**27 Staffing ratios**

**Policy statement**

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. 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**

* In settings on the early years register, the manager must hold an approved level 3 qualification or above and at least half of all other staff must hold at least an approved level 2 qualification.
* The manager should have at least two years’ experience of working in an early years setting, or have at least two years’ other suitable experience. The provider must ensure there is a named deputy who, in their judgement, is capable and qualified to take charge in the manager’s absence.
* Staffing arrangements must meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. Providers must ensure that children are adequately supervised, including whilst eating, and decide how to deploy staff to ensure children’s needs are met.
* Children must usually be within sight and hearing of staff and always within sight or hearing. Whilst eating, children must be within sight and hearing of a member of staff.
* Only those aged 17 or over may be included in ratios if they are suitable, (and staff under 17 should be supervised at all times).
* Suitable students on long term placements and volunteers (aged 17 or over) and staff working as apprentices in early education (aged 16 or over) may be included in the ratios if the provider is satisfied that they are competent and responsible.
* The ratio and qualification requirements below apply to the total number of staff available to work directly with children.
* Exceptionally, and where the quality of care and safety and security of children is maintained, changes to the ratios may be made.
* Our director 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.
* 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.

**Ratios**

**For children aged two:**

**•** there must be at least one member of staff for every five children

• at least one member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification

• at least half of all other staff must hold an approved level 2 qualification

**For children aged three and over in registered early years provision where a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another approved level 6 qualification, is working directly with the children:**

**•** there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children

• at least one other member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification

**For children aged three and over at any time in registered early years provision when a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another approved level 6 qualification is not working directly with the children:**

**•** there must be at least one member of staff for every eight children

• at least one member of staff must hold an approved level 3 qualification

• at least half of all other staff must hold an approved level 2 qualification

Staff-to-child ratios apply to the whole provision, not each room.

There are some exceptions where ratios can be exceeded as long as the quality of care and the safety and security of the children is maintained.