

## CLASSROOMS



## SUPPORTING UNDERSTANDING

When children find it difficult to understand language, they may...

- ❖ Being confused by what they've been asked to do and carrying out instructions incorrectly.
- ❖ Struggling to repeat back what they've been told.
- ❖ Finding it hard to get started to an activity or follow along with a story.
- ❖ Needing instructions repeated and reminders of what to do.
- ❖ Giving irrelevant answers to questions or echoing what they have been told.
- ❖ Appearing distracted or reluctant to participate during a task.
- ❖ Presenting as withdrawn or engaging in less appropriate behaviour.

### Change how you deliver verbal information

- Get their attention first - call their name or use clapping routines & visual cues.
- Use concise and literal language. Summarise longer instructions.
- Give extra processing time (e.g. 10 seconds) before repeating your words.
- Deliver instructions in the order they are to be carried out. Try "First...then..."
- Ask the child to repeat back what you said and teach them how to ask for help.

### Use non-verbal strategies & resources

- What works best for the child - object exchange, pictures, symbols or photos.
- Promote routines through a whole-class timetable or a Now/Next schedule.
- When in doubt, show what you mean. Point to and hold items in key areas of the room.
- Checklists can help older children to manage belongings and materials.
- Use music, rhythm and visual markers on the floor to teach the rules of games.

### Develop understanding through games

- Listening: recognising natural or recorded sounds; musical statues; ready/steady/go games with gradually increasing delays.
- Matching: linking objects/pictures by colour, shape, category and function.
- Prepositions: "Put the car on the bridge"
- Memory: action songs; shopping lists; restaurant orders; Simon Says.
- Barrier games - construction for younger children; drawings for older students.