



## Adsafe Guidelines on Staffing Children's Sabbath School Classes

Class Name	Ages	Adsafe Policy	Ratio	Reasons for having a higher ratio	Reason for having a lower ratio	Notes and Implications
Beginners	0 -2	2 Adult leaders plus one parent for each child	1:1	<p>Adults – Leader is experienced or has training and/or the class environment is open plan or is visible from the wider environment and has moderate to heavy traffic in the vicinity.</p> <p>Parents – Parents have two children in the same room or agree to look after other children.</p>	<p>Adults – The church has had difficulty finding effective leaders and recognise that more adults are needed to support the team and program.</p> <p>Children – nature of toddler/s create child management challenges.</p>	<p>It should be noted that once a child is able to walk it introduces extra challenges to the management of children. This may be a reason to reduce the ratio.</p> <p>When parents supervise other children they need to have a WWCC.</p>
Kindergarten	3 – 4	2 Adult leaders plus parents or helpers to make up the ratio	1:6	<p>Adults – Leader is experienced or has training and/or the class environment is open plan or is visible from the wider environment and has moderate to heavy traffic in the vicinity.</p> <p>Children in class are easily engaged in the activities and happy to comply with requests.</p>	<p>Adults – The church has had difficulty finding effective leaders and recognises that more adults are needed to support the team and program.</p> <p>Children – the class has a number of “Free Spirits” who struggle to participate in the program but enjoy creating their own.</p>	<p>The ratio dictates that with 2 Adults the maximum for the class is 12. Extra helpers are generally needed to go above this number and they will need to have a WWC clearance if caring for other people's children.</p>
Primary	5 – 9	2 Adult leaders plus parents or helpers to make up the ratio	1:10	<p>Adults – Leader is experienced or has training and/or the class environment is open plan or is visible from the wider environment and has moderate to heavy traffic in the vicinity.</p> <p>Children in class are easily engaged in the activities and happy to comply with requests.</p>	<p>Adults – The church has had difficulty finding effective leaders and recognises that more adults are needed to support the team and program.</p> <p>Children – the class has a number of “Free Spirits” who struggle to participate in the program but enjoy creating their own.</p>	<p>The ratio dictates that with 2 Adults the maximum for the class is 20.</p> <p>Extra helpers are generally needed to go above this number and they will need to have a WWC clearance if caring for other people's children.</p>

Class Name	Ages	Adsafe Policy	Ratio	Reasons for having a higher ratio	Reason for having a lower ratio	Notes and Implications
Junior	10 – 12	2 Adult leaders, parents or helpers to make up the ratio	1:15	<p>Adults – Leader is experienced or has training and/or the class environment is open plan or is visible from the wider environment and has moderate to heavy traffic in the vicinity.</p> <p>Children in class are easily engaged in the activities and happy to comply with requests.</p>	<p>Adults – The church has had difficulty finding effective leaders and recognises that more adults are needed to support the team and program.</p> <p>Children – the class has a number of “Free Spirits” who struggle to participate in the program but enjoy creating their own.</p>	<p>The ratio dictates that with 2 Adults the maximum for the class is 30.</p> <p>Extra helpers are generally needed to go above this number and they will need to have a WWC clearance if caring for other people’s children.</p>
Teens	13 – 15 Y7 – Y10	2 Adult leaders, parents or helpers to make up the ratio	1:15	<p>Adults – Leader is experienced or has training and/or the class environment is open plan or is visible from the wider environment and has moderate to heavy traffic in the vicinity.</p> <p>Children in class are easily engaged in the activities and happy to comply with requests. Further, children are supportive of the principles and values presented in the program.</p>	<p>Adults – The church has had difficulty finding effective leaders and recognise that more adults are needed to support the team and program.</p> <p>Children – the class has a number of “Free Spirits” who struggle to participate in the program but enjoy creating their own. Further, a number of children are less supportive of the principles and values presented in the program. A number of children step over the boundaries of appropriate Christian relationships, encourage others to do so, and openly express these values to the group.</p>	<p>The ratio dictates that with 2 Adults the maximum for the class is 30.</p> <p>Extra helpers are generally needed to go above this number and they will need to have a WWC clearance if caring for other people’s children.</p>
Youth	16 – Y11 -	2 Adult leaders	1:20	<p>Adults – Leader is experienced or has training and/or the class environment is open plan or is visible from the wider environment and has moderate to heavy traffic in the vicinity.</p> <p>Young people are supportive and engaged in the program. A number of the Young people are spiritually mature and take a leadership role in the group.</p>	<p>Adults – The church has had difficulty finding effective leaders who can engage with the young people and recognise that more adults are needed to support the team and program.</p> <p>A number of young people are less supportive of the principles and values of the program and happily express this opposition.</p> <p>A number of young people step over the boundaries of appropriate Christian relationships, encourage others to do so, and openly express these values to the group.</p>	<p>The ratio dictates that with 2 Adults the maximum for the class is 40.</p> <p>Extra helpers (Adults) will need a WWC clearance</p>

## Factors to consider

1. Consideration of an appropriate level for staffing children's programs should be done by looking at risk factors to the program. Blanket recommendations from Adsafes are limited in that the service is unable to assess these local risk factors.
2. The assessment of risk and an associated plan to manage these risks is a better practice method to evaluate risks that would affect the safety of persons that are part of the local church community.
3. It should be understood that factors can either heighten risk or reduce risk.
4. The following questions should be considered when assessing the risks to maintaining a safe environment for the Church, its children and those who lead out.
5. The Church may use these factors to determine what would be an appropriate level of staffing for its Children's ministry programs.

## Factors to Consider

### Environmental

1. How are the Sabbath school rooms arranged? Is visibility restricted? Are the rooms isolated? Do the rooms open out to the Church carpark or other unsafe areas? How many people are there around? Are there other classrooms close at hand where other adults can be called to assist?
2. How are toileting needs to be handled? Should children be accompanied if they need to go? At what age are they free to go on their own? How are the toilets arranged? Can those who accompany children to the toilets supervise safely from a distance? Who else is likely to use the toilets at the same time?

### People

1. How many Persons of Concern is the church presently working with? Are there other members who display inappropriate behaviours or break appropriate boundaries?
2. Are the Children's ministry leaders struggling to cope with the rigors of the job? Do they enjoy working with children or only do so because they believe it is their duty to serve God in this way? Should the wider community provide extra support for the leader? Provide timeout for difficult children? Take a story for the class to give them a break?
3. Are there other signs that a member or attendee is not coping with life at the moment and posing extra risk to the community and children?
4. What is the profile of the children attending the individual classes? Are there difficult children? Behaviour wise? Openly defiant of the church's values?
5. Are the programs engaging the children who are attending? Is there an appropriate balance of activities that suit the group?