



Oklahoma
Autism Center
Autism Quality Classroom Checklist

Teacher: _____ Date: _____ Grade Level(s): _____

School District: _____ Building: _____

Administrator/Observer: _____ Number of Students: _____

Score: 2: Present and actively used

1: Present, but not being used; or partially achieved

0: Absent

NA: Not applicable

Quality Classroom Indicator:	Score	Comments
PROGRAM FUNDAMENTALS		
All staff use "person-first" language and do not refer to students by their disability label.		
The goal of social acceptance by peers is emphasized.		
Family members are supported as active participants in all aspects of their child's education.		
Communication with parents is informative, positive and nonjudgmental and is provided frequently and consistently.		
Families are provided with information about school events, educational conferences, support groups, neighborhood events, etc.		
Inter-staff communication is respectful of students and limited in content to classroom issues and instruction.		
All staff maintain the confidentiality of students and families.		
The majority of related services are embedded in general and special education activities and routines.		
CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND STRUCTURE		
The environment is instructionally organized and safe (e.g., teachers can see all students).		
Room arrangement has clearly defined visual boundaries for specific activities.		
The activities and schedule for the day are clear to students and adults.		
Environmental supports (e.g., the use of visual schedules) are posted and visible to all students.		
The roles and responsibilities of all team members are clearly defined.		
Paraprofessionals in the classroom are actively involved with students in a manner that promotes independence, learning and interactions with peers.		
SCHEDULES AND ROUTINES		

A daily schedule of activities, including visuals, is followed.		
Individual student schedules are utilized as necessary (e.g., daily schedule, choice board, activity schedule).		
Students are adequately prepared for transitions (e.g., informed in advance of changes in routine or activity).		
Student wait time is minimized (e.g., through prior planning, preparation and appropriate transition activities).		
Students spend most of his/her time actively engaged in meaningful learning activities, with little or no unengaged time.		
Schedules reflect a variety of learning formats for each student, including 1:1 instruction, small group, large group, independent work, and social interaction/leisure options.		
A staff schedule showing staff and student assignments, locations, and activities, is prominently posted and is followed.		
INSTRUCTION AND INTERACTION		
Positive comments are provided often to students and follow a ratio of 5:1 instructive/positive comments to corrective comments.		
During instruction, staff deliver instructional cues clearly, prompt if necessary, and reinforce correct responses or deliver error correction if needed.		
All classroom staff are involved in providing instruction.		
Instruction is provided during nonacademic activities (lunch, recess, specials).		
Instructional methods reflect the unique needs of students, and are grounded in research-based practices. (see attached Evidence-Based Practices list)		
Physical contact with students promotes independence and preserves dignity.		
Curriculum based assessments are used to determine target skills.		
All staff directly teach communication skills throughout the day targeting multiple functions of communication (i.e., requesting, refusals, gaining attention, commenting, etc.).		
For students who are non-verbal or have limited verbal skills, alternate communication system (e.g., PECS, computerized system) is taught and available across all activities and settings.		
Data are collected during instructional activities for each student.		
Data are tracked, summarized and used to determine if instructional changes are needed (i.e., progress is adequate).		
SOCIAL/PEER RELATIONS		
Opportunities for meaningful interaction and friendships with non-disabled peers are provided daily.		
Staff use a range of evidence-based instructional strategies (see attached Evidence-Based Practices list) to promote successful interactions between children with ASD and their peers.		
Staff promote positive peer interactions by supporting and suggesting successful strategies to interact with peers.		

