

Yarm Gwanga Safe Sleep and Rest Practices Guideline

Section 1 - Overview

(1) Yarm Gwanga recognises that as an education and care service we must meet all children's individual sleep and rest requirements. Children need a comfortable relaxing environment to enable their bodies to rest. This environment must be safe and well supervised to ensure children are safe, healthy and secure in their environment. The risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) will be minimised by following practices and guidelines set out by health authorities.

(2) For the purpose of clause 168(2)(a)(iii) of the [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#), these Guidelines are considered to be the policy and procedure.

(3) These Guidelines satisfy the following [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#) 2011: 81,103, 105, 110, 115

(4) These Guidelines satisfy the following [National Quality Standards](#):

a. Quality Area 2 Children's Health and Safety

i. Standard 2.1 Each child's health is promoted.

- Element 2.1.1 Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.

ii. Standard 2.2 Each child is protected

- Element 2.2.1 At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.

b. Quality Area 3 Physical environment

i. Standard 3.1 Design - The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service.

- Element 3.1.1 Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
- Element 3.1.2 Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.

c. Quality Area 4 Staffing Arrangements

i. Standard 4.2 Professionalism

- Element 4.2.2 Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.

Section 2 - Scope

(5) This Guideline applies to all UNE Representatives, children and families, and all visitors to the Yarm Gwanga Services.

Section 3 - Guideline

Principles to inform the Guidelines

(6) Effective sleep and rest strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and is safe at Yarm Gwanga. Yarm Gwanga has a duty of care to ensure all 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.

(7) Yarm Gwanga's safe sleeping practices are informed by [Red Nose](#), the recognised Australian authority on safe sleeping practices for infants and children.

(8) Yarm Gwanga will consult with families about their child's individual needs and be sensitive to different values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise, associated with sleep and rest. If a family's beliefs and requests are in conflict with current recommended evidence-based guidelines, Yarm Gwanga will determine if there are exceptional circumstances that allow for alternate practices. For example, with some rare medical conditions, it may be necessary for a baby to sleep on his or her stomach or side, which is contrary to [Red Nose](#) recommendations. In this scenario, Yarm Gwanga will only endorse the practice with the written support of the baby's medical practitioner. Yarm Gwanga may also consider undertaking a risk assessment and implementing risk minimisation plans for the child.

Individual children

(9) Yarm Gwanga staff will:

- a. Ensure that children who do not wish to sleep are provided with alternative quiet activities and experiences, while those children who do wish to sleep are allowed to do so, without being disrupted.
- b. Look for and respond to children's cues for sleep (e.g. yawning, rubbing eyes, disengagement from activities, crying, decreased ability to regulate behaviour and seeking comfort from adults). This may mean individual children sleeping, resting or relaxing at different times and in different ways.
- c. Avoid using settling and resting practices as a behaviour guidance strategy because children can begin to relate the sleep and rest environment, which should be calm and secure, as a disciplinary setting.
- d. Acknowledge children's emotions, feelings and fears.
- e. Understand that younger children (especially those aged 0-3 years) settle confidently when they have formed bonds with familiar carers.
- f. Discuss with parents/guardians children's sleep, rest and relaxation routines upon and throughout enrolment. Explore the feasibility of implementing home sleep, rest and relaxation routines at the service.
- g. Respect parent/guardian decisions regarding their child's sleep, rest and relaxation requirements and routines. However, outline with parents/guardians that [Red nose](#) sleeping recommendations must be consistently implemented at the service.
- h. Monitor the temperature of the rest environment and address children's clothing needs. Children will not sleep wearing clothing with hoods or cords.
- i. Seek information regarding the timing and circumstances that may affect a child's sleep, rest and relaxation routine (e.g. illness, changes or disruptions to home routines).
- j. Provide parents/guardians with information (i.e. time and quality) regarding their child's daily sleep, rest and relaxation routines. A written record of sleep will be provided daily to parents/guardians for children through Earlyworks, the Service's early childhood education management software.
- k. Involve children in decision and discussions regarding their sleep, rest and relaxation routines.
- l. Respect each child's rhythm and pace. Respectful practice involves slowing down, adjusting to individual needs and embedding rituals (e.g. singing, story time, meditation) that cue sleep or rest. Devise regular, consistent and relaxing rituals. Consider and plan for transitions that prepare children for sleep, rest or relaxation.

