

Starting school resource pack

A guide for teachers and parents



Introduction

Starting the school year can be a difficult time for all pupils, especially those with autism and special educational needs.

This resource pack has been created to provide help for schools and families when planning for the new school year.

- There are some transitions that are trickier than others, for example the transition from nursery to reception, from primary school to secondary school or mid-way through the term.
- For some children with autism, even the start of a school year that isn't a major transition will still present many challenges.
- Children with autism typically struggle with changes to routines, unpredictable situations, social interactions with new people and communicating their thoughts and feelings.
- Below you will find top tips when planning the new school year for teachers and for parents, some specific details on how to create a person-centred plan (PCP) and finally some downloadable resources to help with the new school year.
- When planning for the school year, if you are a teacher or a parent, the key factors that need to be considered are:
 - It is vital to 'do' and not just 'say' when supporting children with autism and SEN. e.g. show them how and where to line up for lunch, don't just tell them and hope that they do it.
 - Start the transition as early as possible in the summer term (schools) / towards the end of the summer holidays (parents).

At the end of this document there are a selection of visual supports as well as person-centred planning resources that you can download, print off and use to support your child with their transition back to school and beyond!



For teaching staff

1 Start the preparation for transition as early as possible with your pupil

- If a child with autism is in your class already, plan to prepare them for the next school year in the summer term.
- If a child with autism is joining your class, find out if they are being prepared in their current class and offer support when you have prepared your class (see next step).

2 Plan the classroom environment to be inclusive (make reasonable adjustments)



- Break areas - a quiet place in the classroom or out of the class.
- Work station - if needed, but not isolated completely. Can fade the use of the workstation out over time.
- Additional resources (see resources section).

3 Plan the daily / weekly schedule to be inclusive (make reasonable adjustments)



- Does the child with autism need additional break times in their timetable?
- Where will extra sessions such as speech therapy fit in?
- Identify in the timetable a space for working on social skills for the young person and their peers, including typically developing peers.

4 What preparation will the rest of the class need? Extra carpet sessions / assemblies to share information about autism for example.



5 Communicating the young person's needs across the school – how will this be done to support lunch time supervisors for example.

6 Understanding of basic behavioural principles can help to support a child with autism

- Pairing – spend time getting to know the child and what they enjoy doing, join in with play and pair yourself and the environment with fun activities, even if there is a 1:1 TA.
- Motivation – when someone is motivated they will engage in behaviour to access what they want. By understanding this you can support your pupil to be successful, e.g. helping them to request a break when they find work too hard.
- Reinforcement – everyone is different, and what is a reinforcer for one child to work may not be the same for another. Understanding this can help you utilise the individuals reinforcers to increase their on task behaviour.

7 Seek additional support:

- The school SENCo/Inclusion Manager
- Council local offer
- BeyondAutism Outreach Service



For parents



1 Start the preparation for transition as early as possible with your daughter or son (in June or July)

- Ask your school to tell you what class they will go into and what teacher they will have next year.
- Ask for pictures of the classroom/staff to help prepare your daughter or son over the holidays.
- The school may even have a video tour on their website or would allow you to film the transition into school to use for preparing for the changes.

2 Creating an extended planner that covers the summer and into the start of the new school term could help your daughter or son to understand when school is coming back

- You know your child best, if seeing the plan too early would make them more anxious about the change you can delay the preparation.

3 Talk to them about the new school year and use the visuals to help make things more concrete

- You can still talk to your daughter or son about the changes even if they are unable to have a conversation about it themselves.
- Frequent exposure to pictures of the classroom and staff or even watching a video of the new environment will help prepare your child.



4 Share with the new class teacher what things you and your family did over the summer holidays

- What trips did you go on?
- What skills has your daughter or son been working on?
- Have any skills or behaviour regressed over the holidays?
- What did your daughter or son enjoy doing over the holidays?

5 If you need support or have concerns, you could seek help from:

- The school SENCo/Inclusion Manager
- Council local offer
- BeyondAutism Outreach Service

Person-centred plans

How should we plan when supporting someone with autism?

When planning support of any kind, person-centred planning provides a way of supporting a person to plan any aspect of their life. It ensures that the individual remains at the centre of all planning that affects them. Person-centred planning is not an assessment – instead it is a way of involving a person in planning for the future and making changes in a person's life.

Person-centred plans (PCPs) should always respect the ways people communicate. People who use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) should be supported to use their preferred method of communicating.

