# **Communication Environment: What is helping?**

Babies and children use clues to understand what is happening when they don’t understand the words. What clues are there in your setting to help children understand what’s happening and what will happen next? Think about sights, sounds, smells, words, gestures, and what people are doing.

Clues are really important for helping children understand what’s happening, what’s going to happen next, and what words mean. But too many clues and distractions make it hard for them to learn. Focus on the clues the child is reacting too. If the child is reacting positively, add words or gestures to help them learn the language. If the child is reacting negatively (e.g. getting upset), try adding one or two clues before the activity to help prepare them for what’s coming, especially clues like objects, smells or sounds.

1. Write who you are observing, with the date and their age.
2. At eating time, what clues are you giving, how does the child react and what other clues could you give?
3. When it’s time for nappy change or toileting, what clues are you giving, how does the child react and what other clues could you give?
4. When it’s time to go outside, what clues are you giving, how does the child react and what other clues could you give?
5. When it is nap time, what clues are you giving, how does the child react and what other clues could you give?
6. When it is time to tidy up, what clues are you giving, how does the child react and what other clues could you give?