



Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards Teacher-Child Ratios within Group Size

Criteria 10.4 (Required)

Written procedures address the maintenance of developmentally appropriate teaching staff-child ratios within group size to facilitate adult-child interaction and constructive activity among children. Teaching staff-child ratios within group size (see Table 1: Teacher-Child Ratios within Group Size) are maintained during all hours of operation, including:

- Indoor time,
- Outdoor time, and
- During transportation and field trips (when transporting children, the teaching staff-child ratio is used to guide the adult-child ratio)

Groups of children may be limited to one age or may include multiple ages. (A group or classroom consists of children assigned to a teacher or a team of teaching staff for most of the day and who occupy an individual classroom or well-defined space that prevents intermingling of children from different groups within a larger room or area.)

Table 1: Teacher-Child Ratios within Group Size

Teacher-Child Ratios within Group Size (IQPPS Criteria 10.4)						
Age Category	Age Range	Class Size and Teacher to Child Ratio				
		12	14	16	18	20
Preschool	30 to 48 months (2 ½ to 4 years)	1:6	1:7	1:8	1:9	
	48 to 60 months (4 to 5 years)			1:8	1:9	1:10
	60 months to Kindergarten Enrollment (5 years to Kindergarten Enrollment)			1:8	1:9	1:10

- The IQPPS 10.4 criterion would be addressed through policies and observation of maintenance of child: staff ratios and group size.
- The maintenance of developmentally appropriate child: staff ratios and group size is based on the development and learning of children, with consideration of each child’s individual abilities, needs, and cultural background.
- If the predominance of children are 3 years old, the maximum class size is reduced to 18.
- The ratio remains in compliance when a staff member leaves the class without being replaced by a substitute for no more than five minutes (e.g., to get craft supplies, talk in the hall to a parent, go to the bathroom).
- If teaching staff are absent for more than five minutes but less than 20 minutes, the ratio remains in compliance when another adult who is not part of the teaching staff substitutes for the staff member (e.g., to take children to the bathroom, to administer first aid, to take a personal break).
- Nap time: When two or more adults must be present during nap time, at least one of the adults present must be a teacher or assistant teacher-teacher aide (for example, a group of 11 to 20 preschoolers would require at least two people, one of whom is a teacher or assistant teacher-teacher aide, to be present to meet the ratio). Additional adults may be staff members or other adults who function in a different role.
- Special Events: During Special events (such as assemblies, field trips), if children remain in their own classes and the teaching team that is responsible for the class remains with the class, the class is not intermingling. The class must maintain the required teaching staff-child ratios within group size maximums. When intermingling occurs with one or more other classes during the special event, then it is considered as a single combined class. The single combined class must maintain the required teaching staff-child ratios within group size maximums.

Iowa Department of Education guidance should be viewed as advisory unless it's specifically authorized by state statute, according to Iowa Code section 256.9A as enacted by Senate File 475. This does not apply to administrative rules, declaratory orders, or materials required by federal law or courts.