

This document is being distributed pursuant to “Charlie’s Law,” R.S. 17:407.41, and applies to all early learning centers and prekindergarten programs.

Child Safety and Welfare Minimum Standards

1. There shall be a minimum of two staff members present at any facility when more than four children are present, except under an extenuating circumstance that temporarily prevents compliance with this Paragraph.
2. The child-to-staff ratios shall not exceed the following:
 - a. Infants and under one year - 5 to 1
 - b. One year - 7 to 1
 - c. Two years - 10 to 1
 - d. Three years - 13 to 1
 - e. Four years - 15 to 1
 - f. Five years - 19 to 1
3. An average of the child-to-staff ratios may be applied to mixed age groups of children only for groups that include no children under the age of two.
4. When a mixed age group includes children younger than age two, the age of the youngest child determines the child-to-staff ratio for the group.
5. When the nature of a child with special healthcare needs or the number of children with special healthcare needs warrants added care, the center shall add sufficient staff as necessary.
6. Only staff members directly providing care, supervision, or guidance to children shall be counted in the child-to-staff ratio. The same staff members shall not be used to meet the ratio requirements for two different groups of children at the same time.
7. Sufficient staffing needed to satisfy child-to-staff ratios shall be present on the premises during rest time and available to assist as needed. Children ages one and older may be grouped together at rest time with one staff member in each room supervising the resting children.
8. Information regarding required child-to-staff ratios and a phone number to file complaints regarding supervision with the Department of Education shall be posted in each classroom in a location that is visible to parents.
9. Children shall be supervised at all times including on the playground, on field trips, and on nonvehicular excursions.
10. Children shall not be left alone in any room, outdoors, or in vehicles, even momentarily, without staff present.
 - a. The provisions of this Paragraph shall not apply to restroom use as provided in this Section, if a child is being provided services by therapeutic professionals, or if a child is in the custody of a parent or legal guardian.
11. A staff person shall be assigned to supervise specific children whose names and whereabouts the staff person shall know and with whom the staff person shall be physically present. Staff shall be able to state how many children are in their care at all times.
12. A child who is developmentally able may be permitted to use the restroom independently if a staff member is in proximity to and can see the child to ensure immediate intervention to safeguard a child from harm or to assist with an accident while in the restroom.
 - a. An individual who is not a staff member may not enter the restroom area while in use by any child other than his own child.
13. A child age five and older may be permitted to go to and return from the restroom without staff.
14. If a prekindergarten program or early learning center is part of a school with children in kindergarten or older, staff shall ensure that the children enrolled in the prekindergarten program or early learning center are not unsupervised in the restroom at the same time as any older children who are using the restroom. For any facility constructed after January 1, 2026, there shall be designated separate restrooms for the children enrolled in the prekindergarten program or early learning center.
15. Children shall be changed and cleaned immediately following a toileting accident.

LDOE Public School Complaint Line	LDOE Early Childhood Complaint Line	*School Name* Complaint Line
1.877.453.2721	225.342.9905	