

Information Sheet

Visual Supports

9. Simplifying a Personal Visual Timetable using '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

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'

Visual Supports - 8 Personal Visual Timetable

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.

To support the child, Personal Visual Timetables often need to be broken down into more manageable steps. This is done by using the Now & Next approach.

Remember that a child's Personal Visual Timetable runs alongside the setting's Visual Timetable for ALL children.

For this example, the following **Visual Timetable for ALL Children** is being referred to:

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



A layout example for this is available to download: [Visual Supports - Printable Example - Timetable for ALL Children](#)

For this example, the following **Personal Visual Timetable** is being referred to:

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

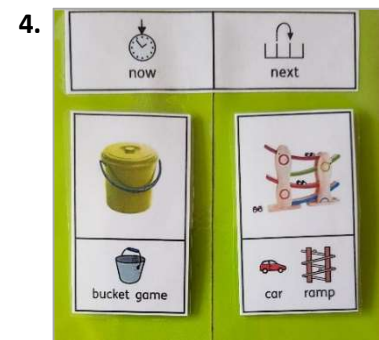


(The photo of Snow White represents a photo of the child)

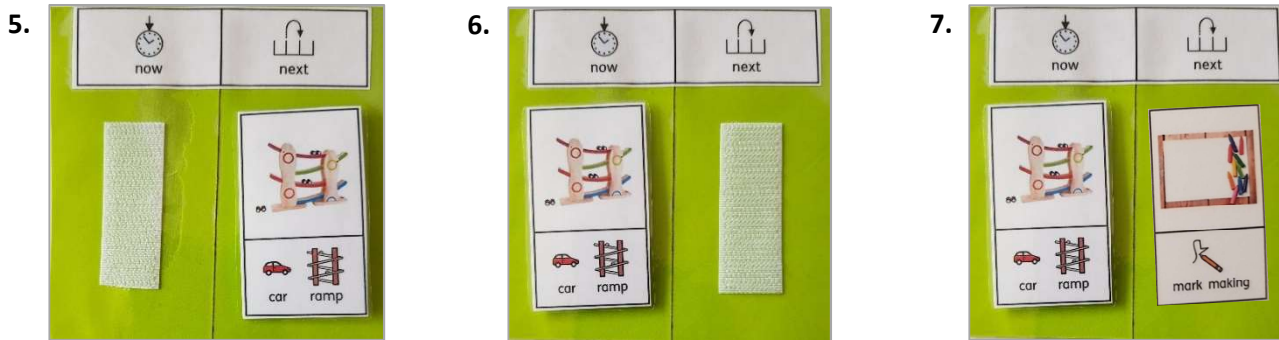
The above Personal Visual Timetable will need to be broken into smaller steps to use on a Now and Next Card. The Photo Cards are taken from the Personal Visual Timetable in order, and added to the child's own Now & Next card (The first two photo cards on the example above, are Puzzle and Bucket Game).

The following are shown as examples only:

1. An adult will show the child the Now & Next card.
The adult will point to the relevant photo card and say, for this example,
"Now, Puzzle - Next, Bucket Game"



2. When the Puzzle has finished, the adult will remove the Puzzle card and say, for this example,
"Puzzle, finished"
3. The Bucket Game becomes the 'Now' activity, so it is moved over to the 'Now' side, as the adult says, for this example,
"Now Bucket Game".
4. The adult will add another photo card from the child's Personal Visual Timetable and say, for this example,
"Next, Car Ramp".



5. When the Bucket Game has finished, the adult will remove the Bucket Game photo card and say, for this example, "Bucket Game, finished"
6. The Car Ramp becomes the 'Now' activity, so it is moved over to the 'Now' side, as the adult says, for this example, "Now Car Ramp".
7. The adult will add another photo card from the child's Personal Visual Timetable and say, for this example, "Next, Mark Making".

and so on...

Please note: Depending on the child's ability, they may wish to move the photo cards themselves.

When planning, it is a good idea to have an extendable activity prior to washing hands for snack, this is just in case the rest of the group are not ready for snack at the planned time - for this example, it is mark making.

The next part will coincide with the **Visual Timetable for All Children** - where an adult will get all the children's attention, and as the arrow is moved, the adult will say, for this example,

"Play has finished, it's now time to wash your hands for snack."

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



This instruction is then broken down for the child who has a Personal Visual Timetable with Now & Next approach. The child may also need advanced notice that this is going to happen.

Idea: To support ALL children to wash their hands, a laminated 'handwashing timeline' can be placed at the children's height, above the sinks at your setting. This is used to guide or as a reminder, or maybe to take away a child's anxiety when they're not sure what to do next.

For example:



A layout example for this is available to download: [Visual Supports - Printable Example - Sink Timeline](#)

For the child with the Now & Next, this wash hands timeline may need to be broken down into individual photo cards to enable the child's Now & Next to continue.

This timeline will be the same for every day.

For this example:

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



(The photo of Snow White represents a photo of the child)

Depending on the child's needs and stage of development, you may need a Personal Visual Timetable for snack, this is to enable the child's Now & Next to continue. This would also be the same every day.

For this example:

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



(The photo of Snow White represents a photo of the child)

After snack, you may have another Personal Visual Timetable ready to use, for example:

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



(The photo of Snow White represents a photo of the child. The king represents parents/carers)

Think about the Photo you use for Home Time - Some children will need 'home time' to be very specific. This may be a photo of who will be picking them up and it is important to ask parents/carers to let you know if this person changes, so you can prepare the child in advance.

When taking Photos:

- Photos should be of the real objects in your setting. Remember to follow the guidance in: [Visual Supports - 4. Using Photos of Real Objects](#)
- Make the photos as clear as possible, with limited items in the background.
- The child may need a new photo if they get something new, e.g. coat, water bottle, etc.

Remember:

- Keep words you use to a minimum.
- Every adult must use the same word(s) with the same visual support(s).
- **The child relies on the visuals you use**, even if you feel they don't need them anymore. The child's level of anxiety will increase without them.
- **Always think about the child's current stage of development** - If the child's stage of development is, for example, 18 months - do you think an 18-month-old child could do what you are expecting the child to do?
- Always, get down to the child's level
- Always, get the child's attention before giving any direction/instruction.

Be organised:

- It is vital that you get the child's Personal Visual Timetable(s) ready in advance.
- The activities shown on the Personal Visual Timetable **must** be available.
- Some timetables will be the same every day, e.g. hand washing, snack time routine.
- Others will need some of the activities changing each day, however this will depend on the child's needs. Some activities will need to be the same, so that they are predictable for the child.