The person at the centre of the planning should always feel in control over the plans that are made, including who is involved and how they are documented. They should be able to express personal preferences and anxieties when going through change. PCPs should be reviewed regularly and as changes happen in someone's life, such as school transitions.



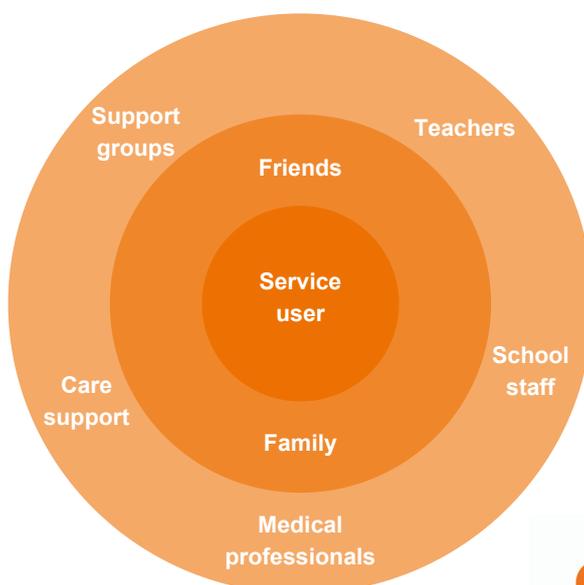
Understanding the difference between 'Important to' and 'Important for':

- 'Important to' are the things that a person cares about or loves. For example, it might be their family, friends, a television programme or activity.
- 'Important for' are the things a person needs in order to live their life. This might include the type of support or how things are done.

Circles of support

The 'circles of support' for an individual are important when planning how support might be delivered and by who. They should work outwards, with the inner circles relating to close family and friends, and outer circles may be school staff or teachers.

Not everyone has the same people in each circle, so getting the views of the individual is important, and being specific about, for example, which relatives. Some people might feel more connected to their friends, rather than traditional relatives. A support circle also prompts discussions around what support might not currently be available, and where additional resources need to be found.



Person-centred plans

SMART targets for transition

Goal setting is important because it ensures that the individual with autism is not missing out on the support that they need. Identifying goals throughout the year rather than through standard formal exams, for example at the end of a school year, means that progress can be closely monitored and adapted accordingly. When setting targets, for example around transition to a new school year, they should be SMART.

S
M
A
R
T

Specific - clearly defined, not vague

Measurable - how will success be evidenced?

Attainable - is the target realistic for the individual?

Relevant - does it fit the individual's skill set, should they be learning the skill?

Time bound - when will the skill be learnt by?

For example: The pupil will meet the new teacher and explore the new classroom twice a week for the last 4 weeks of the summer term. They will also complete a worksheet concerning the new details about the new class such as teacher name, where to hang their coat and where they will sit etc.

Behaviour support plans

Behaviour support plans should be part of an overall care plan. Proactive measures can prevent situations occurring, by allowing space to calm down or facilitating communication.

It is important to understand that carers and families can change their behaviour and adapt the environment to support those with autism and reduce behaviour that is perceived to challenge. They may also be inadvertently reinforcing behaviours that challenge themselves.

A person-centred plan will help to ensure that those with autism are front and centre of the planning and support. The team around that individual will highlight triggers and anxieties and come up with a range of strategies to support them through the situations that they find hard.

Person-centred plans

The Zones of Regulation (Leah Kuypers - www.zonesofregulation.com)

The Zones of Regulation is a programme designed to support students to better understand and describe emotions, with a view to them being able to identify them in themselves and better regulate them.

It categorises all emotions into 4 key zones. This list is not exhaustive! All emotions can be categorised into one of the zones.

The Green Zone = ok, calm, happy, relaxed, chilled out, focused, ready to learn.

The Blue Zone = low regulation - sad, tired, slow, lethargic, feeling poorly or unwell, sleepy.

The Yellow Zone = heightened emotions – anxious, worried, excited, wiggly, silly, annoyed, giggly.

The Red Zone = any emotion to an extreme where it cannot be controlled – depression, panic/ terror, absolute elation, hysteria, anger and so on.



How is it used?

Zones can be differentiated based on the need of the learner. At the most basic level, usually one feeling is attributed to each zone (e.g. green = happy, blue = sad, yellow = worried/excited and red = angry). Visuals can be used to label emotions in others, and postulate how students might be feeling ("you look like you might be a bit worried, I can see you moving slowly and looking down. [show visual] shall we try some activities?").

