

Information Sheet

Visual Supports

8. Personal Visual Timetables

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

Visual Supports - 3 Using Real Objects to support 'Now & Next'

Visual Supports - 4 Using Photos of Real Objects

Visual Supports - 5 Using Photos to Make Choices

Visual Supports - 6 Using Photos to Make Requests

Visual Supports - 7 Using Photos to support 'Now & Next'

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 photo of the real objects of reference - then all adults will use these same **word(s)** with the same **photo(s)**.
- Photos must be of the real objects within your setting, e.g. toilet, taps, hand towels, etc. This includes photos of the child's real belongings, e.g. water bottle, coat, shoes, wellies, etc.

- 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 photo.
 - Take it slowly - start off with using photos of the real object for one purpose, then 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.

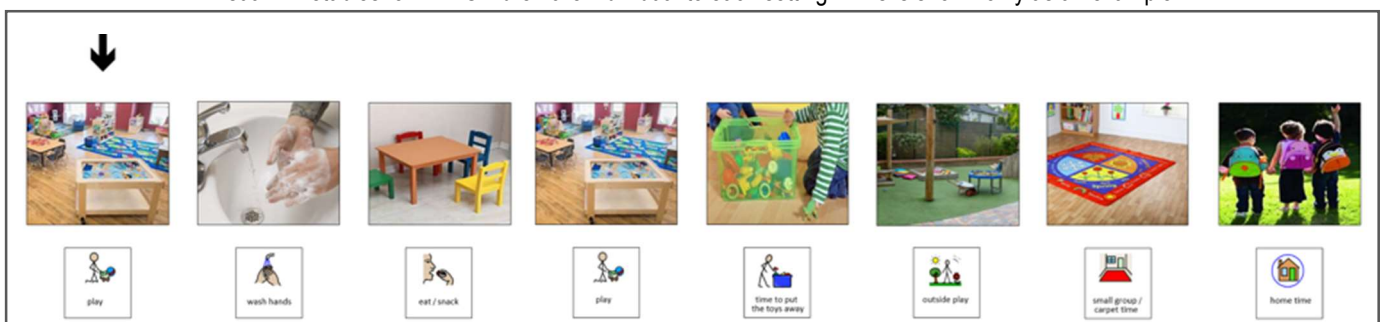
Visual Timetables

Every setting will already have a **Visual Timetable for ALL Children** as this is part of the Universal Level. This will be placed at the children's eye level.

The Visual Timetable for ALL Children must be used consistently, so that it shows where you are within the timetable. This can be done by using an arrow that you can move from photo to photo - or maybe remove or turn round the photos to show that something has finished.

For this example:

Visual Timetables for ALL Children are individual to each setting. This is shown only as an example:



In addition to this, some children may need their own **Personal Visual Timetable** - this is because the Visual Timetable for ALL Children isn't detailed enough and will need to be broken down into manageable steps.

Getting Started

Depending on the child's current stage of development and their level of understanding, a good place to start to introduce a Personal Visual Timetable is just before home time. This is done by adding one activity that the child enjoys, prior to home time. It is like a visual countdown to home time.

Start with a simple Personal Visual Timetable containing one activity and then home time.

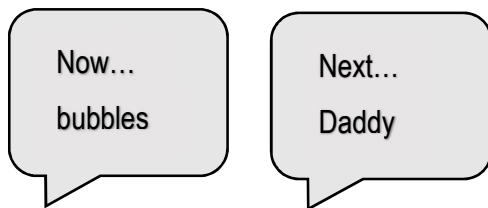
Remember: All Personal Visual Timetables must be ready and accessible.

The 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 show the child the Personal Visual Timetable. The adult will point to the relevant photo when saying the word(s) - remembering to pause between photos.

For this example:

You may need a timer for the bubbles as there is no obvious end.

Example:

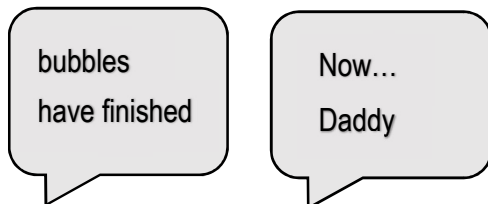


(The photo of Snow White and her dad, the king - represents a photo of the child and their parent/carer)

When an activity has finished, for this example - bubbles, remove the photo card to show that it is finished (in time the child may want to do this independently).

For this example:

Example:



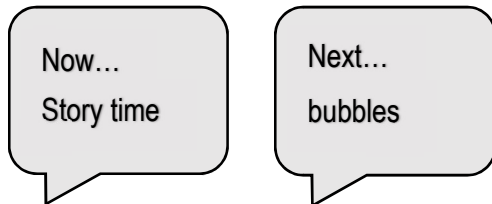
(The photo of Snow White and her dad, the king - represents a photo of the child and their parent/carer)

Some children will be able to have the 'home time' photo card on their Personal Visual Timetable, however some children will need a photo of who is collecting them, and it is important that is accurate. Therefore, encourage parents/carers to keep you updated with any changes. This will give you time to prepare the child for this change.

