

## Following an adult's agenda using a "now and next" approach

### Why?

- ◆ To support children to complete an activity or access a routine they may be reluctant to carry out before taking part in a preferred activity.
- ◆ To develop children's attention and engagement skills.
- ◆ To help children understand that they have a routine to their day.
- ◆ To help children to anticipate that they have some control and choice but not all of the time. There are things that must be done as well as things that they like/want to do.



**This approach supports children to:**

- follow someone else's agenda
- follow directions and learn new skills
- access a range of routines and experiences
- engage and respond communication & interactions
- develop communication skills - using verbal and non-verbal techniques, including the use of visuals



### How?

- ◆ Decide what you want the child to complete first and the preferred activity that the child can do immediately after. This preferred item/activity should be motivating enough to increase the likelihood that the child will follow your direction.
- ◆ Try to use the least amount of words possible and use gesture to support the action if appropriate alongside the use of visuals.
- ◆ Before beginning the first task say, e.g. "now shoes, next garden." If needed, give a simple reminder, when the child is almost done e.g. say "One more shoe, then garden." When the first task is complete, you can state this to the child, "shoes finished now garden" removing the visual for that part and immediately providing access to the preferred item or activity.



**A "now and next" approach should be supported with objects of reference (objects representing the activity e.g. a shoe) or a visual "now and next" board with photos or symbols of the objects/activities.**

**This approach can be used during routines, child-initiated play, during adult led times or to transition between these, e.g.**

*"Now cars in box... next slide"*

*"Now coat off... next trains"*

*"Now puzzle... next bubbles"*

*"Now wash hands... next yogurt"*



**It is important to remember:**

- ☑ **Resources and activities that are highly motivating to the individual child** need to follow the adult's request and be the "next" part of the "now and next" approach.
- ☑ Make sure the 'tasks' or "requests" that you are asking the child to complete are developmentally appropriate and not too challenging.
- ☑ Choose your battles! Think about what is essential to the child and the setting – what will the outcome be?
- ☑ Ensure the language used is adapted to the developmental stage of the child, e.g. using key words – "now snack, next ball."