

# Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Staff:Child ratios

## Staffing & Ratios

### Policy statement

At Ready Steady Grow Pre-School we ensure that staffing levels always meet or exceed the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS 2024) to guarantee children's safety, wellbeing and high-quality education.

We are committed to ensuring that:

- children receive consistent, high-quality interactions and supervision
- staff are appropriately vetted, qualified and experienced
- deployment supports children's learning, emotional security and safeguarding
- staffing arrangements are responsive to the needs, vulnerabilities and changing attendance patterns of the setting

All staff undergo enhanced DBS checks (including barred list checks) and suitability processes in line with safer recruitment legislation, EYFS 2024, and Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP) procedures.

### Procedures

#### **1. Statutory Ratios and Qualifications**

We adhere to and where possible exceed the EYFS statutory minimum ratios:

##### **Children aged 2 years**

- 1 adult : 5 children
- At least one Level 3 practitioner must be present
- At least 50% of remaining staff must hold a full and relevant Level 2

##### **Children aged 3 years and over**

- 1 adult : 8 children
- At least one Level 3 practitioner must be present
- At least 50% of remaining staff must hold a full and relevant Level 2

##### **Enhanced Ratio Option (Qualified Teacher/EYP/Level 6)**

Where a QTS, EYP or Level 6 early years specialist works directly with children aged 3+, ratios may be:

- 1 adult : 13 children, and
- One other practitioner must be Level 3 or above

We will only operate this ratio where we are confident it supports safe, high-quality education, and does not compromise supervision, behaviour management or curriculum delivery.

## Deployment and Supervision

We ensure that staffing is planned, risk-assessed and flexible:

- A minimum of TWO staff are present at all times.
- At least one staff member on duty is the Manager, Deputy, or suitably trained senior practitioner.
- Children are usually within sight and hearing, and always within sight OR hearing, in line with EYFS 2024 and BSCP safety expectations.
- Staff are deployed to ensure effective supervision indoors and outdoors, taking into account:
  - children's ages and needs
  - SEND requirements
  - behaviour, vulnerabilities or safeguarding needs
  - environmental risk assessments
  - toileting, personal care, small group work, and continuous provision
- Staff must never leave an area without informing colleagues and ensuring ratios and supervision remain safe.
- Staff must focus on children and avoid unnecessary social conversation or personal tasks while supervising children.

We do not allow the use of mobile phones or unauthorised devices in childcare areas.

## **Counting Staff Within Ratios**

We only include people in ratios when:

### **Staff (aged 17+)**

- They are employed by us
- They are competent, responsible, and fully inducted
- They meet suitability and DBS requirements
- They understand safeguarding responsibilities and behaviour expectations

### **Apprentices (16+)**

- May be included only when fully competent and demonstrated through observation and supervision
- Must always be supervised and never left in sole charge

### **Students on Placement / Volunteers (17+)**

- May be counted in ratios only for long-term placements where they are assessed as competent
- Under-17s cannot be included in ratios

## **Key Person Capacity**

- Allocation of children to key persons takes into account their experience, workload, confidence, and the needs/VIG of children.
- Key persons must have sufficient time to:
  - plan individually
  - meet with families
  - complete observations and monitoring
  - support transitions

- No key person will be assigned more children than they can safely and effectively support.

### **Staff Meetings and Planning**

We hold regular staff meetings to:

- plan the curriculum
- discuss children's progress and next steps
- identify children needing additional support (SEND, safeguarding, behaviour, speech & language)
- reflect on practice and deployment
- review risk assessments and safeguarding issues

Additional briefings may be held daily to share crucial information about changes in attendance, medical needs, behaviour concerns or vulnerabilities.

### **Safeguarding and Suitability**

- All staff, apprentices and volunteers must complete a full induction and safeguarding briefing before working with children.
- Staff must immediately report concerns about a child, adult or staff member in line with the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and BSCP procedures.
- Staff must declare any changes to their suitability or household circumstances.
- Staff breaks, sickness, absence and supervision are planned to maintain safe ratios at all times.

### **Contingency Planning**

We maintain a staffing contingency plan to ensure ratios are never compromised. This includes:

- access to bank staff
- additional qualified staff scheduled during busy periods
- reallocation of roles to ensure teaching and safeguarding remain strong

Sessions will be adjusted or closed if necessary to maintain safe ratios, safeguarding, and high-quality provision.

### **Further Information**

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Ofsted Early Years Inspection Framework (2025)
- London Borough of Bromley / BSCP Safeguarding Procedures
- Safer Recruitment Guidance (DfE 2023)