

## Information Sheet

### Visual Supports

#### 3. Using Real Objects to Support 'Now & Next'

**Before using the guidance in this document, please refer to the following:**

Visual Supports - 1 Using Real Objects of Reference

Visual Supports - 2 Using Real Objects to Make Choices

#### It is Important to Remember:

- Using visuals is a **whole team approach** - all adults use visual supports for all parts of the day and routine.
- **Everyone** in contact with the child must have an understanding of the child's preferred form of communication.
- When getting your setting ready for the day/session - this should include checking that visuals supports are accessible.
- Visual supports can be personalised to support individual children.
- Visual supports enable the child to have a visual image alongside the verbal word(s).
- Use of visual supports will help reduce some of the child's frustration and anxiety.
- Visual Supports encourage some independence, as well as develop the child's confidence.
- When using verbal communication, remember the child's **current stage of development** (not their actual age) and their current level of understanding.
- It is important to choose the words you will use with the real objects of reference - then all adults will use these same **word(s)** with the same **real object(s)**.
- An adult will get down to the child's level and use the child's name to get their attention - then pause, briefly. The adult will use the chosen words while showing the child the Real Object of Reference.
- Take it slowly - start off with 1 or 2 real objects and only introduce more once the child is using these purposefully.
- Remember, that using visual supports doesn't automatically mean the child will co-operate.

- ❖ The following examples are based on a child who is not receiving support from a Speech and Language Therapist. If the child is receiving support from a Speech and Language Therapist, please contact them for advice.

### Using Now and Next alongside minimal language:

Using the 'Now and Next' approach supports the child to with immediate routine, visually. The amount of times you will use this will be depend on the child's needs and their current level of understanding.

'Now and Next' is like a mini agreement, so you must always follow-through with whatever is 'Next'.

**For this example,** think about when going to the outside area. To indicate what is now, e.g. put their shoes on, coat on, sun hat and sun cream, etc.

- The adult will get down to the child's level
- The adult will use the child's name to get their attention and pause, briefly.

### For this example:



(these are the child's actual shoes)



(the child likes to play football in the garden, so this is the a real object of reference for the garden)

### **Advanced Notice:**

Remember, that some children will need advanced notice for a change that is not of their choosing - this advanced notice will need to be supported with something visual.

The type of advanced notice will depend on the child's current stage of development and their level of understanding.

Please refer to the information in [Visual Supports - 1 Using Real Objects of Reference](#).

**Using Now and Next - for a set of instructions:**

**For this example:** To let the child know that it is nearly lunch-time.



(A hand soap dispenser is used to represent hand washing)

**For this example:** When it is time to wash their hands, the adult would say,



(A hand soap dispenser is used to represent hand washing)

**For this example:** When the child is washing their hands, the adult would say,



(A hand soap dispenser is used to represent hand washing)



(this is the child's own lunch bag)

**For this example:** When the child has finished washing their hands, the adult would say,



(A hand soap dispenser is used to represent hand washing)



(this is the child's own lunch bag)

**For this example:** Once the child is eating their lunch, the adult could say,



**Please note:**

Depending on the child's level of understanding, you may need to include a 'Then' - so that the child knows what is happening, **for this example**, why they are washing their hands.



**Remember:** Every adult must use the same word(s) with the same real object(s).