

Preschool Ratio and Class Size Maximum by Program Standards

Introduction

The Iowa Department of Education supports quality learning opportunities and environments for young children by developing, implementing and monitoring preschool programs and services. Iowa preschool programs operating Statewide Voluntary Preschool Programs (SWVPP), Shared Visions Preschool and classrooms providing early childhood special education (ECSE) services must successfully implement one of three approved preschool program standards. Ratios and class size maximums aligned to each of the three preschool program standards are outlined below.

Head Start Program Performance Standards

1302.21 Center-based option

(3) A class that serves a majority of children who are three years old must have no more than 17 children with a teacher and teaching assistant or two teachers. A double session class that serves a majority of children who are three years old must have no more than 15 children with a teacher and teaching assistant or two teachers.

(4) A class that serves a majority of children who are four and five years old must have no more than 20 children with a teacher and a teaching assistant or two teachers. A double session class that serves a majority of children who are four and five years old must have no more than 17 children with a teacher and a teaching assistant or two teachers.

Age Category	Teacher Child Ratio	Maximum Class Size
3 - year old	2:17	17 Note: No more than 15 children enrolled in any double class
4 and 5 - year old	2:20	20 Note: No more than 17 children enrolled in any double class.

Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards

Standard 9: Leadership and Management - Criterion 9.9R

The program has written procedures addressing the maintenance of developmentally appropriate staff-child ratios within group size to facilitate adult-child interaction and constructive activities among children. Staff-child ratios within group size are maintained during all hours of operation, including:

- a. indoor time
- b. outdoor time
- c. field trips which require at least one adult above the standard classroom ratio

Age Category	Teacher Child Ratio	Maximum Class Size
Preschool (3-5 year olds)	1:10	20

NAEYC Accreditation

Assessment Items O.9.01, O.9.02 and O.9.03

Staff maintain developmentally appropriate staff-to-child ratios in indoor learning environments.

Staff maintain a developmentally appropriate class size in indoor learning environments.

Staff maintain developmentally appropriate staff-to-child ratios in outdoor learning environments.

Age Category	Teacher Child Ratio	Maximum Class Size
Preschool (3-5 year olds)	1:10	20

Additional Notes:

- Class size is the maximum number of children regardless of the program type or number of staff available.
- Shared Visions Preschools must maintain a teacher-child ratio of not less than one staff member per eight children regardless of the maximum class size as outlined in Iowa Code 256A.3(4)a.