# Things to Notice on a School Visit

There’s a lot going on at every school. You’ll find a list of things to look for in order to help you focus on what you want to learn from your visit below.

## THE SPACE

- **How is the furniture configured?**
- **Can students easily interact and collaborate?**
- **Is there open space for gathering together?**
- **What’s on the walls? Is student work displayed?**
- **Can you see individual differences in the work?**
- **Is the space cheerful and appealing?**
- **Are there books available in the classroom? Can students reach them?**
- **What “things” are in the room? Is it full of art supplies, pets, plants, science equipment; “sense of purposeful clutter”?**

## SIGHTS + SOUNDS

- **Whose voices do you hear?**
- **Is the teacher’s voice genuine and respectful?**
- **Do you hear a hum of activity and ideas being exchanged?**
- **Do the students look engaged?**
- **Are students working alone, in pairs or groups?**
- **How are they interacting with each other?**
- **Is the learning joyful?**
- **Where is the teacher? Can you find him among the students? Is she behind her desk?**
- **How do the students react to visitors? Are they warm and eager to share what they’re doing?**

## THE SPACE

- **Is the overall atmosphere appealing? Is it a place where you would want to spend time?**
- **Does student work fill the hallways?**
- **Is there a school library? Is it well-stocked and comfortable?**
- **What is the condition of the bathrooms?**
- **If you get to peek at the faculty lounge, is it a warm and inviting place for staff to spend time?**
- **Is the school clean?**

## SIGHTS + SOUNDS

- **How were you greeted? Is the staff welcoming toward visitors?**
- **Are students in the hallways greeted by name?**
- **Are adults actively engaged with supervising and facilitating recess and lunch?**
- **Do you feel a sense of community?**
- **Does the school feel like a safe place?**

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