

Guidance to toileting in schools

Children are now starting early years provision in settings and schools at a younger age. Most children will have been toilet trained by the time they start, a small number will still have to master this developmental milestone and will need support in managing their intimate care and self-care needs.

There will be children and young people across the age range of 2-19, who are either delayed in acquiring this skill or who, long-term, will need support and intervention throughout the day to manage their intimate care as they progress through the Key Stages.

When children enter nursery/school it is reasonable to expect that the toileting process should have begun, even if in most cases the child may not be fully toilet-trained. That said, under the terms of the **Equality Act 2010** schools must not refuse admission to a child who is not toilet-trained. Admission policies and practices that require a child to be toilet trained are discriminatory and potentially unlawful.

Approximately three quarters of a million children in the UK aged between five and 16 will need some toileting support.*1

Some children will have underlying problems that need to be addressed with the support of medical professionals. However, there are steps which schools can take to reduce the likelihood of children wetting and soiling themselves.

Pupils with complex toileting needs

For some children their additional medical or physical needs may mean that access to the toileting facilities is additional to those of others.

Schools will need hygiene rooms with changing tables/hoists or other equipment where children are not ambulant or able to weight bear. Staff will require manual handling training to support the pupil in moving/position. OT/physio advice is likely to be needed in terms of equipment/handling of the pupil.

FAQs

Is there need for two members of staff to change a pupil for safeguarding reasons?

No there is not. There is not a legal requirement for two members of staff to be present. Staff helping with personal care need to ensure others are aware that they are going to change the pupil in line with the school's intimate care policy.

Will we need a separate room and changing mat to change the pupil?

If the pupil is able to weight bear, it is good practice to change them standing. This is more respectful as they get older and helps to build towards the skill of using the toilet independently. Disabled toilets will be large enough for this if no other area is available.

Working together

How can parents/carers help?

- provide spare clothes/pads.
- establish a routine and share with school.
- help write the intimate care plan.

How can health professionals help?

For those pupils below statutory school age the Health Visitor assesses the skills required for toileting and reviews this at around 27 months. They are able to advise schools around routines/skill acquisition for toileting.

Good practice would be for this to be discussed at the Team Around the Child (TAC) meeting prior to the child starting in the setting.

For those pupils of statutory school age, school nurses are able to give general advice to schools on promoting healthy bladder and bowel routines and parents would be encouraged to be part of this conversation. Parents can contact school nurses themselves if required. School nurses can give healthy bladder and bowel advice regarding issues at home and signpost

on to additional information and other services.

How can school procedures and practices help?

Access to water through the day. Children need to drink water regularly throughout the day. They also need to empty their bladder and bowels regularly and fully when the need arises. Having set times for access to the toilet can cause "I'll go just in case" practices which means the bladder doesn't get used to holding on until it's full. Over time, the bladder capacity can reduce, increasing the need to visit the toilet more frequently. A pupil may consciously or unconsciously reduce their fluid intake, or avoid drinking altogether, if they fear not being able to go to the toilet when they need to.

- make sure toilet facilities are inviting (Perhaps student council could be involved with this)
- make sure there is enough time to use the facilities.
- have an intimate care policy in place.

- create an intimate care plan for the pupil with input from parents/carers and Health where appropriate.

Good practice.

- have written care plans in place
- ensure that pupils are actively consulted about their own care plan

Staff should:

- adhere to the schools' intimate and personal care policies
- make other staff aware of the task being undertaken
- always explain to the pupil what is happening before a care procedure begins
- consult with colleagues where any variation from agreed procedure/care plan is necessary
- record the justification for any variations to the agreed procedure/care plan and share this information with the pupil and their parents/carers
- always consider the supervision needs of the pupils and only remain in the room where their needs require this

Further advice and support

*1 <http://www.bbuk.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Managing-Bowel-and-Bladder-Issues-in-Nurseries-Schools-and-Colleges.pdf>

Pupils with ASD

<https://www.autism.org.uk/about/health/toilet-training.aspx>

Toileting for pupils with healthcare needs

[Supporting learners with healthcare needs: quick guide for support staff and teachers](#)

[Supporting learners with healthcare needs: healthcare needs policy template for schools](#)

[Supporting learners with healthcare needs](#)

[Supporting learners with healthcare needs: template forms](#)

RCT policies

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/SchoolsandLearning/AccessandInclusion/oEducation/relateddocs/LAhealthcarepolicy2019.pdf>

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/SchoolsandLearning/AccessandInclusion/oEducation/relateddocs/servicedocumentationdocs/AccessibilityAdviceRequestForm2019.docx>

[Intimate care policy/guidance](#)

This document is available in Welsh

Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg