



**Stockingford
Nursery School**

TOILET TRAINING POLICY

Passed and adopted by Governing Body:

Signed: *R. L. Long*

Reviewed: May 2026

Next review: May 2027

TOILET TRAINING POLICY

Aim:

To support children's health, wellbeing and development by promoting effective toilet training at an appropriate time.

Objectives:

- Child's individual needs are identified and met.
- Family's cultural preferences are considered.
- Toilet training is a positive experience; family and child feel supported throughout.
- The Nursery School supplies families with information and signposts to sources of further information about bladder and bowel health and toilet training such as ERIC website – www.eric.org.uk and [ERIC's Helpline](http://www.eric.org.uk) (0845 370 8008).
- Communication between the Nursery School and family is promoted before, during and after toilet training.

Actions:

Preparation:

The Nursery School may include bladder and bowel health in discussion with parents at an appropriate time, using ERIC resource *Early Years Healthy Bladder and Bowel Assessment* if required. They may also signpost parents/carers to their health visitor.

Discussion may include:

- Child's current fluid intake – quantity and type of fluid
- Child's current bowel habit – type of stool (*Bristol Stool Chart*) frequency of bowel actions, any behaviour associated with pooing.

Opportunity may then be taken to advise early years staff and family on appropriate fluid intake, recognition of constipation etc. for instance by providing ERIC leaflet *Thinking about wee and poo now you've reached the age of two*

- Toilet training can be a very daunting process for families. The Nursery School will support families by discussing expectations of toilet training, or engaging in further discussion that will take place at appropriate age/stage of development.
- Families will be supported to decide the best time to toilet train their child. The Nursery School will explain why it is helpful for the same approach to be taken at home and in the Nursery School, including using the same words for wee/poo/toilet/toilet etc. The Nursery School will signpost parents to their health visitor on a case by case basis where this is appropriate.

Assessment of Readiness:

- The first stage of toilet training is to recognise when the child is ready. It is essential that the child is:
 - Pooing at least one soft poo a day
 - Staying dry for at least an hour and a half between wees

Other signs to look out for are:

- Showing interest in the toilet/potty
 - They can follow simple instructions
 - Able to sit themselves on the toilet and get up again
 - Starting to show signs of awareness of when they have done a wee or a poo
 - Showing awareness that other family members and peers don't wear nappies, and that they use the toilet
- Children with additional needs may not show reliable signs of awareness. Toilet training should **not** be delayed; it is much harder to achieve when the child is older. Readiness can be assessed by monitoring the child's wees and poos. The Nursery School to offer information such as *ERIC's Guide for Children with Additional Needs*

Delivery:

- The Nursery School will ensure that
 - A suitable facility is offered – either a potty (in Little Nursery), or children's toilet. Children are encouraged to sit with feet flat and firmly supported, knees above hips. Boys to be guided to sit down to wee.
 - In the early stages children cannot differentiate between the need for a wee and the need for a poo. If they wee standing up they may hold onto the poo and can easily become constipated.
 - The correct mechanism of weeing is triggered by relaxation – it is much easier to relax when seated.
 - They may empty their bladder better sitting down.
 - It is more hygienic as they are less likely to wee on the floor/over the toilet seat.
 - Optimum timing for toileting is observed –
 - toilet visits planned for 20-30 minutes *after* meals (the most likely time for a child to poo)
 - suitable interval left between prompts to wee (the bladder needs to be *full* to empty correctly)
 - Fluid intake is optimised – parents are advised to follow ERIC guidelines regarding fluid intake -a minimum of 6 to 8 full cups of drink a day, spread evenly across the day.
- The Nursery School will discuss clothing with family; family will ensure that the child is dressed in clothes that are easy to pull up and down, e.g. jogging bottoms/leggings as opposed to jeans or dungarees. All in one popper vests are discouraged as they are challenging for children to attempt to do independently. A change of clean clothing including several spare pants, trousers and socks etc should be provided each day in a named bag for your child's peg.
- The Nursery School will work with family to ensure a consistent transition from nappies to pants in one step to avoid confusing the child with a mixture of nappies/pull-ups/pants. N.B. The child will still need a nappy for naps initially.
- The Nursery School will support family by signposting information regarding products to support transition such as washable, absorbent car seat protector/washable, absorbent

pants/children's disposable pads and/or advise about putting nappy *over* pants for travelling, so if the child wees they are aware of the sensation of feeling wet. Examples of products at www.eric.org.uk/shop

