

*SEN Early Years
Inclusion Service*

**How to use
First and Then**



First and then explained.

First and then can be a useful strategy to structure your child's activities. This can be used to encourage your child to participate in activities that would not be their natural choice but will help them to develop useful learning skills.

In this section, we have given you some ideas that you can use or adapt to suit your situation. You will also find some templates and suggestions about how to set up and use the 'First and Then' approach which we hope you will find helpful.

Using a First/Then visual Schedule:

- The **First** is the adult focused activity in which the adults instructs the child as to what is expected of them to do first.
- The **Then** is a motivating activity for the child, almost a reward for completing the first task.

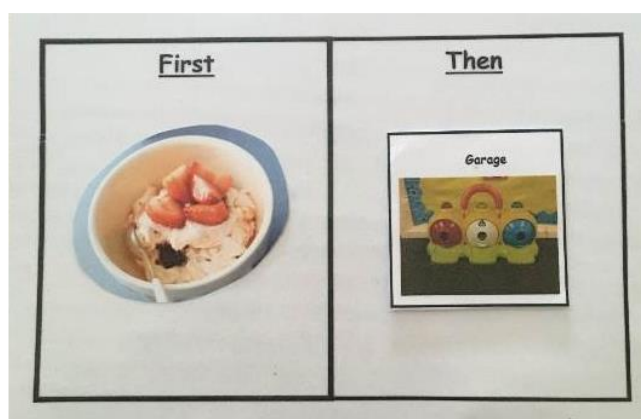
For example, a child may love books, so the adult says **First** jigsaw **Then** books.



There may be various times throughout the day when it may be useful to use the first and then approach.

For example, the adult may want the child to have breakfast before playing with the toy garage so in this case the adult might say

First breakfast **then** garage...



Or, the adult may say **First** breakfast **Then** blocks or **First** breakfast **Then** cars



We have cut out a picture from the cereal box but at home, you could just as well use a cereal bowl and the toys you have to make it visually clear what you are expecting the child to do **First** and **Then**.