



## **Inclusion and Engagement Support Team GEMs- Good Engagement Methods**

GEM's has been put together to demonstrate good engagement methods and practise to support CYP with SEND.

As specialist teachers, we wanted to produce a package to address and support some of the core challenges that professionals will encounter within their classrooms from CYP with SEND.

Within this document, you will find advice and information that has been designed to increase your knowledge of using visuals in the classroom to support CYP with SEND.

### **Visuals**

Visuals refer to words, pictures, objects, gestures/signs, videos, symbols and images, they are a way for us to process information. The majority of information retained by the brain is visual, data received visually is processed considerably faster (60,000 times) and by our long-term memory. 90% of information transmitted to the brain is visual.

Visuals can help CYP understand the message being conveyed to them, they assist the comprehension and understanding of verbal messages and facilitate communication. Visuals are useful regardless if a CYP has good language or not. As adults we rely on visuals in our everyday life such as toilet and exit signs, road signs and gestures.

CYP on the autism spectrum and CYP with speech language and communication difficulties can struggle to process verbal or written information. CYP with learning difficulties are better visual learners. Over 60% of the population are visual learners.

Using visuals in the classroom alongside text and auditory input is a valuable resource and can help support CYP:

- Language development
- Independence with completing tasks
- Vocabulary development
- Literacy skills
- Working memory
- Social interaction
- Time and organisation management
- Routines
- Develop visual thinking skills

### **Why is the use of visuals so important to support learning?**

- Auditory input 'disappears' whereas visuals remain and can be referred to, which supports memory, organisation and attention skills
- Visuals allow the CYP time for language processing.
- They help the CYP 'see' what you mean and clearly show what is expected
- They can build a CYP independence and ability to self-check work
- They can help reduce anxiety- visuals do not have a tone!
- They can support transitions or shift in attention
- They are transferable between schools, home and school and within the CYP school.
- They can provide a means to express feelings/emotions
- They can allow a CYP to make choices
- They convey a message regardless of possible language barrier
- They support all learners

### **Visuals in the education setting:**

- Set up visuals so your students can understand and navigate the environment.
- Ensure they are functional and easily accessible
- Use visuals alongside labels for classroom areas and equipment
- Whole class visual timetable
- Individual visual timetable
- Have visuals for everyday routines
- Ensure visuals are age appropriate or in line with CYP cognitive abilities
- Consider use of photographs taken by adult or CYP
- Visual steps for tasks
- Remember visuals are not just images, the environment set up ready also acts as a visual cue.
- Use of physical objects for reference, e.g. use a lunchbox to indicate moving to dining hall
- Use of signing alongside visuals and spoken information
- Use consistent language with the visual
- Use visuals to show steps in a task

**Resources and reading/viewing recommendations:**

[Visual supports \(autism.org.uk\)](http://autism.org.uk)

[thinking in pictures temple grandin video - Bing video](#)

[Speech and Language Therapy Archives - Integrated Treatment Services](#)

[Home \(makaton.org\)](http://makaton.org)

[Do2Learn: Educational Resources for Special Needs](#)

[Widgit Software | Widgit Symbols Help Communication](#)