

Follows two-part instructions

It is important for children to be able to follow instructions so that they can function effectively across different environments (e.g. home, nursery/school, when at the park etc). If a child struggles with following instructions this impacts on their ability to reach the desired 'purpose' or 'outcome' and thus complete tasks effectively.

Practitioners can support children by:

- Getting their visual attention before giving them an instruction.
- Keeping language simple and direct - one key word if needed.
- Assessing their level of understanding first.
- Starting with instructions that are part of their daily routine at a one key word level before moving to two and three key word instructions
- Breaking instructions down into smaller chunks e.g. Instead of "Go and get your wellies and your coat and go outside", say "Get your wellies." When the child has followed that instruction, say "Now get your coat" then "Now you can go outside".
- Giving them time to process the instruction (up to 10 seconds).
- Repeating the instruction exactly the same way you said it the first time.
- Using the '**First/Then**' concept to help them know what order they need to complete the instruction e.g. "**First** get your jacket, **then** put on your shoes".
- Encouraging them to ask for clarification if they forget part of the instruction or have trouble understanding what they need to do.
- Using a Total Communication approach (visuals, gestures and signs) which will assist their comprehension and recall of the instruction.

Activities, ideas, resources and strategies:

- **Simon Says** - 'Simon says' is a fun game to play with a group of children. It teaches listening skills and encourages learning directions for kids. Keep the instructions very simple at first and gradually make them more challenging. Use your creativity to say out loud what Simon says
- **Games with a purpose** - Ask children to perform ordinary tasks like putting away toys, handing out cups at snack time to their friends, getting a particular book for story times etc. Use task specific praise when they follow an instruction.
- **Games that teach listening skills** - To hone the child's listening skills, have them close their eyes and listen to different sounds carefully. You can use existing ambient sounds or make some yourself. Let them guess what the sounds are. Prompt them by giving clues.