Ages 8-11:

- Keeping their own bedroom clean and tidy
- Being responsible for their own homework
- Being responsible for their own belongings, such as PE kit or borrowed books
- Waking up using an alarm clock
- Helping parents prepare meals
- Learning to use the washing machine/tumble drier
- Taking rubbish out for bin day/sorting recycling

From the age of 4 upwards, you may choose to use 'job' charts to help children see which chores they should be doing each day. This helps children to check their chores and become independent in managing them. You may choose to reward your child for success, or may want the task being completed to be its own reward, this is up to you.

Please remember that every family is individual and that these guidelines are exactly that, guidelines. They are based on research and guidance from parenting groups, but they are not hard and fast rules.

This is particularly true if independence is a journey that you have not yet started with your child and they are already beyond the first stages of this guidance. In this case, small steps become even more important, but don't give up, independence is an essential life skill.

Raising independent children

Why is it important and how do we achieve it?

Independence is not something that children develop on their own; they need guidance, modelling and consistency to be able to develop this essential skill effectively. Independence is a gift you give your children that they will cherish and benefit from their entire lives.

There are a number of key ingredients that children need to experience to achieve independence as they grow:

- Give your children love and respect
- Show **confidence** in your child's capabilities; let them be successful and if they are not, help them to be successful, try not to take over and do things for them
- Teach them that they have control over their lives, within the guidance and limits that you set as a parent
- Provide guidance and then give them the freedom to make their own decisions

Independence is one of our Core Values at Keinton. There are a number of reasons for this, but at the heart of this choice is the fact that independent, self-motivated learners are almost always the most successful. This is key to the children's development in to successful adults.

Remember the old saying:

"Give a man a fish, feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime."

Children need to feel wanted and helpful; they certainly love helping in school! They also need to learn responsibility. Encouraging children to be independent in areas that are appropriate in early childhood, will help them to develop the key attribute of independence in later life, an essential skill as they transition from child to adulthood.

To support parents with this, we have produced this leaflet, with guidance on what are appropriate levels of independence at different ages. Please remember that every child is different, some will be ready for greater independence, while some take longer to develop these skills.

What is vital is that successful independence is recognised and praised and that children are not chastised if they need support at any time. Small steps are important and working together as a family at a younger age will pay dividends as your children grow and develop!

Ages 2-3:

- Picking up toys after play
- Putting dirty clothes into the washing basket
- Washing their hands
- Getting dressed with parental supervision (and support for tricky bits!)

Ages 4-5:

- Getting dressed with minimal parental help
- Making their bed with minimal parental help
- Using the toilet independently
- Cleaning teeth (under adult supervision as appropriate)
- Taking dirty things to the sink/dishwasher after eating
- Helping parents sort colours for laundry
- Matching socks after they have been washed

Ages 6-7:

- Making their own bed
- Getting dressed independently
- Washing themselves
- Helping wash up or put dishes away from the dishwasher
- Choosing clothes and get dressed (adult guidance may be necessary!)
- Watering plants
- Getting school bags ready for school
- Preparing food with parental help