OSCE checklist for child health nursing: play preparation

OSCE checklist for child health nursing: play preparation helps a child understand a planned procedure using developmentally appropriate explanation and safe teaching materials. Use this original practice checklist with your course guidance and supervised skills teaching.

Numbered practice steps

1. Confirm the child's identity and introduce your student role. Explain the task in suitable language, check who can consent under the applicable law, and seek the child's agreement as appropriate. Explain privacy and its limits before sensitive questions. Use hand hygiene and appropriate protective equipment before contact.
2. Confirm the procedure, the child's communication needs and the caregiver's role. Ask what the child already knows and what they are most worried about.
3. Explain what they may see, hear and feel using honest, simple words. Avoid promising that something will not hurt when discomfort is possible.
4. Use a doll, story or safe demonstration item if it helps the child. Keep real sharps, medicines and contaminated equipment out of play materials.
5. Offer choices that are genuinely available, such as a comfort object or position. Agree a way to signal a pause and check the pain relief plan with the clinical team.
6. Check the child's understanding and willingness to continue. Escalate significant distress, allow support and record what helped so the team can use it again.
7. Close by checking understanding, ensuring comfort and cleaning your hands and equipment as appropriate. Document findings and hand over any unresolved safety concern to the supervising practitioner.

Common omissions

Surprising a child with equipment can increase fear. Offering a choice that cannot be honoured undermines trust. Preparation does not replace consent, pain relief or clinical assessment of distress.

Try an original practice task

Practise explaining a simulated blood test using words and a toy. Ask a partner to play a worried child and see whether your explanation leaves room for questions.

These steps support learning, rather than authorising independent treatment. Follow your school's task and local policy; ask for help when a decision exceeds your competence.

Related nursing practice

Return to child health nursing OSCE practice or use the full checklist directory.

Common questions

Is this a school marking sheet?

No. This is an original learning checklist. Your school sets the task and assessment criteria.

Can I print this checklist?

Yes. Use the PDF download on this page for practice.

Sources

- NMC: The Code
- NICE NG204: babies, children and young people experience of healthcare

Checked 2026-11-13. Fees and rules change, so confirm them with the regulator before you book.