Early Learning Centre
Sleep and Rest Policy

National Quality Standard Related Standards/Regulations

**Standard 2.1**
Health: Each child’s health and physical activity is supported and promoted.

**Element 2.1.1**
Wellbeing and comfort: Each child’s well being and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child’s need for sleep, rest and relaxation.

**Regulation 81**
Sleep and rest

**Regulation 168**
Education and care services must have policies and procedures

**Aim**

To ensure that individual children’s needs for sleep and rest are met and respected in a safe and appropriate environment and provided with the appropriate bedding and furniture, considering cultural and religious requirements as well as individual routines.

**Explanation**

Effective rest and sleep strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and safe in a child care environment. Educators must take reasonable steps to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for are met, taking into consideration the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of the children.

**Practice**

Sleep/rest times are intended to be calm, positive, comfortable times where children have an opportunity to pause and “be” in their own space. The PYP Learner Profile attribute “balanced” is central to our approach to sleep and rest.

Educators will discuss children’s sleep and rest needs with parents at the beginning of the school year, or on entry into the Centre, to determine what the child’s current needs and parent wishes are. Individual needs or requirements, such as medical or cultural needs, will be discussed. Parents are encouraged to communicate changes to their child’s need for sleep and rest throughout the year with educators, and educators will initiate these conversations as required. Educators and parents will work together to ensure the child’s needs are met.

Opportunities for sleep and rest are available to children throughout the day, according to their needs. If a child requests a rest, or if they are showing clear signs of tiredness, regardless of the time of day, educators will facilitate access to a comfortable, safe area available for them to rest/sleep. This will be done in consideration of appropriate space, staffing and supervision.

Depending on the needs of the group, a period of quiet relaxation time may be observed after lunch. This may take a multitude of forms including, but not limited to:

- Children resting on individual beds with music or stories playing
- Children reading books, doing puzzles, drawing or other “quiet” activities
- Children engaging in relaxation such as meditation or yoga
Children who need to sleep will be permitted to; however, children will not be patted to sleep, nor forced to sleep.

As the needs of the children in the group changes throughout the year, the period of rest may change, with quiet activities replacing the period of rest time.

Some general principles will be followed:

- Educators will assess each child’s circumstances and current health to determine whether higher supervision levels are required when sleeping/resting.
- Children will sleep/rest with their face uncovered.
- Educators will ensure sleep/rest environments and equipment are safe and free from hazards.
- Educators will communicate with one another to ensure supervision is maintained for those engaged in activities as well as those who are sleeping and/or resting.
- Educators will monitor sleeping and resting children and the sleep and rest environments; checking/inspecting sleeping children at regular intervals, and ensuring they are always within sight and hearing distance of sleeping and resting children so that they can assess a child’s breathing and the colour of their skin.
- Educators working across different aspects of the ELC program will communicate to ensure continuity of care.

When children do sleep during the day, parents will be advised of the timing and duration of sleep via Seesaw or a sleep chart.

Bedding, including fold out mattresses and sheets, are provided by the School. Laundering of bedding is conducted by Centre staff.

Children are welcome to bring small items that enhance their feeling of safety and security for sleep/rest times. Such items may include a soft toy, blanket, pillow or similar.