



Bishop Aldhelm's CE Primary School

Loved by God; United in Learning

Headteacher: Scott Tait Deputy Headteacher: Lizzie Sharpe

Dear Parent/Carer

As we venture through our first half term of the children being in Year 2 we wanted to thank you all for your continued support with home learning and the next step in your child's journey at Bishop Aldhelm's. We also wanted to share with you all the importance of developing age appropriate independence from such a young age.

We often hear parents say... 'Sorry, I have forgotten his/her lunch box today.' Our (school) response will often be 'No, Jonny has forgotten his lunchbox today'. We all take on so much responsibility for our children but our children also need to start taking responsibility for certain actions.

I guess you often feel like you're constantly nagging your child to get things done? Helping them develop their independent streak could help to break the trap. Independence is a vital skill for your primary school child to develop – but it's not always an easy process. Many of us feel that our children are unable to get anything done without a soundtrack of prompts and nagging, and it's not necessarily something that improves as they get older.

There are many reasons why children can struggle with becoming more independent. Sometimes it's due to their developmental stage, as being independent and organised requires quite sophisticated thinking skills. Sometimes it's because they live very much in the moment, and don't have the same agenda as adults. And sometimes it's because parents' expectations are too low or too high.

As your child progresses through primary school and into Key Stage 2, they'll be expected to become increasingly independent and take charge of their own learning and organisation. But independence isn't just important for upper KS2 kids: younger children benefit from having opportunities to do things for themselves too.

At home try to set reasonable expectations

There's a big difference between how independent you can expect your child to be at five, and what they can achieve at 11, so be realistic.

A child in Reception, for example, can begin to do things like get dressed and undressed independently, hang their school bag on their peg, and eat lunch themselves, possibly with adult support, but by the age of about eight, they should be capable of getting themselves ready for school, remembering any sports kit or letters that they need to take in, and knowing what homework they have to do and at least making a start on it independently, with just a little prompting. Don't set your expectations too high, otherwise your child will feel under pressure, but don't set them too low, either: give them the chance to do things you think they're capable of.

Give them some household responsibilities

Letting your child take charge of a few small household tasks is a good way to build independence. For example, you could make it their duty to lay the table for breakfast and put their dirty clothes in the laundry basket.

Make sure their siblings have similar age-appropriate tasks to avoid accusations of unfairness, and be prepared to remind them lots initially, with the hope of these tasks eventually becoming routine. You could also link their chores to a reward, such as their weekly pocket money or their daily hour of screen time.

Give them reminders



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Even as adults, we rely on people to remind us when something needs doing, and children are no different. But to encourage their independence, give them reminders that make them think for themselves, rather than just telling them what they have to do. So instead of saying, 'Don't forget your math homework is due on Wednesday,' prompt them to remember themselves, by saying, 'What do you need to take to school on Wednesday?'

Please believe us... we are not trying to teach you how to suck eggs! We just want to support you in school as we look to develop the children's age appropriate independence.

Year 2 has started so well for the children and with your continued support our children will continue to grow emotional and physically along side developing their independence.

Many thanks

Year 2 Team and Mr Tait



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