

Things that our learners might find difficult:

- Attention – this includes switching their attention to your voice.
- Eye contact – this can be painful for some children
- Interaction and communicating with other people
- Moving between places (transitions) – see below for tips on supporting understanding
- Understanding emotions, body language, gesture
- Understanding spoken language and instructions
- Changes in routine/ people/ places.

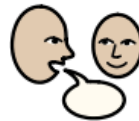
Supporting Understanding



- Reduce language – use reduced key words such as “chair” “seatbelt”
- Use the same words (consistent language) when repeating instructions. Rewording just makes it more difficult.
- Show visuals (photos) of people/ places to prepare learners for where they are going/ who they will see
- Call learner by their name to gain attention before giving an instruction
- Allow additional processing time—allow 5-10 seconds for learners to respond to instructions
- 5-1 countdowns (finger counting / arm squeezes) – help get on / off the bus
- Attention– have a motivating toy or a bag of motivating toys for the learner to play with to help focus their attention and help calm them.

Communication

Many of our learners have difficulty with communication in one way or another. Here are some ways to support communication.

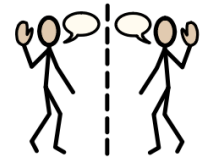


Communication includes understanding of language, use of language, social skills and lots of things in between.

Behaviour

- Some learners display challenging behaviour. This is often because they are trying to communicate something but have no other way. They are not being naughty.
- Positive reinforcement – give lots of praise to good behaviours. Reinforce what you want them to do. Try to ignore the negative.
- Don't just take something away without warning, especially if it's highly motivating. If you have to remove an item, give a 1 minute warning (“one more minute”) and then count down from 5 to 1 before saying ‘finished’ and removing the item.

Interaction tips



Intensive Interaction

People with Autism and other learning difficulties can struggle interacting with others. Intensive Interaction is a great way to build relationships with children who are at an early stage of communication (e.g. non-verbal children).

Intensive interaction helps with:

- early communication skills
- social cause and effect
- Builds an ability and desired to be with others
- Builds on the fundamentals of communication: eye contact, facial expressions, turn-taking.

How to:

You can try Intensive Interaction on the bus by joining in with and copying a child's actions, gestures and noises. It's a bit like how mums interact with their babies. You can show the child that you understand them and have a 'conversation' at their level. Search for 'Intensive Interaction' on YouTube for videos.