

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Staff:child ratios

Staffing arrangements must meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety.

STAFFING POLICY (updated May 2018 for new outdoor premises)

Policy statement

As a minimum, we provide a staffing ratio in line with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that children have sufficient individual attention and to guarantee care and education of a high quality. Due to the outdoor nature of our provision, we aim to have a minimum of three staff present at all times that children are in our care.

If the legal ratio only requires two qualified staff members to be present 'hands on' with the children, the third staff member is available as needed, e.g. to support if there is a medical or toileting accident, and at arrival and pick up times, so that one member of staff can liaise with parents and guard the gate. Our staff are appropriately qualified and we carry out checks for enhanced criminal records and barred list checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service in accordance with statutory requirements.

Procedures

For childcare on non-domestic premises nurseries and pre-schools:

To meet this aim we use the following ratios of adult to children, as a minimum:

- Children aged two years: 1 adult : 4 children:
 - at least one member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification; and
 - at least half of all other staff hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.
- Children aged three years and over: 1 adult : 8 children:
 - at least one member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification; and
 - at least half of all other staff hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.
- We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements where a Qualified Teacher, Early Years Professional or other suitable level 6 qualified person is working directly with children aged three and over between the hours of 8am and 4pm as follows:
 - there is at least one member of staff for every 13 children; and
 - at least one other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
- The number of children for each key person takes into account the individual needs of the children and the capacity of the individual key person to manage their cohort.
- We only include those aged 17 years or older within our ratios. Where they are competent and responsible, we may include students on long-term placements and regular volunteers.
- Although only a minimum of two staff/adults are legally required to be on duty at any one time; one of whom is either our leader or deputy, we aim to have a minimum of three, particularly at drop off and pick up times.
- Our leader deploys our staff, students and volunteers to give adequate supervision of indoor and outdoor areas, ensuring that children are usually within sight and hearing of staff, and always within sight or hearing of staff at all times.

- All staff are deployed according to the needs of the setting and the children attending.
- Our staff, students and volunteers inform their colleagues if they have to leave their area and tell colleagues where they are going.
- Our staff, students and volunteers focus their attention on children at all times and do not spend time in social conversation with colleagues while they are working with children.
- We assign each child a key person to help the child become familiar with the setting from the outset and to ensure that each child has a named member of staff with whom to form a relationship. The key person plans with parents for the child's well-being and development in the setting. The key person meets regularly with the family for discussion and consultation on their child's progress and offers support in guiding their development at home.
- We hold regular staff meetings to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss children's progress, their achievements and any difficulties that may arise from time to time.

Further guidance

Useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications include:

- Employee Handbook (2012)
- Recruiting Early Years Staff (2016)
- People Management in the Early Years (2016)