Once the child is using this simple personal visual timetable purposefully and consistently, you can add another Photo Card - this should be prior to the current one so they stay in the same order.

For this example: Small group / carpet time is added. The activity is story time.

For the child in this example, the small group consists of the child, one adult and one other child. The adult chooses a short story that is of interest to the child, as well as some puppets, to support their attention skills and encourage them to stay at the activity.



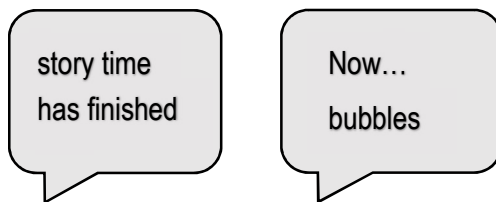
Example:



(The photo of Snow White and her dad, the king - represents a photo of the child and their parent/carer)

Once story time has finished, the photo card is removed, as the adult says:

For this example:



Example:



(The photo of Snow White and her dad, the king - represents a photo of the child and their parent/carer)

and so on...

Continue adding activities slowly, but don't add too many as it could be overwhelming for the child. You know the child well, so you will know when the Personal Visual Timetable is big enough.

Some children will need their personal care needs included within their Personal Visual Timetable.

For this example:

Personal Visual Timetables are individual to each child. This is shown only as an example:



(The photo of Snow White and her dad, the king - represents a photo of the child and their parent/carer)

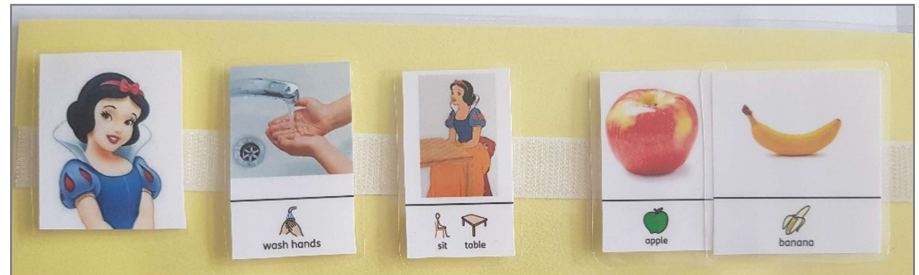
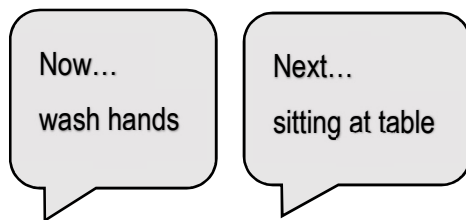
Using Personal Visual Timetable as a Timeline / Sequence of Events:

This can be used to remind or reassure the child - this could be used even if the child has a good understanding of the setting's routine and/or good language skills.

For this example: Have this ready to use in the snack area.

The adult would say,

Example:

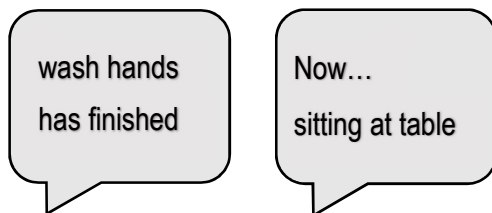


(These photos of Snow White represent photos of the child)

The wash hands photo card is removed, as the adult says,

For this example:

Example:



(These photos of Snow White represent a photo of the child)

and so on...

Another example is the hand washing routine, which is used in the same as the example above.

For this example:

Personal Visual Timetables are individual to each child. This is shown only as an example:



(These photos of Snow White represent a photo of the child)

For more information, refer to: [Visual Supports - 9. Simplifying a Personal Visual Timetable using 'Now & Next'](#)

Other Uses for a Personal Visual Timetable:

To support a child who is anxious (the child may have a good understanding of language & routines):

A child who is generally aware of what is happening throughout the day and can use the general visual timetable for all children - however at times of emotional dysregulation, the child may be worried, scared or unsure. The child would benefit from using a Personal Visual Timetable. This may only be needed at certain times of the day or for specific transitions.

Depending on the child's individual needs, the child may need adult support with their Personal Visual Timetable. The child may need their Personal Visual Timetable to be discrete - maybe in a bag or a tray - for them to access independently.

If the child appears anxious or unsure, an adult could say, for this example: (Use child's name first) "See your timetable?" This would remind the child to go and look at their own Personal Visual Timetable. Remember, if the child's Personal Visual Timetable is discrete, the reminder will also need to be discrete.

For a child who is anxious about when they will be going home (including a child who has just started at the setting):

If the child is anxious/upset, and wants to go home - the adult would point to either the Visual Timetable for ALL Children or a Personal Visual Timetable, to show what activities will be happening before going home.

For this example:



Example:



(The photo of Snow White and her dad, the king - represents a photo of the child and their parent/carer)

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