Staff promotes relationships with peers when assigning groups and planning activities.		
POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT		
Behavioral expectations are defined, taught, and reinforced by all staff throughout the school year.		
Staff see problem behavior as a form of communication and try to determine what is being communicated.		
Focus is on prevention of challenging behavior by identifying supports to minimize the need for the student to use problem behavior.		
Environmental accommodations and adaptations are used to prevent or minimize occurrences of problem behavior.		
Behavior problems are minimized by using choices, clear expectations and positive reinforcement.		
Data systems are used to collect information about classroom behavior.		
Emotional regulation strategies are taught.		
Skills are identified to replace problem behavior and a teaching plan is designed that provides opportunities for frequent reinforcement.		
Students displaying behavioral difficulties have an individualized behavior plan or have been referred for a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA).		
When needed, an FBA is conducted by a team.		
Information from the FBA is used to direct intervention planning and develop a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) which utilizes positive behavior supports.		
A response plan is in place so that if challenging behavior does occur all staff members deal with it in a consistent manner without reinforcing the student's problem behavior and keeping everyone safe.		
TRANSITION PLANNING		
Planning integrates considerations of future environments with the students' current program.		
Planning includes teacher preparation and other supports to ensure success of the students in the new environments so students' programming moves from level to level.		
Student's skills and aptitudes as well as areas of interest are considered in transition planning.		
Focus is on independent living skills, self-advocacy and self-determination in the transition years.		
Post-secondary transition incorporates the coordination of appropriate community-based and adult service agencies.		
Opportunities for students are available in school that align with post-school environments, such as work, recreation and independent living.		

EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICES WITH WORKING DEFINITIONS

Antecedent-based intervention (ABI): Arrangement of events or circumstances that precede the occurrence of an interfering behavior and designed to lead to the reduction of the behavior.

Cognitive behavioral intervention (CBI): Instruction on management or control of cognitive processes that lead to changes in overt behavior.

Differential reinforcement of Alternative, Incompatible, or Other Behavior (DRA/I/O): Provision of positive/desirable consequences for behaviors or their absence that reduce the occurrence of an undesirable behavior. Reinforcement provided: a) when the learner is engaging in a specific desired behavior other than the inappropriate behavior (DRA), b) when the learner is engaging in a behavior that is physically impossible to do while exhibiting the inappropriate behavior (DRI), or c) when the learner is not engaging in the interfering behavior (DRO).

Discrete trial teaching (DTT): Instructional process usually involving one teacher/service provider and one student/client and designed to teach appropriate behavior or skills. Instruction usually involves massed trials. Each trial consists of the teacher's instruction/presentation, the child's response, a carefully planned consequence, and a pause prior to presenting the next instruction.

Exercise (ECE): Increase in physical exertion as a means of reducing problem behaviors or increasing appropriate behavior.

Extinction (EXT): Withdrawal or removal of reinforcers of interfering behavior in order to reduce the occurrence of that behavior. Although sometimes used as a single intervention practice, extinction often occurs in combination with functional behavior assessment, functional communication training, and differential reinforcement.

Functional behavior assessment (FBA): Systematic collection of information about an interfering behavior designed to identify functional contingencies that support the behavior. FBA consists of describing the interfering or problem behavior, identifying antecedent or consequent events that control the behavior, developing a hypothesis of the function of the behavior, and/or testing the hypothesis.

Functional communication training (FCT): Replacement of interfering behavior that has a communication function with more appropriate communication that accomplishes the same function. FCT usually includes FBA, DRA, and/or EX.

Modeling (MD): Demonstration of a desired target behavior that results in imitation of the behavior by the learner and that leads to the acquisition of the imitated behavior. This EBP is often combined with other strategies such as prompting and reinforcement.

Naturalistic intervention (NI): Intervention strategies that occur within the typical setting/activities/routines in which the learner participates. Teachers/service providers establish the learner's interest in a learning event through arrangement of the setting/activity/routine, provide necessary support for the learner to engage in the targeted behavior, elaborate on the behavior when it occurs, and/or arrange natural consequences for the targeted behavior or skills.

Parent-implemented intervention (PII): Parents provide individualized intervention to their child to improve/increase a wide variety of skills and/or to reduce interfering behaviors. Parents learn to deliver interventions in their home and/or community through a structured parent training program.