- Nursery School staff to maintain calm, supportive approach at all times; children should not be rushed or forced to use the toilet against their will. 'Accidents' are to be expected – children learn to recognise the sensation of needing a wee/poo by wetting/soiling.
- All staff and family to ensure child is regularly encouraged and praised. N.B. aim to recognise *achievable* goals such as sitting on the toilet when asked to do so. Keeping pants dry may be an unachievable goal initially.

Communication:

- The Nursery School will ensure all staff are aware of each child's current stage of toilet training to confirm consistent approach.
- The Nursery School will ensure feedback is shared with parents/carers of successful toilet/toilet visits as well as wetting/soiling incidents in order to monitor child's progress.
- Regular updates to be shared with parents with the expectation that they will share information about progress at home. Toilet training is a joint effort!

Trouble shooting:

- Nursery School staff to be alert for possible constipation; incidence is raised during toilet training as some children find pooing into the toilet/toilet frightening. See *ERIC's Guide to Children's Bowel Problems* for further information.
- If toilet avoidance is observed information to be provided - see ERIC factsheet *Children who will only poo in a nappy and other toilet avoiders*
- If child does not appear to be making progress, or regresses, The Nursery School will instigate discussion with family to consider continuing to try, or abandoning the process, allowing time to improve bladder and bowel health and to better prepare the child, starting again after a suitable interval.
- If ongoing bladder/bowel issues, information such as ERIC leaflet *Thinking about wee and poo now you're on the way to school* may be shared with family and prospective school.

Please could parents support their child by checking if their nappy needs changing prior to attending their Nursery session.

Nursery routine:

Little Nursery - One routine change per session and additional changes if soiled or heavily urinated nappies/pull-ups.

Big Nursery – Your child will be routinely changed at lunchtime on their extended day. Children will also be changed if Staff identify your child has soiled or has heavily urinated. Parents are to inform

Staff if there are any additional changes they feel their child would need e.g. medical reasons in addition to the above.

Supporting leaflets and information:

<https://www.eric.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=9ac7ac6e-163c-4aef-8337-062e7790edd8>

<https://eric.org.uk/children-with-additional-needs/>

<https://www.eric.org.uk/Pages/Category/toilet-training>

POTTY TRAINING FLOWCHART



ASSESSMENT

Complete ERIC's Early Years Healthy Bladder and Bowel Assessment Chart.

DRINKING

Child should drink minimum of 5 full cups of fluid at nursery during whole-day session, or equivalent for part-day.

BOWELS

If poo problem is identified, discuss with family and provide signposting to ERIC's [Guide to Children's Bowel Problems](#).

GO!

PREPARATION

Choose words to use, involve child in nappy changing process, introduce equipment and talk about peers who are potty training.

READINESS

Check ERIC's [Guide to Potty Training](#) for signs of readiness. Can they stay dry for an hour or two, are they doing a soft poo every day?

ROUTINE

Prompt for wees every couple of hours, try for a poo 20/30 minutes after meals. Boys to sit for wees to help them learn to poo and empty bladder.

PRAISE & PROGRESS

Track progress using ERIC's [Potty Training Record](#). Praise effort the child is making not just success.

THE BRISTOL STOOL CHART FOR CHILDREN

POO CHECKER What's your poo telling you?



TYPE 1

Small hard lumps like rabbit droppings.
This suggests severe constipation.



TYPE 2

Sausage shaped, but hard and lumpy.
This suggests constipation.



