

Preschool and child care programs that are voluntarily participating in Virginia Quality are focused on top-quality in areas proven to matter to children’s school success.

The Path to Quality	Standard	What does each quality level mean?
	 <p>Basic Health & Safety*</p>	<p>Level 1 programs...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> are enrolled in Virginia Quality, showing their commitment to quality early learning. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> meet health & safety requirements of state & local regulatory agencies.*
	 <p>Education & Qualifications</p>	<p>Level 2 programs meet all requirements for Level 1 and...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> employ staff with formal education in child development or early childhood. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> participate in ongoing professional development in accordance with Virginia Quality Standards.
	 <p>Curriculum & Assessment</p>	<p>Level 3 programs meet all requirements for Levels 1 & 2 and...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> implement curriculum and assessments that support Virginia’s Early Learning Guidelines.
	 <p>Environment</p>  <p>Interactions</p>	<p>Level 4 and 5 programs meet all requirements for Levels 1, 2 & 3 and....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> provide an environment and materials that engage children in meaningful learning and play throughout the day. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ensure their teachers provide high quality interactions that support social and academic success. <p><i>Programs achieving Levels 4 and 5 have demonstrated quality in all of Virginia’s Quality Standards through documentation and an on-site observation. Level 5 programs have demonstrated the highest level of quality in environment and interactions during the on-site observation.</i></p>

All Virginia Quality rated programs are involved in continuous quality improvement and may apply for the next higher level when ready.

**** Check back often for updated quality level information. ****

* Basic Health & Safety criteria are monitored through child care and preschool regulating authorities such as the Virginia Department of Social Services Licensing Standards, the Virginia Board of Education Regulations, Local Ordinance, and the Family Day System. Programs must remain in good standing with their regulating authority’s requirements, maintaining basic and health and safety practices, in order to achieve any of the higher quality levels.

Virginia Quality Standards

A child's brain develops most rapidly between birth and age 5.

Virginia's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) awards quality levels to child care and preschool programs based on four nationally recognized quality standards and best practices: the education and qualifications of the staff, the curriculum or intentional teaching approach the program uses to guide children's learning, the learning environment, and teacher-child interactions.



EDUCATION & QUALIFICATIONS

A teacher's formal education in child development or early childhood education has an impact on school readiness. When teachers have some formal education, such as a Child Development Associate (CDA), professional certificate, or child-related college credits, they are more prepared to intentionally support children's learning through high quality interactions. This standard measures the education and qualifications of program staff.



CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT

Intentional teaching has an impact on school readiness. This standard does not require programs to use a purchased curriculum. Instead, this standard measures how programs intentionally promote children's learning and development. Virginia has developed the *Milestones of Child Development* and the *Foundation Blocks for Early Learning* to guide early childhood educators in promoting school readiness, and this standard considers how the program aligns with Virginia's Early Learning Guidelines.



ENVIRONMENT

The engagement of children in meaningful learning and play, guided by qualified caregivers in an enriched educational environment, has an impact on school readiness. This standard measures the types of materials available to the children and the types of activities they are involved in throughout the day.



INTERACTIONS

Interactions between teachers and children form the foundation for all social and cognitive learning, significantly impacting school readiness. In addition to exposure to high quality materials and intentional teaching, children benefit most when they experience high quality interactions. At your program, do teachers:

- support children's social and emotional growth?
- have a positive attitude towards the children?
- use constructive behavior management techniques?
- encourage children to learn and be creative?

This standard measures the quality of interactions.

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