For more advanced students, zones can be used to identify how they are feeling and then use their toolboxes (lists of activities) to help them function in that zone e.g. a yellow zone toolbox has calming activities and a blue zone toolbox has alerting activities.

The Foundry
17 Oval Way
London, SE11 5RR

outreach@beyondautism.org.uk

How to follow us



[/beyondautism](https://www.facebook.com/beyondautism)



[/beyondautismuk](https://twitter.com/beyondautismuk)



beyondautism.org.uk



[/beyondautism](https://www.instagram.com/beyondautism)



[/company/4984403](https://www.linkedin.com/company/4984403)

Likes

- Lego Ninjago
- Drawing
- Tactile toys
- Structure/routine
- Predictability
- Non-fiction/facts

Pupil name

Dislikes

- Making mistakes
- Being asked lots of questions
- Rules
- Change

My diagnosis is: Autism Spectrum Disorder

I communicate and understand my world by:

- Talking to adults I know and trust
- Responding to structure and routine
- I try to manage my frustration but I can sometimes express myself physically when I get very cross
- I can hold simple conversations if they are about something I like to talk about

I can do these things independently

- Dress/undress
- Use the toilet
- Follow the lunchtime routine

I need support to do these things

- Follow rules and routines
- Stay safe
- Interact appropriately with peers
- Learn new skills

Important information about me

- I am easily distracted
- I can become upset/frustrated if I make a mistake/things don't go my way/things are not as I expected
- I am rigid in the way I think and do things and find it difficult to think or do things differently
- If someone upsets me I might be rude to them or hit them

You can help me by

- Making sure I stay on task
- Giving me options to help me compromise
- Using a reward system to motivate me
- Using a now/next board
- Do OT exercises with me if I do not go outside at playtime ('Shake and Wake')
- Prepare me for change/something new by giving me warning with visual support & social stories
- Giving me space to calm down
- Giving me regular breaks

Likes

-
-
-
-
-
-

Pupil name

Dislikes

-
-
-
-

My diagnosis is:

I communicate and understand my world by:

-
-
-
-

I can do these things independently

-
-
-

I need support to do these things

-
-
-
-

Important information about me

-
-
-
-

You can help me by

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Person-centred planning tools

My details

This plan belongs to (preferred name):

The date the plan was first made:

Date of birth:

Full name:

My allergies:

My intolerances:

My snack and lunch time routine:

How I travel in the community:

Person-centred planning tools

Plans that support my learning and activities:

Risk assessment:

Individual Education Plan:

Behaviour support plan:

Care plan:

Vocational profile:

Health / medical plan:

Personal emergency evacuation plan

Other plans:

My communication:

I communicate using:

Important things you can do to support my communication

Person-centred planning tools

What's important?

What's important to me: (My personal interests, my values and what motivates me)

What's important for me: (What support I need)

Person-centred planning tools

Planning my day:

A good day for me looks like:

Good times of the day for me are:

Things that need to happen during the day to
meet my needs:

Who will support me with travel
and transitions:

Person-centred planning tools

People who are important to me and support me:

Name and relationship:

