EYFS observation: quality interactions  
Whole class / small group/ adult-initiated / child-led

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| Name of practitioner(s):  Number of children:  Age range of children: | Observer:  Focus of observation:  Date(s): |

**Note:** Observation of these skills may take several observation sessions

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| Can you see staff… | Strengths/  Observed | Areas for development |
| **Tuning in** – listening carefully to children, observing body language and what the child is doing |  |  |
| **Showing genuine interest** – giving whole attention, giving eye contact, affirming, using a warm voice tone |  |  |
| **Sharing extended back and forth conversations with children** – more than 2 or 3‘turns’ |  |  |
| **Respecting children’s own decisions and choices** e.g. asking if they need anything to help them; giving them time |  |  |
| **Inviting children to elaborate** e.g. “I really want to know more about this.” |  |  |
| **Re-capping** e.g. “So, you did this first, then…” |  |  |
| **Clarifying ideas** e.g. “So, you think that this stone will melt if I boil it in water?” |  |  |
| **Suggesting** e.g. “You might like to try…” |  |  |
| **Reminding** e.g. “Don’t forget you said you thought this would sink.” |  |  |
| **Using encouragement to further thinking** e.g. “You’ve really thought hard about that…now what are you going to do about…?” |  |  |
| **Offering an alternative viewpoint** – “Was Jack unkind to kill the giant?” |  |  |
| **Speculating** – “Maybe Goldilocks could go and live with the 3 bears…” |  |  |
| **Waiting before they speak or offer ideas** - being present but not interfering |  |  |
| **Asking open questions** – “How did you…? Why does this…? / What do you think” |  |  |
| **Waiting long enough for a child to reply or comment** – not jumping in |  |  |
| **Commenting** – e.g. “I see you have added four more at the back” |  |  |
| **Modelling thinking** – e.g. “I’m not sure how I’ll get all my shopping in my car tonight.” |  |  |
| **Helping** children to find solutions to problems – e.g. “We could try…” |  |  |

Compiled from support materials by Vicky Hutchin (vickyhutchin.co.uk); Ofsted Inspection Handbook;’ Interacting or Interfering’ by Julie Fisher.

**Ofsted Definition of Early Years Teaching (see School Inspection Handbook):**

Teaching should not be taken to imply a ‘top down’ or formal way of working. It is a broad term that covers the many different ways in which adults help young children learn. It includes: **their interactions with children** during planned and child-initiated play and activities, **communicating and modelling language**, **showing**, **explaining**, **demonstrating**, **exploring ideas**, **encouraging**, **questioning**, **recalling**, **providing a narrative for what they are doing**, **facilitating** and **setting challenges**. It takes account of the equipment that adults provide and the attention given to the physical environment, as well as the structure and routines of the day that establish expectations. Integral to teaching is how practitioners assess what children know, understand and can do, as well as taking account of their interests and dispositions to learn (characteristics of effective learning), and how practitioners use this information to plan children’s next steps in learning and to monitor their progress.