

# What makes a Quality Rhyme Time?

## Framework

This framework is the basis for three evaluation tools

An observation schedule, a family survey and session leader self- assessment

It is divided into 6 outcomes

**Outcome 1: Rhyme time supports children's early learning and cultural development**

**Outcome 2: Rhyme time builds the relationship between parent and child**

**Outcome 3: Rhyme time is inclusive**

**Outcome 4: Rhyme time reduces social isolation**

**Outcome 5: Rhyme time is accessible for parents and children**

**Outcome 6: Rhyme time is embedded in strategy and enables strong partnerships**



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Within each outcome there are a number of quality statements. Each statement is mapped against the seven quality principles

1. **Striving for excellence and innovation**
2. **Being Authentic**
3. **Being exciting, inspiring and engaging**
4. **Ensuring a positive and inclusive experience**
5. **Actively involving children and young people**
6. **Enabling personal progression**
7. **Developing belonging and ownership**

## Outcome 1: Rhyme time supports children's early learning and cultural development

- Rhyme times support children's speech, language and communication development by helping children learn words, new rhythms of language and sharing these with adults and other children
- Rhyme times also support children's cultural participation and learning and builds children's cultural experiences, by experiencing performance/drama/dance/music/poetry
- Rhyme times also support children's physical development encouraging movement -actions, dance and motor skills
- Children learn how to be a participatory audience – understanding when to clap, when to join in
- Children practise social skills sitting and listening, sharing, taking turns, interacting with other children and adults
- Rhyme times help to build the confidence and self-esteem of children and parents
- Rhyme times make connections to books and early reading, developing a lifelong love of books



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Outcome 1: : Rhyme time supports children's early learning and cultural development	What quality looks like	Excellence and innovation	Being Authentic	Exciting, inspiring and engaging	Ensuring a positive and inclusive experience	Involving children and young people	Personal progression	Belonging and ownership	Measured by
1.1 Well constructed - clear beginning and end  Session leaders explain at the beginning of the session what will happen and encourage everyone to participate	There is a recognised welcome and a farewell, (eg routine opening and closing songs) with active songs and rhymes in the middle so that children know what to expect	x		x					Observation
1.2 Length and time of session appropriate	Needs of babies and toddlers taken into consideration 0-2, 2-4	x			x				Family survey
1.3 Good preparation to run the session	Well delivered and managed – positive experience for families			x					Session leaders audit
1.4 Session leaders are very enthusiastic and natural when delivering the session	Praising everyone for joining in, clapping at the end of some rhymes  Encouraging adults/children to lead on songs		x	x		x	x	x	Observation Family survey
1.5 Children are engaged through a range of senses and actions and sounds  Children are encouraged to participate and excitement is generated by interaction eg asking children about colours,	High quality resources may be used – props, fabrics, objects, musical instruments  Includes a range of activities				x	x	x		Observation Family Survey



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make animal sounds	<p>verbal participation – noises, joining in with songs and rhymes,</p> <p>physical actions possible arts activities</p> <p>Range of sounds and movements eg choose items from box – element of surprise</p>								
1.6 Delivery of rhymes	<p>Rhymes are repeated rhymes faster or slower</p> <p>Rhymes slowed down so that all children can catch them</p> <p>Session leaders use different voice tones, high, whispering Loud enough voice to engage but not overwhelm audience</p>			x	x		x	x	Observation Family Survey
1.7 During sessions, familiar rhymes are used regularly but new rhymes are also introduced.	Rhymes are repeated during the sessions so that children learn them over time	x		x			x		Observation Family Survey Session leaders audit



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	Counting songs and ABC rhymes are included There are occasional special sessions								
1.8 Session leaders model rhymes to the group and actions using soft toys	Building families' confidence to support children's motor skills							x	Observation Session leaders survey
1.9 Flexibility of session	Follow structure but are open to ideas/ requests  Children moving freely -Leader not put off by children not yet ready to sit and listen and reassuring to parents , reducing their stress if children wander off or cry  If children lose interest, moving on to next rhyme		x					x	Observation Session leaders audit
1.10 Rhyme words are available for people who don't know them,	Builds the confidence of families by providing words, action instructions, having them on a screen etc						x		Observation
1.11 Books are promoted during or before the session	Depending on the age of children, rhyme times may	x							Observation Session

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	<p>include simple stories or maybe rhymes in books.</p> <p>Books are promoted to parents - for children and possibly for adults</p> <p>They are encouraged to borrow books to take home and read to children, to join Bookstart Bear's Reading Adventure</p>								<p>leaders audit</p> <p>Family Survey</p>
<p>1.12 Skilled rhyme time session leaders inspire and engage families</p>	<p>Session leaders are trained before delivering sessions</p> <p>Session leaders have opportunities to see and learn from other settings</p> <p>Session leaders knowledgeable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About the impact of rhyme times on children's development</li> <li>• About books for young children</li> <li>• Has a good rhyme repertoire</li> </ul>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>		<p>x</p>				<p>Session leaders audit</p>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand how to respond to the needs of children with special needs?</li> </ul>								

## Outcome 2: Rhyme time builds the relationship between parent and child

- Rhyme Times provide a short period in the day when parents and children can focus almost exclusively on each other. This helps a child to become securely attached –good attachment helps a baby’s brain physically develop and contributes to emotional resilience