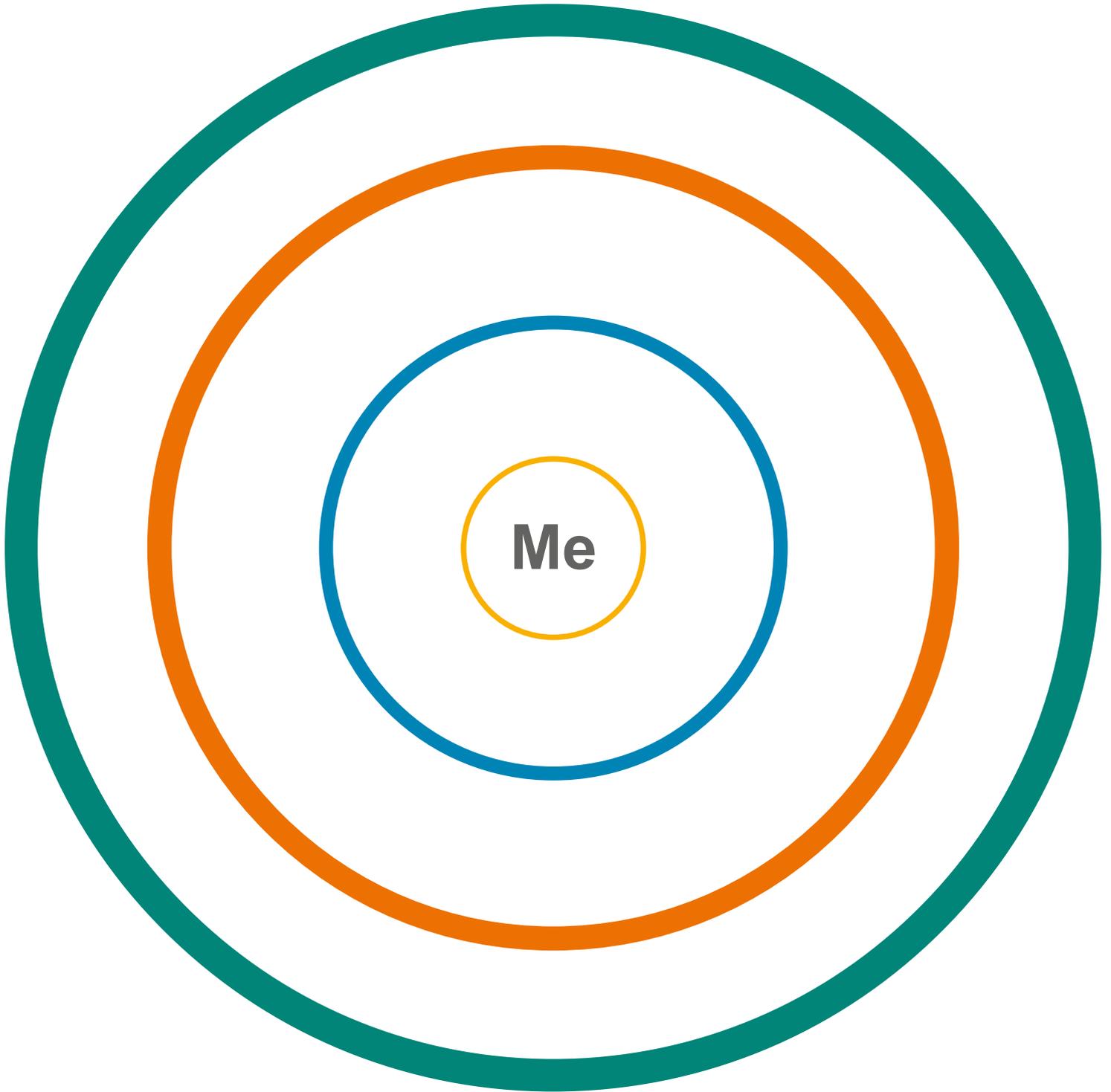
They are important because:

I would like this plan to be shared with:

Name:

How will it be shared and communicated:

Person-centred planning tools



_____ 's

personal planner

**Space for
pupil's photo**

My class:.....

Date:.....

Contents

1. About me
2. How I communicate
3. My family
4. My friends
5. Things I like to do
6. Things I don't like to do
7. Where I like to go
8. Things I'm working on
9. What I may need help with
10. What I like to eat and drink
11. Allergies
12. Medical information

