



Kensington Queensmill

Barlby Road, London, W10 6BH

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www.kensingtonqueensmill.com

“First and then” boards

“First and then” boards can be used to create a structured and predictable environment, which supports engagement in a range of activities and also helps with transitions between activities.

How to use:

1. Show the first/then card, point to the two symbols, and say “First snack, then park”.
2. When the first activity is done, show the first/then card again and say “snack is finished!” while pointing at the first visual on the card.
3. Begin Activity 2 (park) immediately.

When to use:

- Use the boards throughout all activities to increase predictability and support with regulation.
- Draw attention back to the boards when an activity is ending, as it acts as an additional visual to show the end of an activity. This can support with transitions. Alongside this, use countdowns and pre-warning to support with transitions.
- Use the boards at the start of a less preferred activity to show that after its completion, a preferred activity will take place.
- Use these boards when there is a change in routine, as plans can change which can be challenging. Any visuals to support with understanding of this can be beneficial.
- You can write and draw a symbol of the activities on the board. If needed, you can also write the words and show a photo, for example from your phone.

“First, Then, Next” boards

Similarly to the “First and then” boards, use these to build predictability into the day. You can use these when embedding a new activity into a routine, for example “first dinner, then visit Nanny, then game with Mum”.

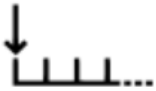



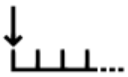


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 <p>first</p>	 <p>then</p>

 <p>first</p>	 <p>then</p>	 <p>next</p>



Key chain visuals

What are “Key chain visuals”?

The key chain visuals are useful across the entire day and can be used in most situations. They are adaptable and portable, as the key ring can be attached to bags and clothing so it is always accessible.

Benefit of using “Key chain visuals”

- They support with providing structure and routine.
- When adults use these visuals alongside their speech, it supports the child’s understanding
- Using these when giving instructions can reduce dysregulation as sometimes, giving too many spoken instructions can cause dysregulation
- The visuals are also a tool that our students can use to communicate with us, so we can offer these to students to support them to express their wants or needs. If our students are trying to express something to us, supporting adults should model the language, alongside using the visuals, to encourage students to use this as a method of communication.

How to use:

- To support understanding:
 - Use these alongside spoken language, by pointing to the visual when saying the word.
 - Try to keep spoken language simple when using the visual.
- To support students’ use of language
 - Offer them the visuals to use
 - When you see they are trying to communicate, model this using the visuals. For example, if the student is pulling your hand and you know they want the toilet, hold up the “toilet” visual, say “toilet” and then go to the toilet with them.

When to use:

- Use them across a range of contexts
- Use them during as many activities as possible.

If there are any additional visuals for the keyring you require, please don’t hesitate to contact the Speech and Language Therapist or Class teacher.



