

STAFFING RATIOS / QUALIFICATIONS

1 adult : 3 for children aged 0 – 2 years.

1 adult : 4 for children aged 2 – 3 years.

1 adult : 8 for children aged 3 – 11 years.

Each facility must have staff ratios appropriate to the ages of children attending. In a mixed age group the staff / child ratio calculator may provide an aid in working out staffing requirements. The children of helpers within the group must be included in the staff / child ratio.

Students on short-term placement must not be included in the staff ratio. However students on long-term placements who are considered competent and have police and social services clearance may be counted in the ratio. Regular staff members and volunteers must be 17 or over.

All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that a minimum of 2 staff are on duty at all times. Should a member of staff be ill, in the first instance a bank staff who has relevant clearances will be asked to fill in. Failing that a voluntary parent / carer helper, who unless they possess the appropriate clearances will NOT be left alone with the children. Failing obtaining minimum staffing levels the session will be cancelled.

Ofsted must be informed of any volunteer who helps for more than 1 in 5 sessions over a period of 3 months.

A minimum of half the staff on duty must hold a relevant qualification in childcare, appropriate to the age range of the children. Where the qualifications of staff do not meet requirements, then staff must take all reasonable steps to undertake appropriate training at the earliest opportunity. Records of the names, addresses and qualifications of all staff are kept on site.

Volunteers and students must always be supervised by a regular member of staff.

A higher staff ratio may be necessary when children with special needs attend or when on an outing.

Staff must:

Like young children and have proven experience of dealing with them, be aware of the possible long-term commitment this requires and be prepared to make such a commitment.

Have a practical understanding of the needs and behaviour – not only the physical needs, but also emotional, social and intellectual needs of young children, and be able to set appropriate boundaries and targets for them.

Be able to create a warm, caring, relaxed atmosphere and have the ability to provide a stimulating environment that fosters the overall development of the children in their care.

Have a commitment to equality of opportunity and not discriminate against children and their families on the grounds of ethnic origin, culture or religion, gender, disability, or marital status and sexual orientation of parents / carers.

Be physically and emotionally able to cope with the care of young children. Be able to provide a good standard of hygiene and a safe environment. Have the basic literacy skills to keep appropriate records. Have a past history, including relevant criminal records, which does not indicate they are unfit to care for young children.

Be able to respect the special relationship between child and parents / carer, be aware of the parent / carer's role in the family and share information on a regular planned basis. Be able to keep confidence about information concerning the life of families entrusted to that person.

Be able to develop good relations with other staff members and adhere to the Staff Protocol.

Be able to fulfil their job descriptions fully and competently.