

## **Encouraging Independence and Allowing Risk Taking**

At Incey Winceys Day Nursery and Preschool we understand that in a world of ever-growing health and safety regulations and an increased awareness of risks, it is even more important to actively encourage independence through consistent routines and clear expectations and allow measured child-initiated risk taking.

Independence is an essential life skill and one that needs to be nurtured from an early age. Adults being overprotective or fearful around children can stunt their emotional development and make them afraid to try new tasks and experiences.

Every child has a different start to life and a consequence of the varying opportunities they have had at home, is that children start nursery with very different levels of physical and functional independence. We are aware that children can be feel uncomfortable speaking in large groups or need a comforter during times of anxiety and we are happy to liaise with parents to ensure the child's needs are met, particularly during the settling period.

Special additional needs or early trauma affects independence and next steps for these children will be carefully planned for.

We ask for support from parents to allow us to encourage every child's independence wherever possible, and ask that you manage your day with adequate time to allow your child to begin to do more and more for themselves, such as brushing their own teeth, dressing, pouring milk into cereal etc. We understand these things take time and sometimes make a mess, but the positive impact on your child's wellbeing and confidence will far outweigh those issues, as we are sure you will agree.

We also ask for parental understanding that accidents in allowing risk taking behaviour accidents will happen; clothes will get messy and children may get hurt by other children or from falling. Our staff are dedicated to making sure every child has a full day exploring, playing and learning, and as with any group of young children, incidents do occur. This means that the environment is safe and serious risks are eliminated or reduced wherever possible, but we will not limit the children's risk taking where they are learning.