TYPE 3

Sausage shaped, but hard, with cracks on the surface.
This suggests constipation.



TYPE 4

A soft, smooth sausage - **THE IDEAL POO!**



TYPE 5

Separate soft blobs
May be fine if the child is well and softer poos can be accounted for e.g. increased intake of fibre or taking laxative.



TYPE 6

A mushy stool
May be fine if the child is well and softer poos can be accounted for e.g. increased intake of fibre or taking laxative.



TYPE 7

A liquid stool
This could be diarrhoea or overflow.

**Based on the Bristol Stool Form Scale produced by Dr KW Heaton, Reader in Medicine at the University of Bristol.*

CHILDREN WHO WILL ONLY POO IN A NAPPY AND OTHER TOILET AVOIDERS



Children who will only poo in a nappy are completely normal. Lots of children go through a phase, usually soon after toilet training has begun, when they refuse to poo in the toilet or toilet and insist on using a nappy.

Other children go through a phase of refusing to wee in the toilet or toilet. You'll find the information and techniques below will be relevant to them too.

Some boys and girls will work it out for themselves, but without intervention some would happily poo in a nappy for years.

Here are some tips to help you break the pooing in a nappy habit.

If your child insists on using a nappy to poo, **DON'T SAY NO**, or they will simply try to avoid pooing. Withholding the stools will lead to constipation – which is definitely something to avoid! Let them have the nappy on just to do their poo, and work on gradually changing their behaviour.

So, where do you start?

1. Constipation

Constipation often plays a part in toilet/toilet avoidance. A big, hard, painful poo will scare the child, and to stop it happening again they simply hold on. Look at [ERIC's Guide to Children's Bowel Problems](#) for information on how to recognise if your child is constipated. There is also lots more information on the [Flowchart for Constipation](#). Make sure any constipation is really well managed before attempting to change toileting behaviour.

2. Making the toilet less scary

Some children are frightened of the toilet itself. This fear will need to be overcome before they can start learning to sit on it. If your child is scared of the flush, start by flushing it while they stand by the bathroom door, then gradually ask them to come a little closer. When they are near enough, encourage them to put just a little bit of toilet paper in the toilet to flush away.

If they are worried about the water splashing back when they use the toilet, show them how to put a layer of toilet paper over the water in the toilet bowl.

Create a game with a few bottles of food colouring! Add a few drops to the cistern, then ask your child to guess what colour the water in the toilet will change to when they flush.

3. Learning to sit on the toilet

To start with, sitting on the toilet/toilet should have nothing to do with pooing. The emphasis should be completely on relaxed, happy sitting – when you ask them to do so.

To start with this may be a five second sit, once a day, fully clothed. That's fine! Reward them for sitting (have a look at our Toileting Reward Chart), and resist the temptation to mention wee or poo!

The key now is moving forward gradually, so each little step forward is an achievable goal. You plan when the toilet/toilet sitting should take place – aim for 20-30 minutes after each meal as that is the best time to poo, and before bed. Make sure your child's bottom and feet are firmly supported – see the section 'How to get the poo in the loo' in [ERIC's Guide to Children's Bowel Problems](#).

Over time you'll build up a regular toileting programme, with your child sitting on the toilet/toilet for 5-10 minutes four times a day. Keep a bag of special toys in the bathroom ready so they look forward to exploring what's there whenever they sit on the loo.

Remember to reward every toilet/toilet sit with your agreed system.

4. Next steps

Once you've made sure your child is not constipated, and they can happily sit on the toilet/toilet for 5-10 minutes, you're ready to begin working towards them pooing in the right place.

The key thing is to work out where they like to poo in their nappy, for example behind the sofa or in the corner of their bedroom, and where you want them to poo – on the toilet/toilet. Put as many tiny steps as possible in between until eventually they reach the toilet. Each step should be an achievable goal.

Be patient – this may take a long time, but it will be worth it! Read the examples below for ideas of how other parents encouraged their children to move step-by-step towards the toilet.