

Favours Day Nursery Ltd Policy and Procedure

Toilet Training

Using a potty is a new skill for your child to learn. While some children will go through the process with relative ease, there will also be children that take a lot longer and have a lot more accidents. Neither of these are an indication that you are doing anything wrong or right or that the child is not ready, it is simply down to each individual being different. You can talk to your health visitor about any worries or questions.

- By age 1, most babies have stopped doing poos at night
- By age 2, some children will be dry during the day
- By age 3, nine out of ten children are dry most days – even then, all children have the odd accident, especially when they're excited, upset or absorbed in something else
- By age 4, most children are reliably dry during the day

There are a number of signs that your child is starting to develop bladder control and might be ready:

- they know when they've got a wet or dirty nappy
- they get to know when they're weeing and may tell you they're doing it
- the gap between wetting is at least an hour (if it's less, potty training may fail, and at the very least will be extremely hard work for you)
- they show they need to wee by fidgeting or going somewhere quiet or hidden
- they know when they need to wee and may say so in advance

Potty training is usually fastest if your child is at the last stage before you start the training. If you start earlier, be prepared for lots of accidents as your child learns.

At Favours Day Nursery we are following Let's Go Potty: Let's go together! This is the 3-step evidence-based approach adopted by ERIC, for children learning how to use the potty independently and stop wearing nappies. The foundation of the approach is that children are born ready to learn new skills. The majority of children will be capable of doing most things including wiping by themselves when they start school. Research shows it is better for children's bladder and bowel health to stop using nappies between 18 and 30 months. Starting toilet training after 2 and a half to 3 years can make it harder for some children to learn this new skill.

<https://eric.org.uk/advice-about-childrens-bladders-and-bowels-from-birth-to-potty-training-to-school-2/>

Step 1: Preparation

- Make sure there is no underlying constipation and that the child is having plenty of water-based drinks (6-8 cups a day). Keeping their bladder and bowel healthy and working properly will help with potty training.
- Involve them in nappy changing and talk to them about it whilst you're doing it so that they begin to understand where wee and poo goes and how our body feels.
- If you always change their nappy in the bathroom, they will learn that's the place where people go to the loo.

Step 2: Practice

Teaching the child how to use a potty and feel comfortable around wee and poo is a great way to introduce the next step. From the time the child can safely sit up by themselves, they can start sitting on a potty with your help. Good times to try a potty sit include:

- Shortly after they wake up or before bedtime
- After mealtimes
- Anytime you know the child needs to go (if you see them straining for a poo, for example)

Using play can help teach the child what you expect, as well as motivate them. You can use stories, characters and toys to explain to the child what they need to do and teach them how to do it.

Step 3: Stopping using nappies

Thanks to plenty of preparation and practice, the child has gained new skills and confidence. They are now ready for the last step which is to stop wearing nappies. Here are some tips to help make this stage easier for you both:

- Make sure it's a good time for you as well as the family. It's best to avoid doing it at a time when there are any big changes or disruptions to the child's or family's routine.
- Dress the child in clothes that are easy for them to get on and off avoiding tights and buttons, so they can take the lead with using the potty.
- If the child is a boy, encourage him to sit down on the potty for both wees and poos - especially in the beginning. We empty our bladder better when sitting down and it helps to prevent constipation.
- Potty training is a big milestone for the family too. Work together – guide the family towards a definite goodbye to nappies, to ensure consistency for the child.
- If your child has an accident, just clean it up and wait for next time. It takes a while for them to get the hang of it. If you don't make a fuss when they have an accident, they won't feel anxious and worried, and are more likely to be successful the next time.
- Your child will be delighted when they succeed and a little praise from you will help a lot. It can be quite tricky to get the balance between giving praise and making a big deal out of it. Do not give sweets as a reward, but you could try using a sticker chart.

Potty training children with additional needs

Almost all children can learn to be clean and dry. Children with special needs including delayed development and physical disabilities may take a little longer and need more support. However, the process you need to follow is the same. This can feel like a big challenge, but it's important not to put off potty training for too long. The longer the child wears a nappy, the harder it may be to introduce a new place for them to wee and poo. [The charity Contact has more information on potty training for children living with a disability.](#)

My child doesn't want to use the potty

Try not to worry. Remind yourself that sooner or later, your child will want to be dry for their own sake. If they start to see potty training as a battle with you, it'll be much harder. Leave the potty training for a month or so, then try again, slowly and calmly.

My child keeps wetting themselves

You have 2 options. You could go back to nappies for a while and try again in a few weeks, or you can keep leaving the nappies off, but be prepared to change and wash clothes a lot. Whatever you decide, don't let it get you or your child down, and don't put pressure on them. Don't confuse your child by stopping and starting potty training too often.

My child uses the potty sometimes, but has accidents other times

Accidents will happen for a while, so when your child does use the potty or manages to stay dry, even if it's just for a short time, tell them how pleased you are. Even though accidents can be very frustrating, try not to show your child how you are feeling. Explain that you want them to use the potty next time. If your child starts to worry about making a mess, the problem could get worse.

My child was dry for a while, but now they've started wetting themselves again

If your child has been dry for a while, either at night, during the day or both, and then starts wetting themselves again, it can mean they have a bladder infection, constipation, type 1 diabetes or threadworms, ask your GP for more advice. Alternatively, there may be an emotional reason. A change of routine or another disruption, such as moving house or a new baby arriving, can often have an effect. The best thing you can do is be understanding and sympathetic. Your child will almost certainly be upset about wetting themselves and won't be doing it on purpose. Stay positive and give your child gentle reminders about using the potty regularly.

In order for toilet training to proceed smoothly we **recommend** the following;

- Not to use 'Pull Ups'. In our experience, children do not understand the difference between these and nappies as they still do not have the wet sensation after having a wee. We have seen far more success stories with the use of pants straight from nappies. The children instantly feel more grown up when they start using pants and it is far easier to remember that they are not wearing a nappy.
- Discuss the language you use with your child with our staff so that they are fully aware and can instantly understand your child's needs.
- Supply lots of spare pants, socks and 'suitable trousers' for your child
- Never reprimand the child for having an accident
- Offer the child opportunities every 45-60 minutes to use either the potty or the toilet so that their bladder has time to fill (20-30 minutes after a meal is the most likely time for a child to poo)
- Give plenty of praise when the child successfully uses the potty or toilet
- Putting a nappy over pants for travelling so if the child wees they are aware of the sensation of feeling wet or using products such as absorbent car seat protectors (available from www.eric.org.uk/shop)
- Aim to recognise achievable goals such as sitting on the potty when asked to do so – keeping pants dry may be an unachievable goal initially

More information and support

You can contact [ERIC, The Children's Bowel and Bladder Charity](http://www.eric.org.uk), for information on potty training.

You can call the ERIC helpline on 0808 801 0343 (Monday to Thursday, 10am to 1pm) or you can [email the ERIC helpline via a webform](#).

You can also talk to your GP or health visitor to get some guidance. They may refer you to a clinic for expert help.

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Written with guidance from the National Day Nurseries Association, NHS, ERIC, DfE