

Oaklands Family Newsletter



Summer 1 2026

This half term's Family Newsletter is focusing on Independence & Life Skills. This is a key area of our curriculum for all children as we want to support our children to be independence and be able to access the community

Independence & Life Skill Curriculum Leaders:

Sejal Patel – Nurture Class Teacher

Raksha Patel – Elm Class Teacher

Sammy Nour – Assistant Head Teacher

Why are Independence & Life Skills Important?

At Oaklands our motto is *Building Foundations for Fulfilling Futures*, and part of this means we see our children as future adults and aim to equip them with the independence skills they will need to succeed throughout their lives.

Our Independence & Life Skills Curriculum covers a wide range of topics, including eating and drinking, personal care, personal hygiene, first aid, road safety, engaging in the community and E-Safety. Many of these topics are taught as lessons, with other teaching capitalising on opportunities in school for children to learn these skills, such as taking shoes on and off after visiting our soft play room, or looking at the weather to decide if we need a coat or a jumper on when we go outside.

You can find an overview of our Independence & Life Skills Curriculum on our website:

[Independence and Life Skills | Oaklands School Leicester](#)

Teaching resilience and persistence is an important part of this learning. To develop these skills we often use *Purposeful Struggle* in teaching. This is the idea that learning new skills isn't always easy, and pupils need to learn new skills by persevering until they can complete a new independence task, whilst being supported at the point in their learning they need it most. It also allows for staff to let children have a go at doing something for themselves, without adults always doing things for them, this helps them to develop their independence and receive lots of praise for when they achieve in their independence learning.

Developing our curriculum this year – Cooking and Educational Visits:

As part of our school improvement priorities this year we have worked hard to improve our Independence & Life Skills Curriculum in the areas of Cooking and Educational Visits. This is now taught with individual Pathways in mind, to ensure pupils are being taught the skills they need to succeed.

All children are experiencing getting out into the local community and learning how to cross a road safely, or are working towards doing so. We have weekly visits to the local area, including Evington Park, Evington Library and shops in Evington village and the surrounding area. We are also expanding our Educational Visits learning for those children who are ready to do so, with visits to Twycross Zoo, West Lodge Farm Park and Fun Valley play centre all taking place this term.



You can find out more about our Cooking and Educational Visits Curricula on our website:

[Cooking | Oaklands School Leicester](#)

How can you support your child at home?

Parents, carers and family members at home can support Independence & Life Skills at home too.

Think about *Purposeful Struggle* – Allowing children time to do independence skills for themselves, such as dressing, finding their belongings or cutting their food. You can help them learn new skills by supporting them in the process where they need it most, then giving them the chance to practice this new skill. E.g. When a child is putting on their shoes, they can do all of the steps apart from doing up the Velcro. Allow them to do all of the steps up to this, then show them how to do up the Velcro, before allowing them to have a go themselves. Over time and with practice, they will be able to do all of the steps to putting their own shoes on. You may need to allow extra time to get ready in order to do this.

Include your child in cooking and food preparation where possible – Including children in everyday cooking and food preparation tasks will help them to develop their skills. Many children are highly motivated by food so they are often interested in these types of tasks, so it's a great opportunity to promote learning. All skills are relevant and useful for children to learn, from finding food in cupboards and the fridge or freezer, to opening packets and Tupperware, preparing drinks, cutting and chopping, and using appliances where appropriate and under supervision.

Take your child out into the community and new places where you can – Experiencing the community and learning to regulate in new environments can widen their cultural capital and help them to experience new place. We appreciate this can be tricky for our children, so supporting them to do this by showing them pictures of where you are going, letting them know what they will be doing after going somewhere, having their communication aid, if they have one, with them, and any resources to support regulation, such as comfort items or stim toys, will help them to manage being out in the community or a different place. You can start with short visits, even just for a few minutes, then gradually build up their time there.

Online support for individual skills – On our website there are some visual resources to support a range of skills.

Guides to support learning (scroll down to find life skills): [Guides to Support Learning | Oaklands School Leicester](#)

If you would like any further support to develop your child's Independence and Life Skills, please contact their class teacher who will be happy to offer advice and support, and we can also create personalised visual resources for you.

Life Skills

Here are some ideas to support your child develop a range of life skills important for the future.



Life Skills - Mashing



Life Skills - Mixing



Life Skills - Setting the Table



Life Skills - Spreading



Life Skills - Using Cutlery



Life Skills - Washing Up



Toothbrushing Guide for Parents