QUALITY PLAY

Quality play is not determined by how impressive an activity looks, how many materials are available or how busy children appear. It is better understood through the experience learners are having.

WHAT CAN WE LOOK FOR IN QUALITY PLAY?

AGENCY	Learners influence the direction, decisions and possibilities of their play.
ENGAGEMENT	Ideas matter to learners; attention and involvement are more than compliance.
DEPTH	Learners revisit, investigate, combine ideas and develop their thinking.
FLEXIBILITY	There is room to change plans, experiment and respond to the unexpected.
CONNECTION	Interactions, relationships and shared thinking enrich participation.
INCLUSION	Different learners can enter, contribute and experience belonging.

QUALITY IS NOT A SCORE FOR THE CHILD

These features are lenses for noticing the conditions and experiences we create. Not every characteristic will be visible in every moment, and play does not need to meet a checklist to be valuable.

Notice the experience, not just the activity. Ask what learners can do, decide and discover.

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QUALITY PLAY

REFLECTING ON THE QUALITY OF PLAY

Observe a play experience before making changes. Record what you actually notice, then consider what the environment or your teaching might make possible next.

A QUALITY PLAY OBSERVATION TOOL

LOOK FOR...		WHAT DID YOU NOTICE?
AGENCY	Who made decisions about what happened?	
ENGAGEMENT	What held the learners' interest?	
DEPTH	What ideas were tested or revisited?	
FLEXIBILITY	How did plans or possibilities change?	
CONNECTION	How did others influence the play?	
INCLUSION	Who participated, and what supported access?	

FROM OBSERVATION TO RESPONSE

What is already working well? What could you protect, extend or make more accessible? What might be better left uninterrupted?

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