

Here's how to... Use an Individual Visual Timetable

<p>What is it?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A visual timetable, timeline or visual activity schedule is visual representation of the day that can be used to support a child to know what will happen next. This can be done with pictures, symbols or printed words. - If a child does not have symbolic understanding, you can introduce the process of following a schedule using objects of reference. - The schedule can be either a full day or a section of the day depending on the child's understanding.
<p>Who is it for?</p>	<p>In Early Years settings they support all children both verbal and pre-verbal and particularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children presenting or diagnosed with communication difficulties including Autistic children. - Children that have anxiety about what is happening throughout their day - Children new to the setting - Children with EAL
<p>How do I use it?</p>	<p>The visual timetable is an interactive tool and is only useful when it is used that way. To help a child to know where they are in the day, the visual timetable needs to be referred to regularly. This needs to be at a height accessible by the child and able to be spotted by the child at a glance.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce the visual timetable to the child at the start of the activity or time period that it relates to. For example, at the beginning of the day, show the child the activities that will be taking place in the morning. If there is a choosing activity, make sure that there is a picture which represents 'choosing time', but not necessarily what the child has chosen in advance (in case they change their mind). 2. Carry out the activity or step that is first on the visual timetable, referring with the child to the picture as you go. 3. Refer back to the visual timetable at the end of an activity with the child. Show visually that the activity is finished and model placing the picture into the finished box. 4. It is important that each activity on the timetable is completed and that this takes place in the identified order. If you are running out of time, you can take a very short amount of time with a particular activity, but make sure that you do it. This helps to increase predictability.
<p>Why would I use it?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It enables a child to know the things that must happen first, before they can do the activity that they are often focused on. - It can reassure children what is going to happen and the order that things will happen in which can lessen anxiety. - It also helps them learn the concept of time passing as they are able to understand where they are in the day, by knowing what has gone before and what will come next.

Top tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- DO persevere. It might take some time for the child to become familiar with and understand this method for communication.- DO make sure that the timetable is always set up before the child comes into the room.- DO come down to the child's level when using this resource and make sure it is set up in a suitable location that is easily accessible to the child.- Do begin with a small number of symbols then gradually build this up as the child becomes more confident at using their timetable.- DO laminate the resources so that they last. This will save you lots of time in the long run.- Do reduce your language.- Do support the child you are working with to access the 'next' activity on the timetable and to return to the timetable once this is complete.- DO consider the child's current level of wellbeing as to whether it is appropriate for the adult to encourage engagement with the visual timetable.
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