

## Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service

# Visual Timetables

### What is a visual timetable?

A visual timetable is a tool to outline the structure, activities and events of the day. It should be referred to at key points throughout the day and supports children with the following:

- Following a routine
- Prepares for any changes in routine
- Understanding when an activity is starting and ending.

The visual timetable can be used in a variety of ways

- To show the structure of the whole day
- To show the structure of parts of the day e.g. the morning up until lunchtime
- To be used in educational settings to show expectations of what the child is to achieve in a specific session or activity.

### What do I need to create a visual timetable?

- Symbols or pictures/photographs can be used to create a visual timetable, consider which would be most appropriate for the child and the activities you will be doing.
- A chart/board/ strip will be needed to place the pictures onto each day
- Using Velcro is an useful way to attach pictures to the board, allowing easy removal when needed.
- It is also useful to have a box or envelope that all the pictures are placed into, after they have been completed each day.

### How to use the visual timetable



- Set up the timetable, attaching all the relevant pictures that are needed for the day/ morning/activity
- Then go through each picture with your child, explaining what they are, in the order that they will happen
- When the first activity is finished, refer back to the timetable, removing that picture and placing it in the box/envelope that you have prepared. Explain that this activity is finished and again explain what it happening next
- Continue to do this after each activity is completed.

## Visual Timetables– Examples














There are a variety of styles and ways of creating a visual timetable, below are just a few examples. It is important to consider the amount of pictures, and type of pictures, that will be best for the child to have on their timetable.





If you have any questions speak to the child’s speech and language therapist to advise further, and if unsure always start with fewer symbols, rather than more, to avoid confusion for the child.

This timetable shows a full morning in school for a child. This can be helpful for children who need to feel prepared for the morning ahead and who have a relatively good understanding of time i.e. they can understand an order of events.

 Monday
 register
 carpet time
 English
 maths
 drink and snack
 playtime

For some children, knowing **who** they are working with and **where** they will be might be more important than knowing the actual lesson/activity. When planning a timetable, consider what matters most for the child

 Friday	
 Mrs Smith	 classroom
 Mr Patel	 table work
 Mr Patel	 sensory room
 friends	 lunch
 Mrs Smith	 hall
 Parents	 home

1	2	3	4
 put on apron	 get paints	 paint picture	 tidy up

A sequence strip may be useful for a child that needs activities breaking down into smaller steps. This can also help to build independence in completing a task by allowing the child to learn to rely on the visual prompts.