

What you might see:

You might see a child who:

needs extra time to understand spoken instructions or new information.

may not respond straight away because they are still processing what was said.

feels overwhelmed by too much talking, too many choices or quick changes.

struggles with instructions unless they are broken down clearly.

finds abstract or unclear ideas difficult without concrete examples.

needs support to use skills learned in one situation in another.

may be overwhelmed, withdraw, go quiet or appear anxious.

misunderstands expectations if they aren't clearly explained.

finds it difficult to notice changes, transitions or environmental cues.

What you can try:

- Provide an individual workstation for focused tasks where appropriate.
- Maintain clear and consistent classroom routines, including transitions, supported by a visual timetable that is regularly updated and used to prepare the child in advance for any changes to staffing, routine or transitions.
- Provide planned transition support by giving a clear warning (e.g. 5- and 2-minute prompts), showing a visual cue (now/next, first/then or timetable), and offering an adult check-in to confirm the next step before the child moves on.
- Use objects of reference, photographs or symbols to communicate transition times, expectations and to reinforce the daily schedule.
- Allow extra time for the child to process receptive language.
- Use task boards and visual supports to set clear steps for task completion, promote independence, clarify expectations and support transitions.
- Use a systematic approach to tasks (e.g. work trays) to increase engagement and reduce anxiety around work completion.
- Provide graphic organisers to support independent work (e.g. writing frames, mind maps, checklists) and simplify language where needed.
- Use individual interests to increase attention to less preferred activities and embed preferred activities where possible.
- Offer choices about tasks or how to complete them (e.g. using a choice board).
- Break learning into small, achievable steps.