

## RATIO POLICY

### **AIMS**

This policy is intended to set out values, principles and policies underlining the Projects approach to staff:child ratios and qualification requirements.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The organisation will take responsibility for ensuring that all services operate within the minimum staff:child ratio, in compliance with the *Department for Education "Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)"* which require providers to offer adequate staffing arrangements to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety.

### **REQUIREMENTS**

The minimum staff:child ratios whilst in the childcare setting and to escort children on school pickups are:

- For children aged under 2 years old at least 1 member of staff to every 3 children 1:3
- For children aged 2 years old at least 1 member of staff to every 4 children 1:4
- For children aged 3 years and over at least 1 member of staff to every 8 children 1:8

During trips and outings the manager or deputy may decide that minimum staff:child ratio levels can be increased to:

- For children under 3 years old at least 1 member of staff for every 3 children 1:3
- For children over 3 years old at least 1 member of staff for every 6 children 1:6

- Ratios and supervision levels will vary depending on the number of children in the setting and the needs or requirements of the children in the group. Considerations and decisions will be made if a child requires 1:1 to meet their individual need.
- A manager or deputy will make the decision as to whether to increase the staffing levels for trips and outings with babies and children under the age of 2 years in order to maintain safety.
- Only those aged 17 years old or over will be included in the staff:child ratios. Staff under the age of 17 years old should be supervised at all times.

- In some cases, we may include students on long term placements and apprentices (aged 17 years and over) in our own staff:child ratios. This will be at the discretion of the Childcare Manager and will only occur after a full assessment in all aspects of the job role are conducted and the Childcare Manager is satisfied that the student or apprentice is competent and responsible. (see also 1.4 student policy).
- The Childcare Manager must hold at least a full and relevant level 3 qualification and should have at least 2 years' experience of working in an Early years setting.
- At least one member of staff included in the staff:child ratio must hold a full and relevant Level 3 qualification.
- At least half of all other staff included in the staff:child ratio must hold a full and relevant Level 2 qualification.
- At least one person who has a current Paediatric First Aid certificate must be on the premises and available at all times. All newly qualified entrants to the early years workforce who have completed a level 2 and/or level 3 qualification on or after 30 June 2016, must also have either a full Paediatric First Aid or an emergency Paediatric First Aid certificate within three months of starting work in order to be included in the required staff:child ratios at level 2 or level 3.
- Unqualified workers will not escort children on school pickups unsupervised.
- A Childcare worker should never be left to work or play with a large group of children alone. Sometimes it may be appropriate or necessary for an adult to have one-to-one contact with a child, or to work or play with a small group of children on their own. This could happen for example if a child becomes ill or asks to speak to a trusted adult alone, or if work involves one-to-one mentoring or small group work, but this should be risk assessed by the manager or deputy to consider the needs of children and the suitability of the staff. If staff are not within sight or sound of another staff member then walkie talkies must be used for communication.
- The Childcare Manager will be supernumery whenever possible. In a situation where they are working in the service and are counted in ratio, a suitably qualified member of Senior staff will be supernumery.
- Staff who are employed for cleaning, cooking and administration are not counted in the staff:child ratio.
- It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer to ensure that no member of staff, volunteer, student, trainee or apprentice will be permitted to work directly with



children until an up to date enhanced DBS certificate is presented, or viewed through the DBS update service **NO EXCEPTIONS**. The project requires DBS certificates to be updated every three years.

### **LONE WORKING UNEXPECTEDLY**

It is best practice for there to be more than one adult present when working or volunteering with children and young people. There may be some situations where staff must work alone with children and young people unexpectedly. If this happens, there are things which staff must do to keep as safe as possible.

- Staff must make sure they are somewhere with the child or children where other people can see and hear them.
- Staff must tell another adult that they are alone with a child or children.
- Staff must make a record as soon as possible afterwards of why they were unexpectedly alone with a child or children and what happened.
- Staff must tell their manager or supervisor and the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy.

This Policy will be reviewed every 3 years or if there is a change to EYFS.