



Developing Independent Learners

Bexton Primary School

Why do children need to be independent?

Being able to think and act independently is an important skill to develop in our children. We believe by developing independence, we are fostering learners who are in control of their own learning in the classroom and beyond.

How can we develop independent learners?

Teachers are important partners in this process. By developing routines and strategies in their classrooms, teachers will enable children to control the level of challenge and pace of learning. Adults giving too much support, whilst seeming helpful, can actually reduce the amount of learning, as the message is given that someone else is there to do it for them.

Parents also can influence how independent their child is by encouraging their child to embrace challenges and allowing them to 'have a go'. At Bexton we love the phrase 'if a child can do it, they should do it'.

Here are some ways to gradually develop independence in your child:

Reception	Encourage your child to dress independently. Top buttons are tricky and it's ok to still help with these!
Year 1	Ask your child to help pack their bag for school, encouraging them to remember their diary, homework and reading books.
Year 2	Allow your child to write in their homework diary (please still write comments- we love these!) and pack their bag independently.
Year 3	Encourage your child to do more of their homework independently. They should also be packing their own bag and remembering when they need to bring swimming kit or return letters.
Year 4	Encourage your child to start to plan ahead, deciding when they need to do their homework, return letters, bring swimming kit. They should be packing their own bag each night.
Year 5	Encourage your child to be responsible for their own belongings, packing their school bag and remembering letters. They should also be able to pass on messages to the teacher.
Year 6	By Year 6 children should be confident to do all of the above without reminders. In Year 7 they will need to navigate a timetable and be able to remember different items each day. If they have developed their independence through primary, they should be ready to cope with the demands of secondary school.

Using 'Whole Class Feedback' to develop children's independence

A new strategy we've developed to support children's learning is 'Whole Class Feedback' (WCF). Traditionally teachers have provided written comments after a piece of work and then the child responded to the written comment. Talking to the children and by looking in books, we felt that this process could be improved as it made only a minimal impact on children's learning, but teachers were spending hours after school writing comments. We have worked with the children and teachers to develop a process that has increased the progress children make and ensured teachers spend less time marking and more time adapting or improving their lessons.

How Whole Class Feedback works:

1. The teacher marks all the children's books. They use pink dots or our marking code to show children where they need to check and make improvements.
2. Each teacher has a WCF folder in which they make notes, e.g. any misconceptions, children who need more time with the teacher, or some great examples to share in the next lesson. Sometimes the teachers use a power point (mainly Y3 upwards) to make notes on. They can then show this to the class in the next lesson. Here is an example of one used in Y5 and Y6.

<p>DATE: Whole class feedback Use these prompts to help you independently improve your writing</p>		Amazing sentences:	
Quick check: Capital letters: Full stops: Question marks: Exclamation marks: Commas: Paragraphs to organise ideas: Co-ordinating conjunctions: <i>for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so</i> Subordinating conjunctions: <i>before, if, because, although, while</i> <i>when, as, while, even though, after,</i> <i>however</i> Legible joined handwriting	Excellent word choices:		Key spellings to be improved:
	Watch out for:		

We've talked to the children who tell us that they prefer the Whole Class Feedback to written comments as they learn from what the other children have done and get more ideas to help them improve their work. We will continue to share how Whole Class Feedback develops with parents. If you have any further questions about anything in this hand out please speak to either Mrs Armstrong or Mrs Sach who will be able to help you.