1. About Me



2. How I communicate



3. My family



4. My friends



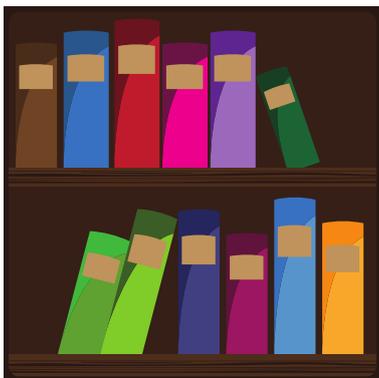
5. Things I like to do



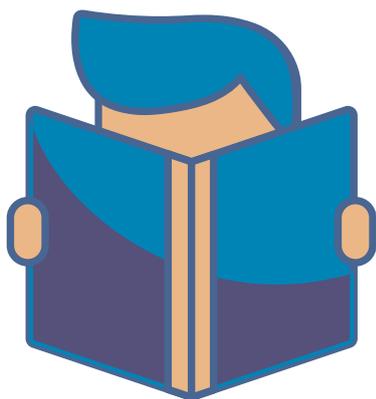
6. Things I don't like to do



7. Where I like to go



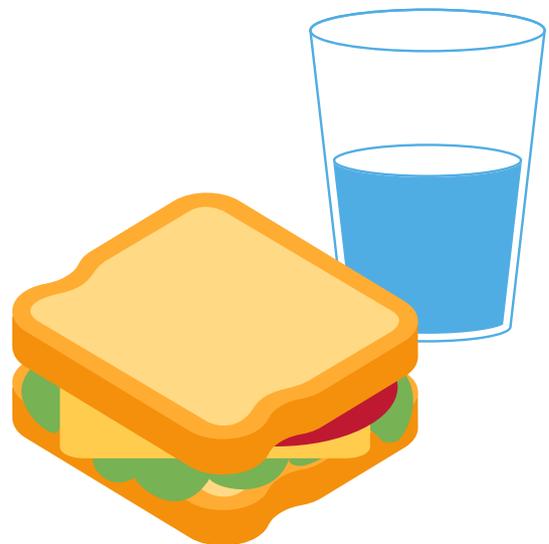
8. Things I'm working on



9. What I may need help with



10. What I like to eat and drink



11. Allergies



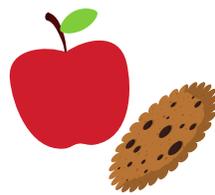
12. Medical information



Visual resources: day timetable

9:15 - 9:30	9:30 - 9:45	9:45 - 10:00	10:00 - 10:15	10:15 - 10:30
 Registration				

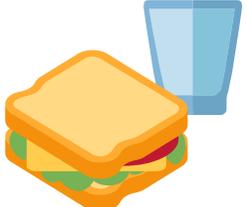
10:30 - 11:00



Snack and play

We've included some suggested times. Write your own over the top to match your timetable, or create your own version!

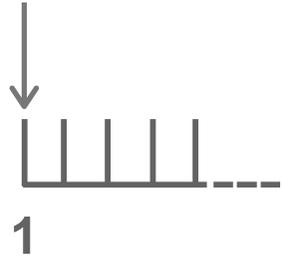
Visual resources: day timetable

11:00 - 11:15	11:15 - 11:30	11:30 - 11:45	11:45 - 12:00	12:00 - 12:15
12:15 - 12:30	12:30 - 13:30			
	  <p data-bbox="884 1300 1355 1364">Lunch and play</p>			

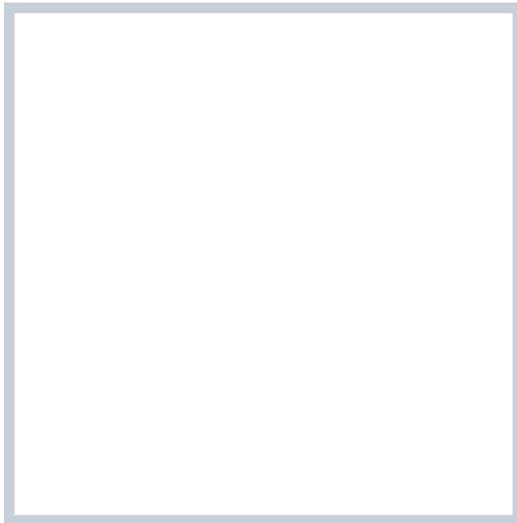
Visual resources: day timetable

13:30 - 13:45	13:45 - 14:00	14:00 - 14:15	14:15 - 14:30	14:30 - 14:45
14:45 - 15:00	15:00 - 15:15	15:15		
		 Home time		

Visual resources: First, then board



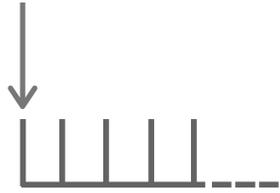
First



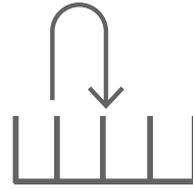
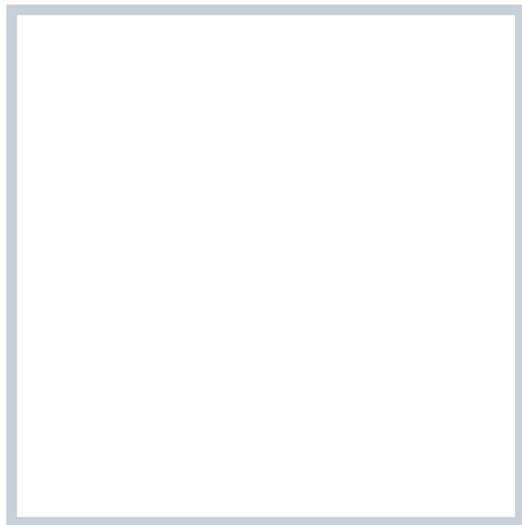
Then



