

New Educator to Child Ratios

By Faye Williamson

As of January 1 2016, improved educator to child ratios are due to commence in all states and territories except TAS and WA, where they are already in place.

These changes are helping to bring national consistency to the National Quality Framework (NQF). Educator to child ratios are an important factor in delivering quality education and care, allowing staff to give more individual attention to each child.

The new ratios were agreed by all states and territories as part of the NQF and although the NQF started in 2012, the 1 January 2016 deadline for the introduction of these ratios was set to give services time to prepare for all the changes.

Affected age groups, services and jurisdictions:

- New ratios apply for children older than 24 months and younger than 36 months at centre-based services in NSW, Queensland and South Australia.
- New ratios apply for children older than 36 months up to and including preschool age for all centre-based services in Queensland and Victoria.
- New ratios apply for preschools in ACT, Northern Territory and South Australia.
- New ratios apply for family day care services in Queensland.
- The educator to child ratios are already in place in Tasmania and Western Australia and therefore no changes are required. ■

Centre-based services (Long day care, preschools and OSHC)		
Educator to child ratios – birth to 24 months		
	Before 2016	From 1 Jan 2016
All States and Territories	1:4	1:4
Educator to child ratios – children older than 24 months and younger than 36 months		
	Before 2016	From Jan 1 2016
SA	1:8 for the first 8 children 1:10 for any additional children	1:5
Educator to child ratios – children older than 36 months and up to and including preschool age		
	Before 2016	From Jan 1 2016
SA	1:10 for centre-based services other than preschool 1:13 for preschools	1:10 for centre-based services other than preschool 1:10 for disadvantaged preschools 1:11 for all other preschools
Educator to child ratios – children over preschool age		
	Before 2016	From Jan 1 2016
All states and territories	There is no national ratio however state and territory ratios may apply	
Family day care services		
Educator to child ratios – birth to 13 years		
	Before 2016	From Jan 1 2016
SA, ACT, NSW, NT, TAS, VIC, WA	1:7 with no more than 4 preschool age or under, including educator's own children younger than 13 years of age	1:7 with no more than 4 preschool age or under, including educator's own children younger than 13 years of age

Source: Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority