continuous improvement cycle, or earlier if required due to emerging risks or incidents.
- Notify all affected stakeholders of any significant changes to this policy or its procedures at least 14 days in advance, unless a shorter timeframe is necessary to manage risk.
- Feedback can be submitted via [policy@meli.org.au](mailto:policy@meli.org.au).

## 8. Legislation, Acts, Standards

This policy is informed by the following legislation, regulations, and standards:

- 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 (Vic)
- Australian/New Zealand Standard – AS/NZS 2172:2010
- Australian/New Zealand Standard – AS/NZS 2130:1998
- Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act 2012
- Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Regulations 2012

These references ensure that sleep and rest practices at Meli Kindergarten Services are safe, evidence-based, and compliant with national and state requirements.

## 9. Related Documents

### Sources

- [Red Nose Australia – Safe Sleeping Guidelines](#)
- [ACECQA – Safe Sleep and Rest Practices](#)
- [Australian/New Zealand Standards – Cots](#)
- [WorkSafe Victoria – Children's Services OHS Compliance Kit](#)
- [Kidsafe Australia](#)
- [ACCC – Product Safety Guidelines](#)
- [EYLF & VEYLDF – Approved Learning Frameworks](#)
- [Hazardous Manual Handling – Compliance Code](#)

### Related Policies

- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy
- Supervision of Children Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Hygiene Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Interactions with Children Policy
- Emergency and Evacuation Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Administration of First Aid Policy

- Staffing Policy

## 10.Document History

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections Modified	Updated By
1.00	CEO	10/12/2025	10/12/2025	New policy	Cassandra Gallop