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Outcome 2: Rhyme time builds the relationship between parent and child	What quality looks like	Excellence and Innovation	Being Authentic	Exciting, Inspiring and engaging	Ensuring a positive and inclusive experience	Involving children and young people	Personal progression	Belonging and ownership	Measured by
2.1 Parents encouraged to join in and sit with children, and include at least one rhyme in session when parents and child have to sit and face each other	Great eye contact and physical closeness and interaction eg “Head , Shoulders, Knees and Toes” , “Grand Old Duke of York” , “Row, Row Row your boat”	x			x				Observation
2.2 The benefits of sharing rhymes are explained to parents in the sessions but not in a didactic way  “This rhyme helps with rhythm, this song will help with counting”	Session leaders understand the impact a session has on a child and can express this in terms of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Speech, language communication</li> <li>•Parent /child attachment</li> <li>•School readiness</li> </ul> Why rhymes help language development, they introduce new words. Rhymes and songs help children remember and make the sounds, especially when accompanied by actions (which also help children’s healthy physical development)  Face to face rhymes are good for making eye contact	x			x		x		Observation Family Survey Session leader audit





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	between parent and child and building strong bonds – good for children’s brain development and for keeping children and parents relaxed								
2.3 Session leaders encourage parents to keep singing rhymes at home in home language/culture	Parents create more opportunities to spend time and share experiences with their child- building bonds						x		<b>Observation</b>



### Outcome 3: Rhyme time is inclusive

- All families including those from different cultures and those with children with disabilities and families with children who have been adopted or fostered feel equally welcomed in rhyme times

Outcome 3: Rhyme time is inclusive	What quality looks like	Excellence and innovation	Being Authentic	Exciting, inspiring and engaging	Ensuring a positive and Inclusive experience	Involving children and young people	Personal progression	Belonging and ownership	Measured by
3.1 Including rhymes from a range of cultural traditions Books and images used in rhyme times reflect different cultures and children	Families feel valued and that their own lives and the lives of other people different to them are reflected in the rhyme time		x		x				Observation Family survey
3.2 Families invited to share own rhymes in own language as well as learning English	Families feel valued				x	x		x	Observation Family survey
3.3 Session widely promoted in the community	Reaching into communities who may not have traditionally used libraries or who have English as a second language				x				Family survey



Outcome 3: Rhyme time is inclusive	What quality looks like	Excellence and Innovation	Being Authentic	Exciting, inspiring and engaging	Ensuring a positive and inclusive experience	Involving children and young people	Personal progression	Belonging and ownership	Measured by
3. 4 Ensuring children with disabilities can access and enjoy the rhyme time.	This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hello goodbye signed</li> <li>• Using lots of visual symbols,</li> <li>• Children able to experience textures, illustrations</li> <li>• Ensure children with disabilities close to the action / able to access quieter spaces</li> <li>• Promoting quieter sessions to families of children with autism</li> <li>• Sensory activities and cushions</li> </ul>	x	x		x				Observation Session leader audit

## Outcome 4: Rhyme time reduces social isolation

- Reducing social isolation – families feel included, welcomed and have the opportunity to meet other parents, improving the wellbeing of parents and children

Outcome 4: Rhyme time reduces social isolation	What quality looks like	Excellence and Innovation	Being Authentic	Exciting, inspiring and engaging	Ensuring a positive and inclusive experience	Involving children and young people	Personal progression	Belonging and ownership	Measured by
4.1 Session leaders always check if there are new participants and make them feel welcome	Parents feel confident about participating				x				Observation Family survey
4.2 Develop strategies to ensure no cliques e.g.	People encouraged to say hello to the family next to them or other activities to get people talking				x			x	Observation Family survey
4.3 Session leaders take time to acknowledge all children and parents,	Greeting people when they arrive, using children's names Session leaders introduce themselves by name		x						Observation Family survey
4.4 Listening to children	Children's requests and suggestions and questions acknowledged		x				x		Observation Family survey
4.5 Families building new friendship networks	Families encouraged to stay after the session to talk to other parents and children and session leaders stay to chat	x						x	Observation Family survey



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## Outcome 5: Rhyme time is accessible for parents and children

- Families from all backgrounds find it easy to come to rhyme times and join in

Outcome 5: Rhyme time is accessible for parents and children	What quality looks like	Excellence and Innovation	Being Authentic	Exciting, inspiring and engaging	Ensuring a positive and inclusive experience	Involving children and young people	Personal progression	Belonging and ownership	Measured by
5.1 Parents encouraged to sit on floor with children not sitting separately -comfortable cushions, marked space, but seats for older people, expectant mothers	Enables face to face attachment and parents supporting children to learn actions	x							Observation
5.2 Accessible car parking					x				Observation Family survey
5.3 Toilets, nappy changing facilities available and spaces for parents to feed children					x				Observation Family survey
5.4 Space is clearly defined	As far as possible there is	x			x				Family survey



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Outcome 5: Rhyme time is accessible for parents and children	What quality looks like	Excellence and Innovation	Being Authentic	Exciting, Inspiring and engaging	Ensuring a positive and inclusive experience	Involving children and young people	Personal progression	Belonging and ownership	Measured by
	<p>enough space for everyone</p> <p>Environment safe for children – automatic doors</p> <p>Clear signs where to go –eg buggy parking</p>								
5.5 Reliable	Regular times and not cancelled at short notice				x				Family survey
5.6 Free					x				Observation
5.7 Close to home					x				Family survey



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## Outcome 6: Rhyme time is embedded in strategy and enables strong partnerships

- Rhyme times act as bridge to other services for families
- Rhyme times enable partners to reach families with targeted support

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6.1 Session leaders signpost to other services at, before or after rhyme times	Rhyme time acts as a bridge to other services providing straight forward access for families	x			x				Observation
6.2 Partners attend rhyme times to meet and consult with parents and families	Enable partners to reach targeted communities	x			x				Session leaders audit
6.3 Rhyme time embedded in whole library policy and linked to whole authority/service early years policies e.g. Warwickshire Time to Talk strategy	Integrated approach/ shared messages, processes and delivery approaches – consistent support for families		x						Session leaders audit



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