

Early Childhood Walk Through The Learning Environment

Staff Member		Notes:
Date		
Time/Activity Setting		

The physical classroom environment has significant impact on the engagement and independence of young children. The classroom space should be interesting and functional. According to The Creative Curriculum for Preschool (The Foundation), "A well-organized classroom helps children make choices, encourages them to use materials well, and teaches them to take increasing responsibility for maintaining the classroom." (p. 55)

Look For:	Notes:
Classroom space is divided into clear interest areas (blocks, dramatic play, toys/games, art, library, discovery/science, sand/water, music/movement)	
Varied materials are available in each center, providing children a range of choices—materials are multicultural	
A designated area is available for quiet activities	
Noisier centers are located away from quiet centers (e.g. Books are not next to Blocks)	
Other areas (e.g. dramatic play, blocks) provide choices for more physical activities	
Classroom layout provides opportunities for children to form small groups	
Interest areas are strategically placed near needed resources (i.e. tile floor for art)	
Everything has a "place" and children participate in cleanup and general care of the room (i.e. cubby for blocks, shelves for puzzles)	
Labels appear frequently in the classroom, should include both pictures (of the object/location) and words, and promotes independence during clean up	
There is a clearly defined area for large group activities—floor space is sufficient to accommodate all children, children have a soft/comfortable place to sit (e.g. carpet)	
Classroom "traffic" moves smoothly throughout all areas of the classroom	
Children with disabilities should have access to all areas of the classroom; traffic patterns/aisles between interest areas will accommodate a wheelchair, if needed	
Materials are arranged in such a way that children can access them independently	

Possible post walk through questions:	Notes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe transitions during the preschool day. How does your classroom arrangement support or hinder transitions?• Describe how your classroom arrangement follows principles of universal design (classroom arrangement is accessible/useable by all children and adults). If it does not, what changes do you intend to make?• How will you adjust your classroom arrangement based on this information?• (If applicable) How did you use the results of the ECERS-R observation when setting up your classroom? Were there areas for improvement? What are your identified strengths in regard to classroom environment?• Describe how the preschoolers respond to large group...how does your classroom arrangement support (or hinder) their engagement during large group instruction?• Between now and my next opportunity to observe, what would you like to see happen in regard to your classroom environment? What will your next steps be in regard to achieving those goals?• How can I support you as you seek to improve your classroom arrangement/environment?	
Additional Notes/Discussion/Action Plan:	