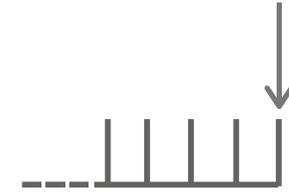
Visual resources: Now, next, then board



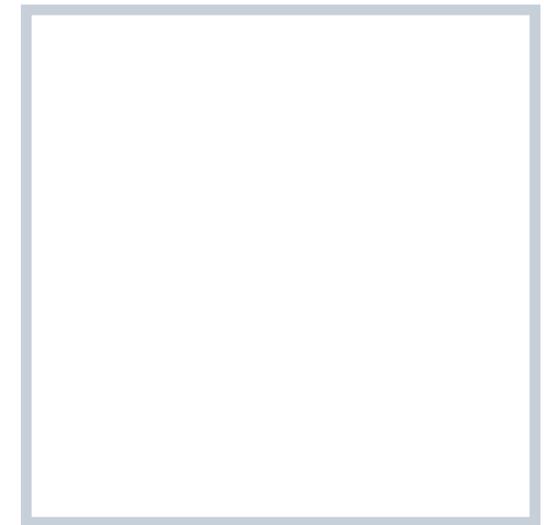
Now



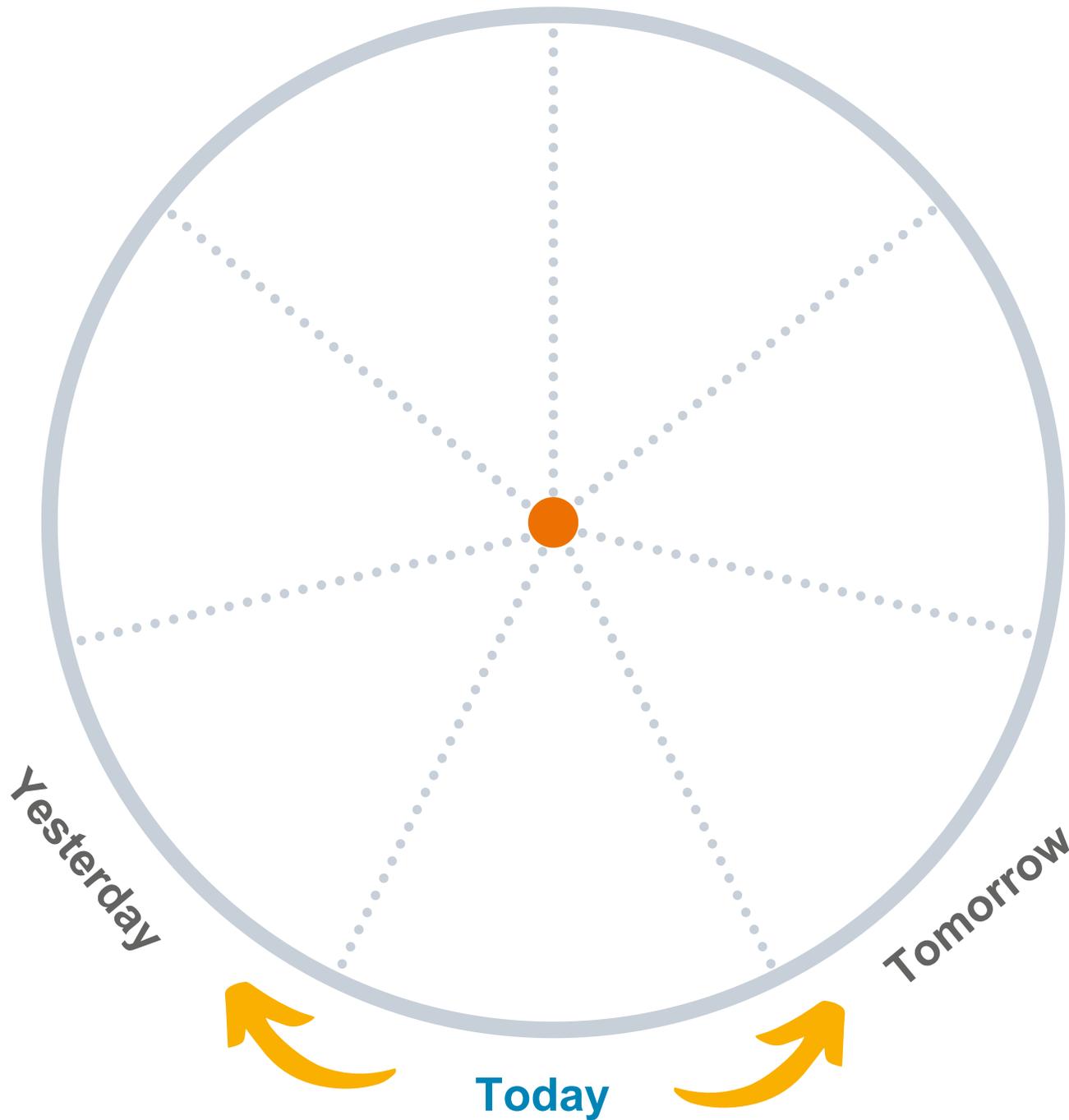
Next



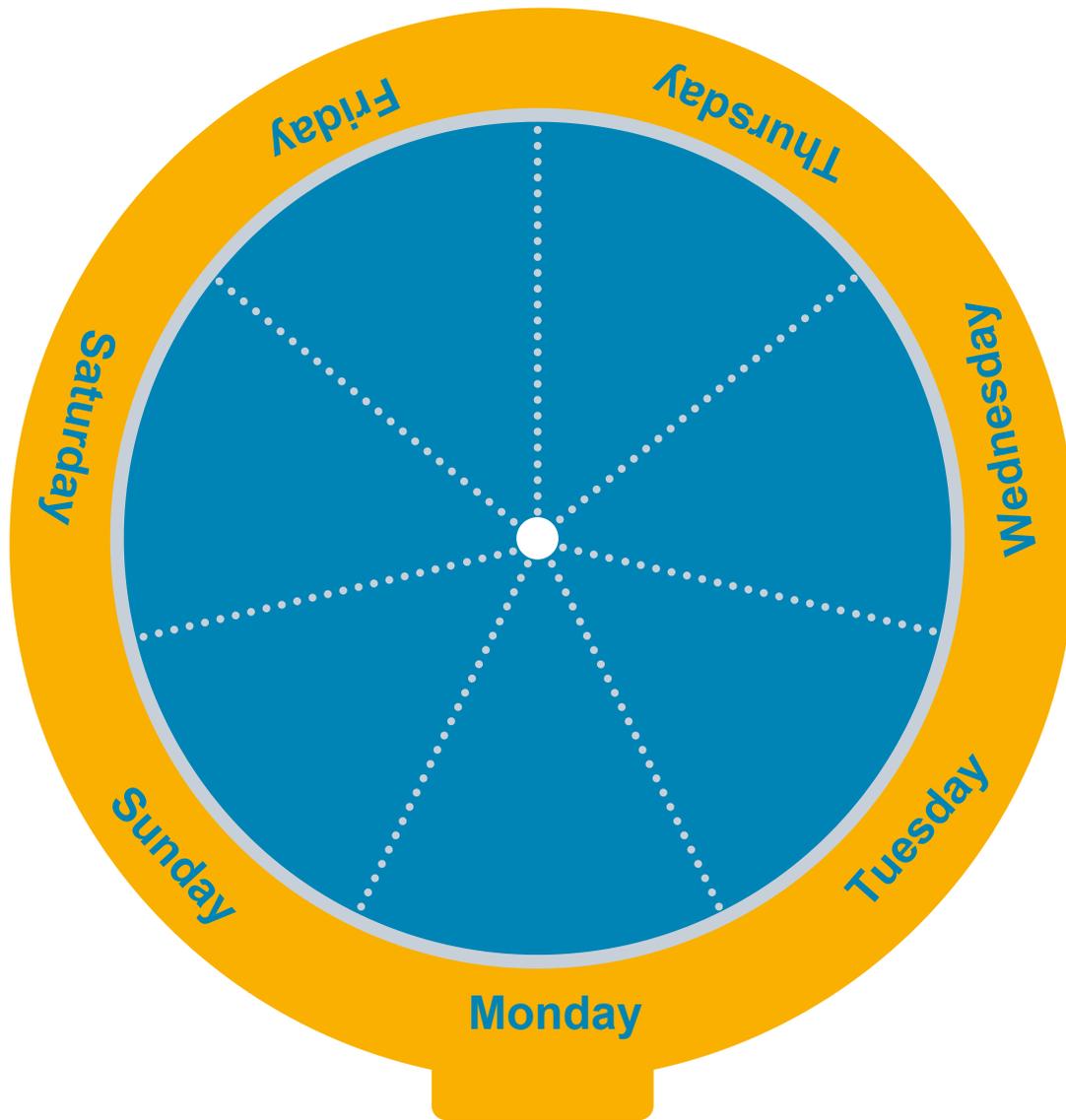
Then



Days of the week



Visual resources: Days of the week spinning wheel



Instructions

1. Print both pages (use card and laminate to help it last)
2. Once printed cut out both wheels
3. Using something sharp, pierce a hole through the white and orange dots with the days wheel on top. (Use blue tack or something soft to protect your fingers and surfaces whilst making the hole)
4. Use a split pin to fasten the wheels together and your days of the week spinning wheel is ready to use!

