

## Visual prompts

**Visual prompts support children who may not yet have the language to understand routines and behaviour expectations in the setting.**

By providing a concrete visual image, visual prompts build on the natural development of language as children first learn the names of people and things they see frequently.

Children can look at the pictures and take in the information at their own pace, which gives them extra time to think and process information.



Visual prompts also support children to understand what is happening next, something new or to learn routines. This reassures the child and supports their emotional well-being, as well as reduces anxiety, particularly in social situations.

Top tips for developing visual prompts within the whole setting:

- When developing visual prompts for a group of children think carefully about what format, how many and when you will introduce them
- Choose a few to introduce at a time
- Agree on the vocabulary that will go with the prompts e.g. Good Looking, Good Listening, Good Sitting
- Make sure the prompts are large enough for the children to see depending on the context e.g. you might make prompts the size of a coaster to work with one child but have larger prompts (A4 size for a whole group)
- Display clearly, at child height and ensure that other displays do not distract children from focusing on the prompt
- Support the use of visual prompts by using signs, gestures and clear language appropriate for the children's stage of development
- Ensure all staff use the visual prompts consistently across the setting
- Make displays and books for routines e.g. daily routine, snack time, washing hands
- Make visual prompt fans for each practitioner with key prompts, e.g. behaviour expectations, feelings, key routines
- Have whiteboards and pens to draw quick visual prompts for unexpected situations (laminated white card works well too)
- Use Velcro for prompts that change e.g. daily routine
- Laminate any pictures or photos – they will last longer!



### **Further resources**

The NDNA SEND Champions Programme supports practitioners to gain the skills and confidence to improve provision for children with SEND