- m. Talk with children about the importance of sleep, rest and relaxation for their growing bodies.
- n. Outline this procedure and [Red Nose](#) safe sleeping guidelines when inducting new permanent and casual staff.

Safe Resting Practices for Babies (Birth to 24 months)

(10) Yarm Gwanga staff will:

- a. Apply an alternative resting practice if a medical condition exists that prevents a child from being placed on their back. An instruction to provide the alternative practice will only be applied under written direction from the child's registered medical practitioner.
- b. Place babies on their back to sleep when first being settled. Once a baby has been observed to repeatedly roll from back to front and back again on their own, they can be left to find their own preferred sleep or rest position (this is usually around 5–6 months of age). Babies aged younger than 5–6 months, and who have not been observed to repeatedly roll from back to front and back again on their own, will be re-positioned onto their back when they roll onto their front or side.
- c. Sleep babies with their head and face uncovered when they are put down to sleep, ensuring:
 - i. Their feet are positioned at the bottom of the cot.
 - ii. Linen is tucked in securely / not loose. Alternatively, an infant can be dressed in a safe baby sleeping bag.
 - iii. All head coverings and jewellery are removed, except for small stud or sleeper earrings.
 - iv. There are no doonas, loose bedding or fabric, pillows, lamb's wool, bumpers or soft toys in the cot/bed.
 - v. The use of sleeping bags with a fitted neck and armholes (but no hood) as an alternative option to bed linen.
- d. Discontinue the practice of wrapping/swaddling a baby when a baby shows signs of rolling. Refer to [Red Nose](#) Safe wrapping. If a baby is wrapped when sleeping, staff will consider the baby's stage of development. Staff will leave a baby's arms free once the startle reflex disappears, at around three months of age, and discontinue the use of a wrap when the baby can roll from back to tummy to back again (usually at four to six months of age). Staff will use only lightweight wraps such as cotton or muslin.
- e. Never provide an infant with a bottle or drink whilst laying on a bed, or as a sleep aid. When requested by a parent/guardian, a dummy can be offered during sleep routines. If a dummy falls out of a baby's mouth during sleep, it should not be re-inserted. Dummies will be provided but they will not be attached to chains.
- f. Never use a pillow, cushion or beanbag as a mattress.
- g. Ensure calm, relaxing music is played at rest time.
- h. Ensure infants are dressed appropriately for the room temperature.
- i. Ensure mattresses are covered by linen when infants are resting or sleeping.
- j. Ensure compliance with all [Red Nose](#) safe sleeping guidelines, and -
 - i. Display [Red Nose](#) safe sleeping guidelines in all infant sleep environments.
 - ii. Outline [Red Nose](#) sleeping recommendations with parents/guardians upon and throughout enrolment. [Red Nose](#) safe sleeping guidelines will be consistently implemented.
 - iii. Acknowledge that the [Red Nose](#) safe sleeping guidelines may be inconsistent with some home routines. With sensitivity, educators will outline with parents/guardians that the [Red Nose](#) safe sleeping guidelines cannot be compromised unless the baby has a medical condition and the sleeping practice is under the written recommendation of the child's medical practitioner.

Safe Resting Practices for Toddlers (24 months to 3 years)

(11) Yarm Gwanga staff will:

- a. Place toddlers on their back to rest, unless otherwise directed in writing by the child's medical practitioner.

- b. Allow toddlers to find their own sleeping position, but will always lay them on their back when first placing them to rest.
- c. Not allow a toddler's face to be covered with bed linen when they are sleeping.
- d. Offer quiet experiences to those toddlers who do not fall asleep.
- e. Ensure calm relaxing music is played at rest time.

Safe Resting Practices for Preschool Children (3 to 5 years)

(12) Yarm Gwanga staff will:

- a. Place preschool children on their back to rest. If they turn over during their sleep, allow them to find their own sleeping position but always ask them to lay on their back when first placing them to rest.
- b. Not allow a preschooler's face to be covered with bed linen when they are sleeping.
- c. Use light bedding as the preferred option.
- d. Offer quiet experiences to preschoolers who do not fall asleep.
- e. Ensure calm, relaxing music is played at rest time.
- f. Be flexible and responsive to individual sleep, rest and relaxation needs. For example, older children may prefer to rest on cushions or relax by participating in quiet experiences such as puzzles or drawing.