Peer-mediated instruction and intervention (PMII): Typically developing peers interact with and/or help children and youth with ASD to acquire new behavior, communication, and social skills by increasing social and learning opportunities within natural environments. Teachers/service providers systematically teach peers strategies for engaging children and youth with ASD in positive and extended social interactions in both teacher-directed and learner-initiated activities.

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS): Learners are initially taught to give a picture of a desired item to a communicative partner in exchange for the desired item. PECS consists of six phases which are: (1) “how” to communicate, (2) distance and persistence, (3) picture discrimination, (4) sentence structure, (5) responsive requesting, and (6) commenting.

Pivotal response training (PRT): Pivotal learning variables (i.e., motivation, responding to multiple cues, self-management, and self-initiations) guide intervention practices that are implemented in settings that build on learner interests and initiative.

Prompting (PP): Verbal, gestural, or physical assistance given to learners to assist them in acquiring or engaging in a targeted behavior or skill. Prompts are generally given by an adult or peer before or as a learner attempts to use a skill.

Reinforcement (R+): An event, activity, or other circumstance occurring after a learner engages in a desired behavior that leads to the increased occurrence of the behavior in the future.

Response interruption/redirection (RIR): Introduction of a prompt, comment, or other distracters when an interfering behavior is occurring that is designed to divert the learner’s attention away from the interfering behavior and results in its reduction.

Scripting (SC): A verbal and/or written description about a specific skill or situation that serves as a model for the learner. Scripts are usually practiced repeatedly before the skill is used in the actual situation.

Self-management (SM): Instruction focusing on learners discriminating between appropriate and inappropriate behaviors, accurately monitoring and recording their own behaviors, and rewarding themselves for behaving appropriately.

Social narratives (SN): Narratives that describe social situations in some detail by highlighting relevant cues and offering examples of appropriate responding. Social narratives are individualized according to learner needs and typically are quite short, perhaps including pictures or other visual aids.

Social skills training (SST): Group or individual instruction designed to teach learners with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) ways to appropriately interact with peers, adults, and other individuals. Most social skill meetings include instruction on basic concepts, role-playing or practice, and feedback to help learners with ASD acquire and practice communication, play, or social skills to promote positive interactions with peers.

Structured play group (SPG): Small group activities characterized by their occurrences in a defined area and with a defined activity, the specific selection of typically developing peers to be in the group, a clear delineation of theme and roles by adult leading, prompting, or scaffolding as needed to support students’ performance related to the goals of the activity.

Adapted from “Evidence-Based Practices for Children, Youth, and Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder”, Autism Evidence-Based Practice Review Group, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Task analysis (TA): A process in which an activity or behavior is divided into small, manageable steps in order to assess and teach the skill. Other practices, such as reinforcement, video modeling, or time delay, are often used to facilitate acquisition of the smaller steps.

Technology-aided instruction and intervention (TAII): Instruction or interventions in which technology is the central feature supporting the acquisition of a goal for the learner. Technology is defined as “any electronic item/ equipment/ application/or virtual network that is used intentionally to increase/maintain, and/or improve daily living, work/productivity, and recreation/leisure capabilities of adolescents with autism spectrum disorders” (Odom, Thompson, et al., 2013).

Time delay (TD): In a setting or activity in which a learner should engage in a behavior or skill, a brief delay occurs between the opportunity to use the skill and any additional instructions or prompts. The purpose of the time delay is to allow the learner to respond without having to receive a prompt and thus focuses on fading the use of prompts during instructional activities.

Video modeling (VM): A visual model of the targeted behavior or skill (typically in the behavior, communication, play, or social domains), provided via video recording and display equipment to assist learning in or engaging in a desired behavior or skill.

Visual support (VS): Any visual display that supports the learner engaging in a desired behavior or skills independent of prompts. Examples of visual supports include pictures, written words, objects within the environment, arrangement of the environment or visual boundaries, schedules, maps, labels, organization systems, and timelines.