Visual resources: reinforcer icons



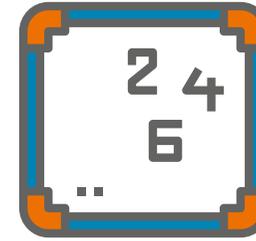
Computer



iPad



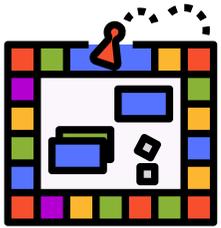
Playground



Whiteboard



Water play



Board game



Spinny chair



Cars



Painting



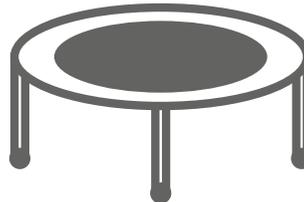
Music



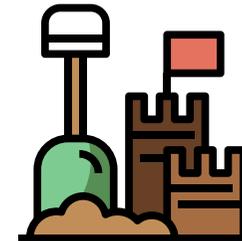
Blocks



Train



Trampoline



Sand play



Sensory room

Visual resources: Classroom icons



Table work



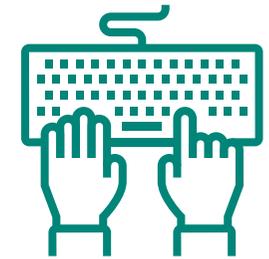
Group



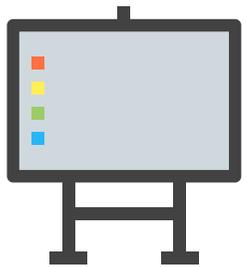
SaLT



OT



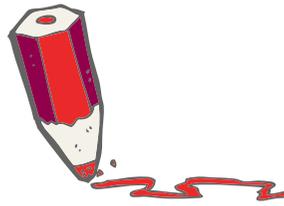
Typing



Big screen



Writing



Colouring



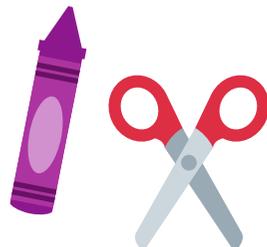
Reading



School trip



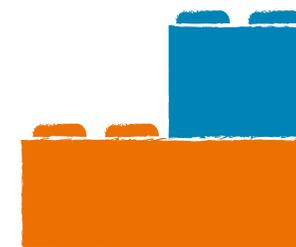
Music



Art



Maths



Lego



Puzzle

Visual resources: Classroom icons



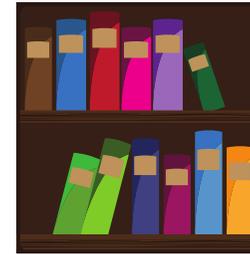
Shops



Ball



Shower



Library



Yoga



School club



Cooking



Song time



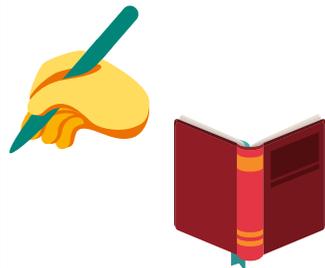
Swimming



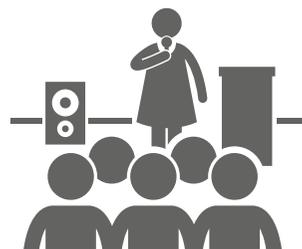
PSHE



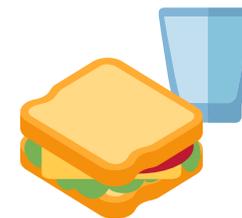
Science



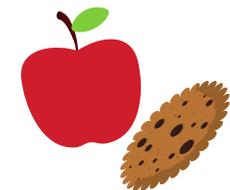
English



Assembly



Lunch



Snack