stop



sit



quiet



chair



coat on



shoes off



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calm



good thinking



play



trousers



up



listen



socks



on

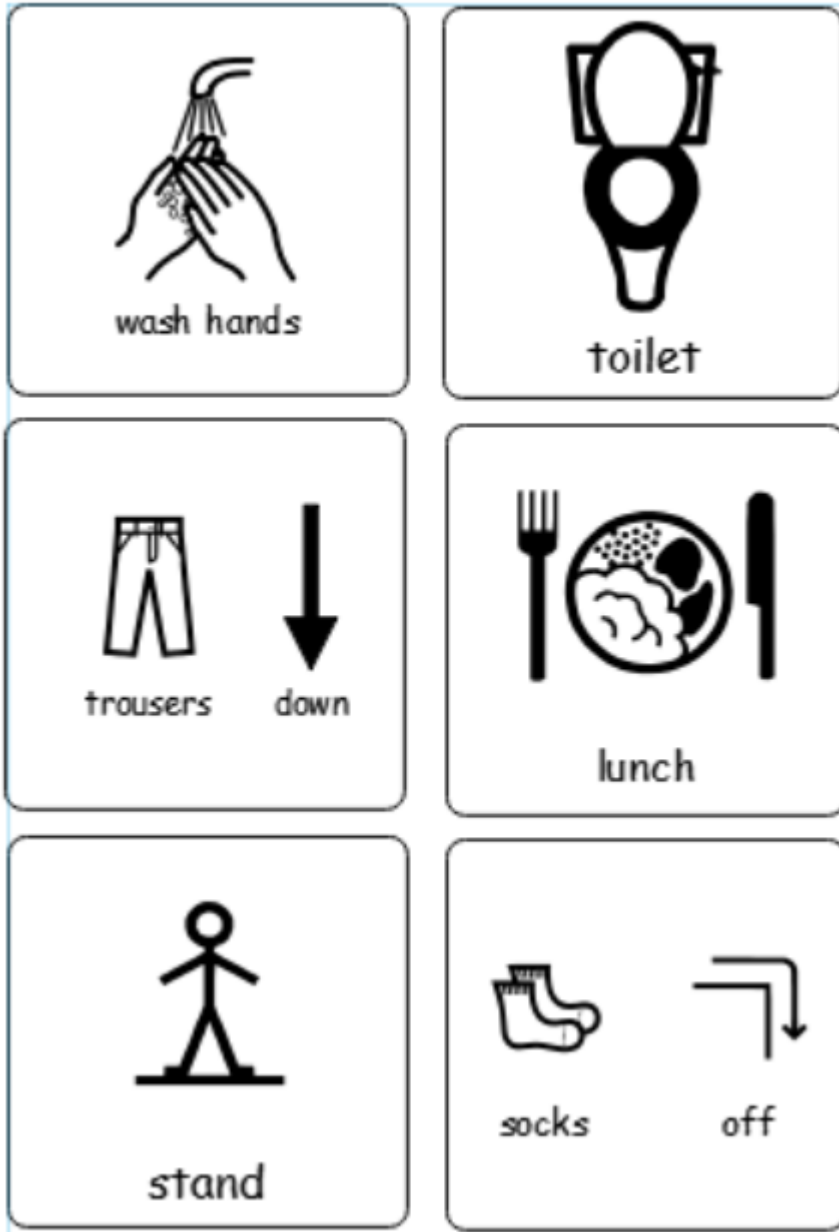


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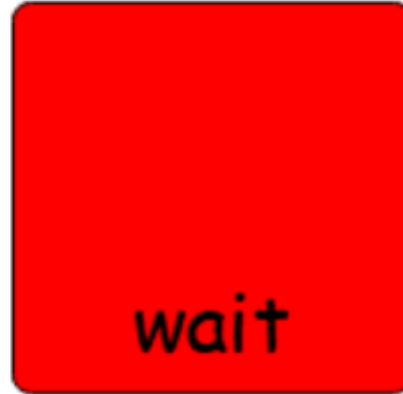
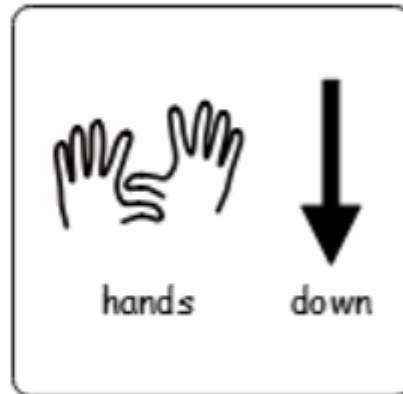


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Objects of Reference

What are "Objects of Reference"?

Objects of reference uses objects that have a specific meaning linked with them.

When used **often and consistently**, these objects can help children to develop an understanding of their environment. For example, when they are given a spoon, they know that it is time for dinner.

Objects of reference can be used to help children to make choices between activities and to help them understand what is going to happen next.

How to introduce Objects of Reference

1. Find an **object that is clearly associated with each activity** and not used in other activities (make sure it is something the child can hold and explore).

For example:

- *Lunchtime – plate*
- *Teeth brushing – toothbrush*
- *Nappy change – nappy*
- *Bath time – flannel*
- *Toilet – toilet roll*

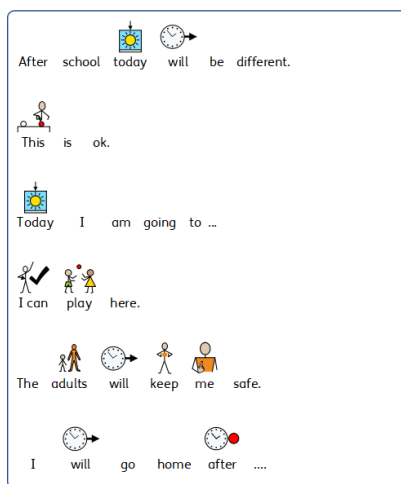
2. **Just before the activity**, give the object to the child, so he can explore it for a while. Name the activity (e.g. "bath time") and make the Makaton sign, if you know it. Make sure you go the activity straight away so the child learns to link the object with the activity.
3. Keep the object with you **during the activity**, so she can see and touch it. This will help build her link between the object and activity.
4. At the **end of the activity**, show the activity is over by putting the object in a "finished" box (e.g. shoe box or ice-cream tub), or encourage your child to put it in himself. Clearly say e.g. "bath time finished" and then move away from the activity.
5. Keep **repeating** this process each day to help your child learn what activity each object represents. It will take time and patience, so you will need to persevere!
6. Once your child seems to be **anticipating** the activity when you give them the object, you can begin to introduce further objects.

Social Stories

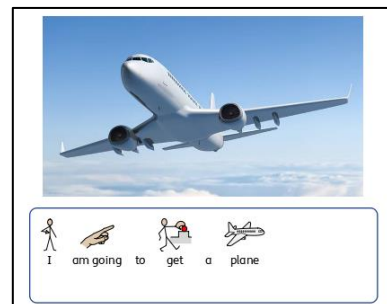
What are social stories?

