

The background features abstract, overlapping green geometric shapes, primarily triangles and polygons, in various shades of green, creating a modern and dynamic visual effect. The shapes are layered, with some appearing more prominent than others, and they extend from the edges towards the center of the frame.

Developing and supporting independence for teenagers

Independence will mean different things for different children and families.

- ▶ What do you think of when you think about pupils being independent? Actions and thinking?
- ▶ Think about the daily routines that you think your child may need some support with to further their independence

Toileting - using different toilets, privacy, cleaning self, washing hands

Washing - showering, hair washing

Getting snacks or food eg. breakfast

Understanding a list of things to do eg. getting ready to leave on a school day

Bed time routine

Being safe in the community - road safety, public transport, asking the right people for help, being safe around people, knowing routes and how to get to specific places

How can we support independence?

- ▶ Think about what it is you want your child to do. In school we look at the end goal and then break it down into smaller steps
- ▶ Visual support - symbols or photos (school can help)
- ▶ An instruction sheet with steps (photos, symbols or words)
- ▶ Clear instructions - photographs or videos of you doing the task
- ▶ Praise, encouragement and rewards

Using our autism knowledge to teach independence

- ▶ We know that children with autism need to be explicitly taught new things and have expectations and instructions made clear.
- ▶ Let's think of an example of something that you would like your child to be able to do independently and let's think about how to break it down and different ways of teaching it.
- ▶ Now let's think of a very different example and how we would approach that

Practice and understanding that mistakes are part of the process

- ▶ As adults we know that we don't start at expert level in a new skill immediately - we practice and get better and develop skills.
- ▶ It can be really hard for some autistic children to make mistakes and to try things that they haven't yet mastered.
- ▶ As well as teaching the skills we need to teach the resilience and understanding that mistakes are part of the process and that bit can be hard.
- ▶ We also need to ensure that we can planning enough time in for these new skills to be practiced - when rushing in the morning to get out the door it can sometimes be quicker and easier for us to do more things for children so that we're not late.

Next steps

- ▶ Think about priority skills for independence for your child that you might like some support with - we can help you break it down or provide visuals or examples of visuals you may like to adapt.