

## Possums case example

The *Possums* is a long day care service caters for 21 children aged between 3 and 5 years. The service operating hours are from 7am to 6pm daily. Parents are asked to indicate daily within the sign-in book if they would like their child to sleep. Rest time is included within the daily schedule as occurring between 12 noon and 2pm.

On the day of observation rest time commences at 11:53 am. At this time all children are instructed to move directly from lunch onto their beds, which have been set up by educators. The educator puts on a music cd, the lights are turned off, and some children are offered a soft toy to rest with. Children are instructed to rest quietly and some children are instructed to place their “*belly on bed*” and “*heads down*”. No other activities are permitted. The educators, both teacher and assistant, do cleaning and paperwork at a table in the room. At 12:13 the teacher leaves the room for her lunch break and the assistant is left in the room to supervise the children. Some children start to talk and move around on their beds, and are moved by the assistant to different places in the room. One child is moved to the baby room to rest as he is unable to lie quietly. The assistant continues to clean the room around the children. At 12:43 the teacher returns and the assistant leaves for her lunch break. At 12:57 children who have demonstrated “*good resting*” are given a book selected by the teacher and are permitted to read the book on their bed. The remaining children have to wait until they have demonstrated “*good resting*” before they receive their book. At 1:30 the lights in the room are turned on and children are asked to pack away their beds. Any children still asleep are woken at this time. Eight of the 21 children sleep during the rest time.

Total rest time: 1hr 37 minutes

## Questions for reflection

- How does this scenario map onto the NQS Quality Areas and Elements?
- How does this scenario align or not align with current research evidence on sleep for children aged 3 – 5 years?
- What questions does it raise?
- What could this service do to improve their current practice?