

Classroom environment checklist

Strategy	Not very often	Sometimes	Most of the time
Children are aware of and able to demonstrate good listening behaviours			
Background noises are considered and children and staff are able to hear each other with ease			
Staff use children's names to gain their attention			
Staff get down to the child's height when talking in a smaller group or in one-to-one situations			
Asking-friendly environment – children are confident with asking questions to staff and other children when they don't understand something and need clarification			
Thinking time is built into lessons			
There are waiting and turn-taking systems giving children enough time to process information and take turns in discussions			
Children work with partners where appropriate in order to practise talking skills			
Visual displays show activities and routines, e.g. daily timetable, preparing for lunchtime or clearing up after an activity. These are positioned so that children can quickly and easily refer to them when needed. Areas, learning resources and materials are labelled with photographs, pictures or words, as appropriate			
Visual displays show expected behaviour, e.g. reminders about what to do when arriving in the classroom before morning registration			
Displays are interactive and include children's own work – they stimulate thinking and discussion and/or are referred to by staff and children to support their learning; especially (but not exclusively) vocabulary displays including topic-related vocabulary			
Movement of children between lessons is managed so that children move around the school calmly and with confidence, e.g. visual reminders in the corridor or letting some children leave before or after the main 'rush'			
Key words are included in planning/lesson objectives, and staff show how to use key words, explain them and encourage children to use them in their talking			
Resources and activities promote discussion between staff and children and between children			
Children are supported to engage in structured conversations with staff and children			

Staff use of language	Not very often	Sometimes	Most of the time
Praise speaking and listening, including when children ask questions			
Modify their language and pace of delivery according to the language level of the children			
Comment and encourage			
Model language by repeating and extending what the children say, by adding a small amount of additional information or by using language that the children are not yet using			
Talk about language when needed, e.g. explaining idioms or turn-taking in conversations			
Use open-ended questions to extend the children's thinking, when appropriate			

Additional notes