

USING COMMUNICATION BOARDS

- The focus is on natural language stimulation, where visual language is modelled alongside verbal.
- The adult language partner points to the symbols representing the key words of her sentence while speaking. The children are able to see picture symbols used for a range of functions by skilled communication partners, and in doing so learn how to use this communication method within natural settings.
- This way of communicating echoes how typically developing children learn language.
- The consistent use of picture information alongside verbal also plays to the visual strengths of learners, and helps with their understanding of instructions, information and questions as well as showing them a means of expressing themselves.
- All these strategies are used alongside existing communication techniques, such as Makaton and PECS, according to each child's needs and preferences.
- Within an educational setting, these single symbol sheets can be used consistently alongside activities such as 'playdough', 'snack' or 'phonics.'
- These sheets are made up using a symbol set, typically to meet the vocabulary requirements of the activity in each particular setting. (see examples given).
- Vocabulary is organised from left to right to loosely imitate sentence structure in written and spoken English, although certain key symbols such as 'more' and 'finished', which frequently appear on displays, are located in the same place each time to help the learner's understanding and use of them.