

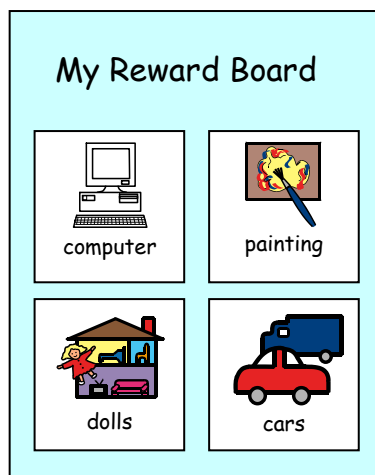
## ADVICE ON USING A FIRST & THEN (NOW and NEXT) BOARD

The main purpose of a First & Then board is to help pupils with ASC understand, anticipate and participate in a series of activities. If used effectively a first and then board helps to:

- Provide structure
- Prepare for change
- Encourage appropriate / expected behaviour
- Motivate pupils to complete adult directed tasks

First you will need to do a motivator assessment i.e. find out what are the pupil's favourite activities. This can usually be done through observing the pupil in self-directed activity and determining what he/she enjoys most – an activity, a favourite toy etc. If it is not possible to determine this through observations, it may be necessary to set up specific sessions where activities are presented and the pupil's level of interest assessed e.g. bubbles, playdough, cars etc.

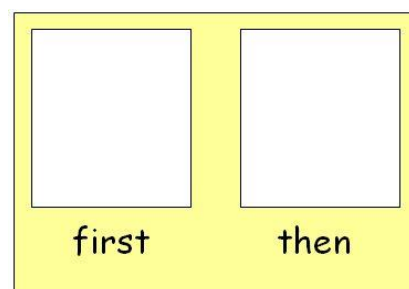
Having ascertained what motivates the pupil a reward board should be set up e.g. a plain coloured laminated sheet onto which are velcroed photos, pictures or symbols of the pupil's preferred activities. It is advisable to have a maximum of 4 choices at any one time; some pupils may only be able to cope with 2. It is essential that the choice of activities is reviewed regularly as motivators can change over time.



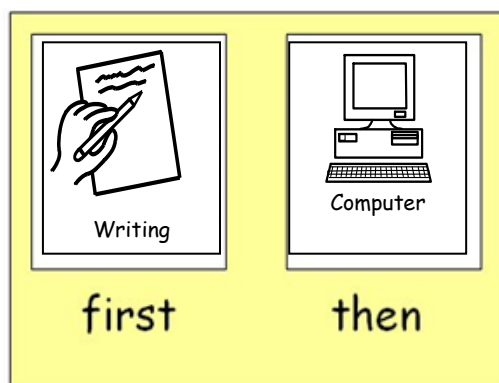
The next stage is to set up a work area in a quiet part of the classroom. Take the pupil to this area at set times and show him/her a visual timetable for the current session. A 'first and then' board would be most appropriate to begin with.

Encourage the pupil to choose a reward activity from the reward board and with him/her place it on the 'then' section of the 'first and then board.' Next place the picture of the adult chosen activity on the 'first' section:

Explain what will be happening by pointing to each symbol in turn and saying, "first ..... then .....". If the pupil attempts to leave the adult chosen activity, remind him/her of what will be coming next by referring to the 'first and then board.'



# The Bridge Outreach Service



In order for the pupil to understand the system, initially the adult chosen activity may need to be very short (30 seconds) and the reward activity much longer, but gradually the length of the first activity can be extended.

**Both activities should have a clear start and finish and this can be communicated to the pupil by setting a sand timer.**

If the pupil continues to be distracted even though you feel that he/she understands the system, then it is likely that the reward is not sufficiently motivating and you will need to reset it. You may also need to do a further motivator assessment.

When the pupil has got used to the 'first and then' board, you can set up a timetable for a series of activities. At first the pupil may need to be rewarded in between each activity(a), but gradually it should be possible for the pupil to complete 2 or 3 short adult chosen activities before getting the reward(b).

