MARYLAND EXCELS

Companion Guide to Maryland EXCELS Self-Assessment: Family Child Care
Examples of Observable Teacher-Child Interactions

Keep this Companion Guide on hand to help you focus on the kinds of teacher-child interactions to look for when conducting a Maryland EXCELS Self-Assessment: Family Child Care.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL Teacher-Child Interactions *Personal and Social development includes feelings about self and others, relating to adults and other children, increasing self-awareness, and building self-concept. Teachers support this development by doing the following:*	Examples of Observable Teacher-Child Interactions *You might hear other examples that support these interactions.*
Responding to a child with positive displays of affection.	Smiles, facial expressions, actions, words (please, thank you), hugs, etc.
Using a soft tone of voice.	Uses calming words and warm tone of voice; never yells.
Playing with materials with a child.	Engages with children by describing the materials; models taking turns with materials.
Following a child's lead during play and routines. Planning alternative activities for children who finish early.	Lets the child decide what to use, what to do, and for how long during play.
Providing choices during play, routines, and chores. Providing a balance of teacher-directed and child-directed activities.	Lets the child decide where, with what, and how to play; lets the child decide how to help during routines.
Acknowledging and labeling feelings and reactions. Monitoring children's understanding and facial expressions.	Uses feeling words (thrilled, sad, excited, frustrated).
Being clear and consistent about limits and expectations. Giving clear directions and explanations for completing activities, tasks, and transitions. Using effective pacing with established routines and rules.	Uses the same rules every time; uses positive words.

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Reinforcing and acknowledging positive behaviors. Providing positive guidance to support appropriate behavior. Providing time for children to practice self-regulation.	Uses phrases such as "I like how you are _____"; or "You did _____ very nicely."
Giving reassurance when upset.	Uses phrases such as "I know you are sad/angry/frustrated/scared. Would you like _____?"
Helping a child feel safe, comfortable, and accepted. Speaking informally with a child to gain information about her/him.	Connects activities and conversations to a child's life.
Building positive relationships: with children, among children, and modeling respectful peer-to-peer relationships.	Lets children choose different groupings throughout the day.
Demonstrating enthusiasm, intensity, and humor.	Laughs with the children; uses verbal and physical signs of enthusiasm.
Motivating children to feel competent and capable of completing a task/skill by providing feedback and encouragement specific to that task/skill. Using effective and specific verbal feedback.	Instead of praising by making a general statement, like "Good job," gives specific feedback about skill development: "I see you worked really hard to _____!"
Providing children with opportunities to choose to work/play individually, in small groups, or in a large group.	Lets children choose different groupings throughout the day.

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COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE **Teacher-Child Interactions** *Communication takes place with words, gestures, and actions in the physical layout of the classroom environment. Language Development includes understanding and communicating; early literacy (pre-reading and pre-writing); listening and speaking; expressing thoughts, ideas, and emotions; and entering into conversations. Teachers support this development by doing the following:*	**Examples of Observable** **Teacher-Child Interactions** *You might hear other examples that support these interactions.*
Engaging in formal (to provide information) and informal (social) conversations throughout the day, using clear, adult language.	Uses real vocabulary; avoids using baby-talk; uses a pleasant but normal tone of voice; talks with children about their home activities, weekend activities, or children's favorite things.
Putting words to what the children or you are doing.	Uses self-talk: "I am putting the red block on top of the blue block!" or "I am wiping your bottom to keep it clean. The wipe is cold and wet." Uses parallel talk: "You are holding the red block!" or "You are holding your bottle!"
Imitating sounds/repeating what a child has said.	Responds to babbling; uses the correct pronunciation: "Ba, Ba? Oh, you want your bottle."
Expanding upon what a child has said.	Repeats and expands upon what a child says: "Ba, Ba! Yes, your bottle has milk in it."
Using, labeling, describing, adding, and explaining new vocabulary words.	Talks about what the child is experiencing, in the moment.
Connecting examples and experiences to each child's everyday life.	Chats about what is happening in the child's life, at their home, with their family, etc.
Having "give and take" conversations with each child. Speaking to a child at child's eye level.	Pauses after a child makes a sound before making the next sound; repeats their sounds or adds words.
Redirecting a child's behavior while on their level using a calm, positive tone.	Gets on eye level; uses positive phrases: "You can use this one and please give that one back to your friend."

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COGNITIVE Teacher-Child Interactions *Cognitive Development involves discovering and learning through mathematical, scientific, and social exploration. High level questions and discussions are essential to support each child's concept development. An early childhood educator continuously promotes a responsive learning environment to improve the children's participation. Teachers support this by doing the following:*	Examples of Observable Teacher-Child Interactions *You might hear other examples that support these interactions.*
Encouraging each child to explore a variety of materials using multiple methods (verbal, visual, hands-on materials).	Provides materials that engage different senses (sight, sound, touch, taste, smell); ets children handle materials.
Asking guiding questions to extend experiences by asking children to explain, infer, compare, analyze, and evaluate information that has been presented.	Asks questions: "What should we do next?" *(Children might not respond.)*
Asking open-ended, high-level questions requiring more than a one-word response (why, how, what if, how do you know) that help children develop understanding of a concept or topic.	Asks questions with more than one correct answer; asks questions that require more than a one-word answer. *(Children might not respond.)*
Introducing a topic to children by clearly stating objectives.	Uses Plan/Do/Review: "Now we are going to _____."
Encouraging each child to use self-help skills.	Instead of praising by making a general statement, like "Good job," gives specific feedback about the skill: "You pulled up your pants by yourself!" or "Thank you for putting the toys away."
Encouraging each child to try new activities and skills.	Instead of praising by making a general statement, like "Good job," gives specific feedback about the skill or activity: "Look how hard you are working on that new puzzle!"
Having children complete a task that requires intellectual involvement.	Encourages children to solve problems and conduct experiments; engages children with activities requiring thinking and decision-making.

Connecting prior knowledge of the children with new information. Asking questions to make connections to a child's prior knowledge.	Asks "How did you know?"; or "How did you figure that out?"
Providing time for children to digest and react when information is presented.	Pauses before giving more information or a "correct answer."
Asking follow-up questions to encourage children's responses; waiting enough time for the child to respond. (Asking children to elaborate on their answers, etc.)	Asks open-ended questions; asks follow-up questions based upon their answer: "How do you know?" or "How did you figure that out?"

PHYSICAL AND FEEDBACK Teacher-Child Interactions *Physical Development includes coordinating movements; coordinating and using large and small muscle groups; improving self-help abilities; building self-help skills; and caring for self and others. Feedback is specific to a child's demonstration of skills rather than simply a positive comment or praise. Teachers support this development by doing the following:*	Examples of Observable Teacher-Child Interactions *You might hear other examples that support these interactions.*
Assisting a child while she/he learns new skills. Stating specific, concrete expectations for the skill being developed. For example: step by step instructions are provided, as needed.	Guides the child's hand to turn the pages of the book; guides the child's arm when holding a spoon.
Encouraging each child's independence while being patient with her/his efforts.	Lets the child make a few attempts before helping: "You can do it!"
Offering assistance before a child becomes frustrated.	Asks "May I help you?"; or "Let's try it this way."
Praising a child's efforts to do things for her/himself. Providing children with in-the-moment, objective feedback that reinforces proficient and developing skills.	Uses comments: "You tried for a long time!"; or "That is hard to do. May I help you?"
Developing lessons that reflect children's interests and skills, and meet each child's developmental needs and abilities.	Asks children what they want to do; provides choices of activities; groups children by skills and interests.