

**Evidence-based Practices for Early Childhood Classrooms**



**Focus on Classroom Space:**

**Visual Supports are used to Enhance Instruction**

Daily schedule is posted with pictures and words

Schedule is used as a teaching tool

Rules are posted with pictures and words

Class display is child-centered and/or related to instructional units

Additional visuals are used to support instruction

**Classroom Materials are Sufficient and in Good Condition**

Classroom areas are organized, clearly defined, and uncluttered

Shelves, bins, and areas for children's personal items are labeled

Materials are sufficient in quantity, interest, and variety to engage all children.

## 1. Visual supports are used to enhance instruction

### 1a. Daily schedule is posted with pictures and words.

Quality indicators:

- The schedule is taught or referred to throughout the day and throughout the school year.
- The daily schedule is posted at the children's eye level and is visible from most areas of the room.
- Rules are age appropriate and do not contain vague language (such as "nice hands").



Questions to ask:

- ✓ How often do you refer to the schedule throughout the day?
- ✓ How do you use the schedule to teach the routine and class expectations?



### 1b. Schedule is used as a teaching tool to enhance transitions.

Quality indicators:

- Teachers refer to the schedule throughout the day using it to share expectations.
- Teachers use the schedule to prepare children for changes in activities and movement from one instructional time to another.



Questions to ask:

- ✓ How do you use the daily schedule to support transitions?
- ✓ How often do you refer to the schedule throughout the day?



### 1c. Rules are posted with pictures and words.

#### Quality indicators:

- Children are able to see the rules, posted with pictures and words, from all areas of the room.
- Pictures are provided that clearly define the rules of the classroom.
- The number of rules ranges from three to five rules.
- Children participate in rule development.
- Rules are referred to throughout the school day and school year.
- Rules are easily understood by young children.



#### Questions to ask:

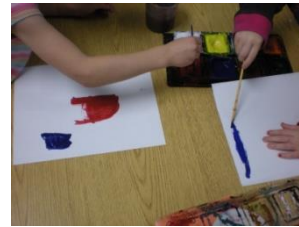
- ✓ How do you develop the classroom rules?
- ✓ How do you teach the rules to the children?
- ✓ How often do you refer to the rules throughout the day or the school year?
- ✓ How do you address rules that have been broken



### 1d. Class displays are child-created and/or related to instructional units.

#### Quality indicators:

- The classroom display changes throughout the year.
- The display is predominantly child created.
- There is variety in the display – some projects are academic such as writing or patterning, some projects are class projects, and some are purely for exploration and creative expression.
- The materials are hung at eye level.
- Encourage the artistic process by allowing children to explore and create with art materials. Avoid products that are adult-directed and allow little creative expression.



**Artistic Process  
Emphasized:**  
Children are permitted to explore and create

#### Questions to ask:

- ✓ When are children allowed to create their own artwork or explore with creative materials?
- ✓ Are children allowed to create class projects that differ from the teacher provided samples?



**Product development  
is emphasized:**  
Adult directed activity with minimal creative expression.

## 1e. Additional visual supports are used to support instruction.

### Quality indicators:

- Use of pictures to support verbal communication such as stop signs, individualized picture schedules, scripted stories for social situations or first/then boards.
- Incorporation of manipulatives to support stories, finger plays and pictures paired with written words.
- Labeled shelves for organization.
- Visual supports provide non-verbal reminders and can enhance oral language development.



### Questions to ask:

- ✓ How do you incorporate visual supports to enhance instruction?
- ✓ How do you use picture cues to support children who are having difficulty with task completion, following the schedule or adhering to rules?
- ✓ Are they consistently used throughout the day, month or year?
- ✓ Are they revised as needed?



## 2. Classroom materials are sufficient and in good condition.

### 2a. Classroom areas are organized, clearly defined, and un-cluttered.

### Quality indicators:

- All areas of the room are clearly defined.
- Materials are organized and easily accessed by children and adults.
- Storage of materials not being used in centers or for current instructional units is minimal and not taking up classroom space.



### Questions to ask:

- ✓ How often do you rotate materials?
- ✓ How many of the classroom materials are available for use by the children?
- ✓ Which materials in the classroom can only be accessed by adults?



## 2b. Shelves, bins, and areas for children's personal items are labeled.

### Quality indicators:

- Words, pictures and shape outlines may be used when labeling.
- Children know where to put materials when not in use.
- The organizational system for the room is taught to the children.



### Questions to ask:

- *How do children know where materials are stored or where to get desired materials?*
- *How do the children know where to put materials when they are done?*



## 2c. Materials are of sufficient quantity, interest, and variety to engage all children.

### Quality indicators:

- Materials are stored on child-sized shelved.
- There are multiples of high interest class materials and shelves are stocked.
- There are plenty of activities available in the class that are rotated throughout the year, to keep children actively engaged and extend learning.
- Class materials are in good condition.



### Questions to ask:

- ✓ *How often are materials rotated?*
- ✓ *Do children have access to high interest toys during center time activities?*
- ✓ *Can the children access materials independently?*