Social stories are short descriptions about a situation or event, containing specific information about what will happen and why. Social stories are adapted to each individual and will contain varying levels of information and visuals, depending on the child's needs.

e.g. 1 social story consisting of multiple sentences per page and symbols on key words



e.g. 2 social story consisting of one picture and one sentence per page



Why do we use social stories?

Social stories are a concrete way of helping children understand abstract concepts or changes.

By presenting information about what might happen in a structured and visual manner, we can increase the structure in children's lives and reduce their anxiety.

Topics social stories can target:

- Developing self-care skills
- Coping with changes to routine and unexpected events (e.g. moving house)
- Emotional regulation strategies (e.g. what we can do when sad)
- Understanding or predicting how others might behave or respond in a particular situation





How do we use the social story?

Once you have written a social story, the adult needs to make opportunities for the children to regularly access the story whilst in safe and calm environments. The child may read the story themselves, require adults to read the story to them, or might access a recording of the story.



Talking Mats

“A Talking Mat” is a visual system to support people to express their views and feelings. The talking mat allows students to organise their opinions into of items and activities they like, and do not like.

 I  Like	 I  do not like

How to use a talking mat:

- Your talking mat is a one-page sheet separated into 2 columns: ‘like’ and ‘don’t like’
- You will need visual cards of items/activities to place on the mat (these can be digital if the user would interact better with a digital resource)
- Initially you can use the talking mat to label you child’s actions, e.g. then they are enjoying an ice cream show them the talking mat and place ice cream under ‘like’.
- Once children are familiar with the talking mat, you can try to complete the mat around a specific topic.
- Show them the visual and ask them to place it on the mat to share their opinion around the item.

Top tips:

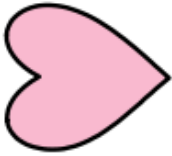
- Use the boards after all activities, ensuring there are some activities your child likes and some that they don’t like.
- When using the talking mat, ensure you model the language of ‘like’ and ‘not like’

- You can write and draw a symbol of the activities on the board. If needed, you can also write the words and show a photo, for example from your phone.
- Talking mats can also be digital.

If there are any additional topic visuals you require to use with your talking mat, please don't hesitate to contact your child's Speech and Language Therapist or Class Teacher.



I



Like



I

do not like



Turn taking

Turn taking and sharing are complex social skills that many young children can find difficult. By encouraging your child to participate in turn taking activities, and using visual supports, you can help them to develop these skills.





There are many different visuals you can use to support turn taking. Initially try to have one adult playing with one child. Keep turns short and try to ensure the activity is highly motivating for you child.

Tips:

- Use activities which are fun for your child to watch. This will help them to maintain the attention on you when it is your turn.
- Initially the adults turn will be very short to slowly build up the skill
- Model language throughout, such as 'my turn' and 'your turn'.
- Ensure the activity is predictable, for example use count downs to show when each turn is ending.

How to use visuals during Turn taking

1. Use a first and then board to show whose turn is 'first' and whose turn it will be after.
2. Use photos of each player or write their names each time under wither 'first' or 'then' (*depending on your child's level of understanding of words*)

 first	 then
	

3. Show your child the first/then card, and say "First Jo's turn, then Berta's turn"
4. Countdown the end of each turn and model language, for example "3, 2, 1... Jo's turn has finished"
5. Then swap the names around on the first and then board and show this to your child.
6. Refer back to the visual if your child is trying to take another turn when it is not their turn.
7. Each time the turn swaps, show this change by moving the persons picture to 'first' or write their name there.



Creating structure at home

Children, especially Autistic children, learn best from repetition and benefit from predictability and structure. Establishing routines at home reduces unpredictability of everyday life for autistic children. Although home life can be unpredictable, certain events happen each day, for example mealtimes and bed time. A good way to create structure at home is by using a visual schedule, including these regular activities as well as changing events.

What are visual schedules?

Visual schedules breakdown the steps that will happen and present them using a visual list, e.g. written words, symbols or pictures. Visual schedules can be used to show the steps involved within an activity, e.g. having a shower, or can be used more broadly to show the activities that the child will do in a day.

The visual schedule can help children understand their day and what they need to do. This increases predictability, which can support with regulation and participation in activities.

How to use a visual schedule:

- Creating a schedule for the day or activity involves writing and drawing a symbol of each step.
- When each step has ended, draw student's attention to the schedule and remove the item that has finished. Place it in the finished pouch. Start the next activity.
- If there is a change, show the student the change as you make it on their schedule.
- You can offer choices of activity and support students to have some control over activities on their schedule where possible.

E.g. 1: schedule for a weekday	E.g. 2: schedule for going to the park