Supervision of Resting Children

(13) Yarm Gwanga staff will:

- a. Ensure all children who are resting are supervised by educators.
- b. Ensure all children who have fallen asleep in the service are monitored regularly with specific attention to breathing patterns. All babies (0-1 years) will be checked at regular intervals. Complete and document a visual safety check (Sleep room record) every 10 minutes. Visual check of infant sleep status i.e. breathing and skin colour.
- c. Ensure baby monitors are used in both cot rooms, but only for additional assistance.
- d. Ensure windows to cot rooms are clean and free from posters etc to allow for educators to view children at all times.
- e. Identify the level of risk for individual children when determining sleep monitoring needs. For example, consider the age of the child, medical conditions and/or sleep issues.
- f. Dress children appropriately to support sleep, rest or relaxation.

Environment

(14) Yarm Gwanga will provide a safe environment that meets individual children's needs for sleep and rest by:

- a. Creating a responsive and safe sleep, rest and relaxation environment.
- b. Providing places within the indoor and outdoor environment, where children are able to retreat from the busyness of the day.
- c. Creating a peaceful and comfortable sleep environment. This means providing quiet, well-ventilated and comfortable sleeping spaces.
- d. Acknowledging that a sleep environment may be created outdoors. A detailed risk assessment should be completed to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children and educators. For example, consideration should be given to temperature extremes, sun safety, manual handling, implementing Rednose safe sleeping guidelines etc.
- e. Placing cots, beds, mats and stretchers away from electrical cords and power points.

- f. Ensuring beds, mats or stretchers are covered by linen when children are resting.
- g. Ensuring ben linen, cots, beds, mats and stretchers are well maintained, cleaned between the use of different children, and stored in a hygienic manner.
- h. Ensuring all cots meet the Australian Standard for Cots (AS 2172 / AS/NZS 2195) and labelled accordingly. Please note, bassinets, hammocks and prams/strollers do not carry safety codes for sleep, and must not be used for ongoing sleep routines.
- i. Ensuring cots are well maintained and do not have any gaps an infant can get caught in. There should not be any more than a 25mm gap between the mattress and the cot sides and ends. Cot mattresses must meet Australian Standards AS/NZS 8811.1:2013 and should be in good condition, clean, firm, flat and must fit the cot base with no more than a 20mm gap between the mattress and the sides of the cot.
- j. Ensuring mattress are the right size for the cot, be firm, clean, flat (not tilted or elevated) and in a good condition.
- k. Placing cots/beds away from hanging cords such as blinds, curtains, electrical appliances or decorative mobiles.
- l. Placing cots/beds away from heaters, electrical appliances and power points.

Communicating with Families

(15) Rest strategies and practices are outlined on the Yarm Gwanga [website](#). Information regarding [Red Nose](#) Safe Sleeping Practices will be available to families on the Yarm Gwanga website as well as displayed periodically on noticeboards, in newsletters, posters and brochures.

Staff Training

(16) Yarm Gwanga staff and educators will receive information and training to fulfill their roles effectively, including being made aware of the sleep and rest policies, their responsibilities in implementing these, and any changes that are made over time. Yarm Gwanga staff have access to information regarding current best practice through access to [Red Nose](#) safe sleeping guidelines.

Authority and Compliance

(17) The Guideline Administrator, Director UNE Life, makes these Guidelines.

(18) UNE Representatives must observe these Guidelines in relation to University matters.

(19) These Guidelines operate as and from the Effective Date.

(20) Previous Policies/Procedures/Guidelines relating to safe sleeping and rest practices at the Yarm Gwanga Services are replaced and have no further operation from the Effective Date of this new Guideline.

Section 4 - Definition

For the purposes of this Guideline the following definitions apply:

(21) Red Nose - <https://rednose.com.au/> safe sleeping guidelines authority

(22) Visitor includes but is not limited to, students on practical placements, volunteers, community members and persons conducting inspections/audits.

(23) Yarm Gwanga refers to both the Yarm Gwanga Preschool & Early Education Centre as well as Yarm Gwanga Vacation Care.

Status and Details

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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"UNE Representative" - Means a University employee (casual, fixed term and permanent), contractor, agent, appointee, UNE Council member, adjunct, visiting academic and any other person engaged by the University to undertake some activity for or on behalf of the University. It includes corporations and other bodies falling into one or more of these categories.

"Effective Date" - means the Rule/Policy takes effect on the day on which it is published, or such later day as may be specified in the policy document.