How to…

Use a visual timetable

What is a visual timetable?

Autistic students can really benefit from having a visual timetable. Visual information reduces anxiety by showing them what is going to happen in their day. Visual timetables can also aid students to be as independent as possible, by visually showing them where they need to go or what they will be doing next.

How to use a visual timetable

Photo or symbol timetables: Use clear visuals suitable to the person using it, some students may need to use photos where others can tolerate symbols. The visuals should be laminated and placed on a Velcro strip in the order the events or activities will be happening. Once an activity is finished, remove the visual and place into a 'finished box'. This helps students understand that the task is over and they are now moving on to the next.

Written timetables: remember that some students will require written timetables instead of photos or symbols. This is similar to how many people manage their time, e.g. calendars, diaries and lists. They might like to have a small whiteboard to write on and wipe off, or they may prefer their own notepad. Work with the student to figure this out.

Remember…

1. Visual timetables can be vertical or horizontal, as long as you keep to this direction consistently.
2. Visual timetables should be used alongside any now and next boards or visual timers the student has.

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