

Adult to child supervision ratios

Adult to child ratios when supervising or working with children

It is important that all Stiklings activities have sufficient adult staff and volunteers in place to ensure the safety of children – and that these adults are suitable to undertake these tasks. They have been safely recruited, including the relevant safeguarding checks (DBS), and properly trained, including safeguarding training.

Parents and carers as supervisors

Although Stiklings encourages parents/carers to accompany children to activities, we do not recommend those planning or providing activities include carers in supervision calculations, unless the carers/parents are acting in a formal volunteering or other capacity during the activity. In these circumstances, this should mean that those parents/carers meet all appropriate requirements in terms of:

- ★ Appropriate checks.
- ★ Clarity about their role.
- ★ Who has overall responsibility for the group.
- ★ What is acceptable practice

For unattended children the level of supervision provided needs to be appropriate to the needs of the children involved in the activity. This could vary depending on:

- ★ Age (see table below)
- ★ Gender (wherever possible mixed gender groups should be reflected in the adult supervisors)
- ★ Ethnicity (wherever possible mixed ethnic groups should be reflected in the adult supervisors)
- ★ Behaviour
- ★ Abilities within your group/any medical or other special needs
- ★ Nature and length of activities
- ★ Requirements of location
- ★ Additional supervision/support needs of some or all participants (for example due to disability or age)
- ★ Competence/experience of participants for the specific activity
- ★ Nature of activity (for example aerials and fire sessions may require higher levels of supervision than circus workshops)
- ★ Nature of the venue - whether closed (e.g. a sports hall) or open (e.g. parkland); private and exclusive to the group or open and accessible to the public); and what types of equipment children may have access to.

Whatever the recommended ratio of adults to participants is, a minimum of two adults should be present. This ensures at least basic cover in the event of something impacting on the availability of one of the adults during the activity (e.g. in the event of one participant requiring the attention of an adult during the activity following an accident).

The recommended minimum ratios of adults to children are shown in the table below. These are based on Ofsted¹ EYFS guidelines for organised children's activities and do not necessarily account for the supervision of children with additional needs:

Supervising Adults (minimum)	Age of Children	Maximum Number of Children	Ratio
2	0-2 years	6	1:3
2	2-3 years	8	1:4
2	3-8 years	12	1:6
2	8-12 years	16	1:8
2	13-18 years	20	1:10

Examples:

- ★ Example 1: A pre-school has 32 children in attendance (15 aged 2-3 years and 17 aged 3-5 years). The minimum number of staff required is 7.
- ★ Example 2: A youth club has 15 members aged 13-17 years. The minimum number of staff required is 2.
- ★ Example 3: A Sunday School has 24 children in attendance (5 aged 2-3 years, 7 aged 3-8 years and 12 aged over 8 years). The minimum number of staff required is 6.
- ★ Example 4: The mother and toddlers group has 18 children in attendance (12 aged 0-2 years and 6 aged 2-3 years). The minimum number of staff required would be 5.

¹Ofsted is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills in the UK. <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/about-us>
NSPCC recommendations - www.nspcc.org.uk
Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Registration of School Age Services) Regulations 2018.