Visuals in the Classroom

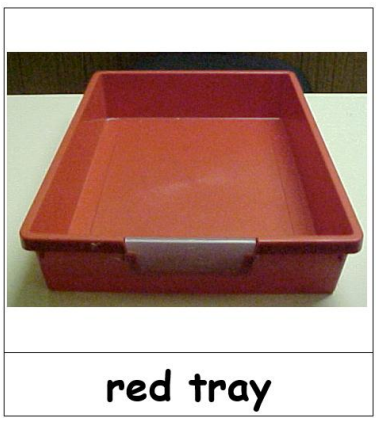


The following is guidance for the use of visuals, to support autistic learners.

Visual timetable:
Every classroom has a yellow background for their visual timetable. Yellow is the colour background to be used for non-negotiables. These are the things children don't get a choice about. For example, after playtime we are doing guided reading. There is no choice, it is happening. The yellow backgrounds are in the same place in every classroom to enable children to always know where the visual timetable is, whichever room they are working in.


classroom

All of the symbols that we use on the visual timetable are to be either photo-symbols (especially for early years of students with complex needs) or black and white and should be consistent throughout the school. This means that when a child has learnt a symbol in reception it will remain the same throughout their time at the School.
Rather than maths or English, consider red tray/blue tray. The student then knows they have to complete the activities in their trays, and it will give more relevance than Maths/English for which there are different tasks/areas of study.


red tray

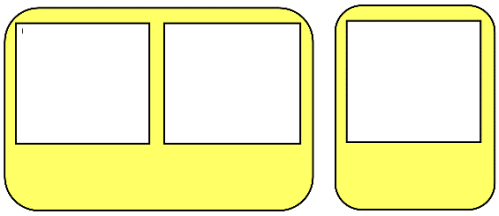

blue tray

Symbols are laminated in Matt laminating pouches to reduce reflection of light to support children with visual impairments and visual sensory sensitivity.

Visual timetable instructions for use:

1. Ensure your visual timetable is ready before the start of the day.
2. Each time something is complete, remove the picture from the visual timetable.
3. Don't put the next day's visual timetable up until the children have gone home.

Use of now and next boards:

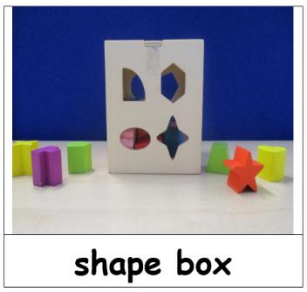


Now and next boards must have a yellow background. Some children will require a two part now and next board and some may require just a 'one part' now board. Other children may be able to access 3 or 4 part boards.
It is best when using now and next boards to use photographs rather than symbols, however if they are symbols that the child has already learnt such as those used on the visual timetable, then they can be used.

Choice:
There are times in school where children, who require visuals to support them, get to choose what activity they would like to do. They may also use visuals to choose what food they would like for a snack or for dinner.

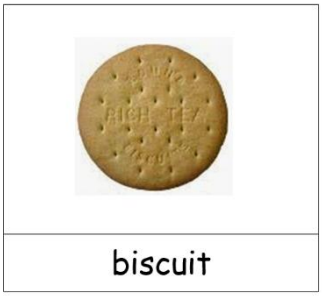
Activity choices should be given on a **RED** background.





Food choices should be given on a **BLUE** background.





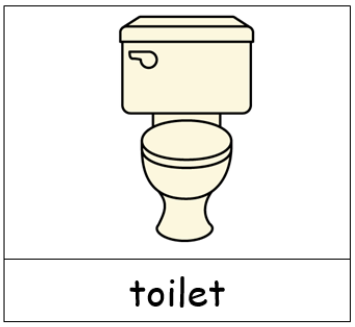
These boards need to be a red or blue piece of card/paper that is laminated with Velcro strips on to stick the choice cards to.

When choosing from a red activity choice board, encourage the child to place the chosen card onto the Now and Next board with the yellow background. Now they know it is going to happen. This works well

when you are asking them to do a non-preferred activity first and want them to have a choice regarding the preferred activity which will come next. Some children may need to do an activity sandwich of preferred, non-preferred, preferred. Be mindful that when teaching children to follow directions with visuals they may only be able to cope with an activity for a very brief amount of time. Perhaps only a few seconds. Just remember that the activity must happen and be finished with the permission of the adult before moving on to the next activity. When finishing an activity, use the finished symbol and overlay it on the photo on the now and next board. Remove the photo whilst saying the activity name and finished. For example, “bubbles finished”. Then reaffirm what the next activity is by pointing to it and saying ‘now’ and the name of the activity, for example, “now numbers”.

Other key prompts and visuals should be available at that child’s workstation or within reach:

Water/drink
Toilet



Symbols for instruction:

