LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

This document is being distributed by nonpublic prekindergarten programs pursuant to "Charlie's Law," R.S. 17:407.41, and applies to all early learning centers and prekindergarten programs.

Child Safety and Welfare 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 be in compliance with those set in rules that the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall adopt for this purpose. The rules shall provide maximum ratio requirements for prekindergarten students who are three years old, four years old, and five years old in order to provide for the health, safety, and welfare of those students. Both public and nonpublic schools operating prekindergarten programs shall comply with the ratio requirements provided in these rules:

   Bulletin 741 (Nonpublic)–Louisiana Handbook for Nonpublic School Administrators requires that the child-to-staff ratios for nonpublic prekindergarten programs shall not exceed the following:
   - Three years - 13:1 or 20:2
   - Four years - 20:1 or 30:2
   - Five years - 20:1 (beginning 2027-2028 school year)
   - *Note: If the school serves any infant, one-year-old, or two-year old children, that portion of the school program must be licensed and meet the ratio requirements of Bulletin 137 for those classrooms.*

3. An average of the child-to-staff ratios may be applied to mixed age groups of children.

4. Information regarding required child-to-staff ratios and a phone number to file complaints regarding supervision with the Department of Education, as applicable, shall be posted in each classroom in a location that is visible to parents.

5. Children shall be supervised at all times including on the playground, on field trips, and on nonvehicular excursions.

6. Children shall not be left alone in any room, outdoors, or in vehicles, even momentarily, without staff present.

   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.

7. A staff person shall be assigned to supervise specific children whose names and whereabouts that 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.

8. 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.

   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.

9. A child age five and older may be permitted to go to and return from the restroom without staff.

10. 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.

11. Children shall be changed and cleaned immediately following a toileting accident.

Nonpublic School Complaint Line	Formal Complaints Regarding Safety Standards Compliance
337-237-1546	Jeremy.Stinson@Cognia.org