

# William Gilpin

## Guidance on Toileting Needs in Schools and Early Years Settings

### Introduction

The vast majority of children are appropriately toilet trained and able to manage their own needs competently before they start school. This policy will apply to pupils who, for whatever reason, require toilet training or special arrangements with toileting in preschool or school settings.

### This Policy Statement:

- Identifies the importance of working in partnership with parents/ carers;
- Sets out the principles of good practice;
- Provides practical guidance for preschool and starting school;
- Clarifies the implications of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001;
- Sets guidance for children with special educational needs and disabilities;
- Emphasises the employer's duty to safe guard the health and safety of pupils and staff;
- Provides Child Protection advice Raises awareness of the need to protect the dignity of the child.

### Partnership with Parents

Open and supportive communication with parents is fundamental to planning for and meeting the child's toileting needs effectively and sensitively. Many parents may feel anxious that their child is not able to use the toilet independently and may have already experienced some difficulties with toilet training and/or experienced negative attitudes from others towards the issue. For some children their toileting needs may be relatively short term and related to initial toilet training, whereas others may require a long term toileting programme. Parents will need to feel confident that the setting is able to support their child's toileting needs and is positive about doing so.

### Partnership with Children and Young People

The active involvement of the child in their toileting programme is vital to make sure they have ownership and understanding of their targets.

### Principles of Good Practice

Children who have difficulties in controlling their bladder/bowels have sometimes had a difficult start on the road to personal independence. It is possible to understand why early training has been missed, ineffective or not yet possible. **These children have an educational entitlement irrespective of their difficulties with toileting.**

- Children or young people who need assistance with toilet training or special toileting arrangements must be treated with respect, dignity and sensitivity.
- Educational establishments should ensure that they work in partnership with parents and carers in planning for toileting needs and effective toilet training.
- It is important to adopt consistent approaches at home and at school.
- The setting, in partnership with parents or carers, child and any other professionals involved, should make and review care plans working towards achieving maximum independence of the child with toileting over time.
- The setting, supported by Headteachers, Governors, and Senior Managers, should positively address issues raised by toileting needs in a constructive and problem solving way.
- Preschool and school staff should be provided with access to appropriate resources and facilities and be supported by clear plans, policy guidelines and training. All staff supporting pupils with toileting difficulties must receive appropriate information and specific training as required.

- Headteachers and Managers should be aware of, and ensure implementation of, appropriate health and safety procedures and risk assessments.
- Headteachers, Governors and Senior Managers should be aware of their duties to comply with the SEN and Disability Act 2001.
- Schools must consult the Social Worker whenever planning toilet training or special toileting arrangements for children on the Child Protection Register or whenever any Social Services Children's Teams are involved.
- It is important to alert the Educational Social Work Service if any school attendance difficulties develop as a consequence of toileting concerns.

### **Attending Preschool Settings and Starting School**

The Children's Services Department, acting through the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, believes that children with toileting difficulties should be admitted into nursery and reception classes with their friends in the same way as any other child.

At this stage it is not possible to assume that failure to achieve independence with toileting is in itself an indication of special educational needs. However, there are some children who enter pre-school or reception with special educational needs and/or medical conditions which indicate the need for special toileting arrangements or toileting training. These children fall within the terms of the SEN and Disability Act 2001 and the pre-school or school setting must take "reasonable steps" to support them.

### **Definition of Disability in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)**

The DDA provides protection for anyone who has a physical, sensory or mental impairment that has an adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The effect must be substantial and long-term. It is clear therefore that anyone with a named condition that affects aspects of personal development must not be discriminated against. However, it is also unacceptable to refuse admission to other children who are delayed in achieving continence. Delayed continence is not necessarily linked with learning difficulties. However, children with global developmental delay, which may not have been identified by the time they enter nursery or school, are likely to be late achieving independence with toileting.

Education providers have an obligation to meet the needs of children with delayed personal development in the same way as they would meet the individual needs of children with delayed language, or any other kind of delayed development. Children should not be excluded from normal pre-school or school activities solely because of incontinence.

Any admissions policy that sets a blanket standard of continence, or any other aspect of development, for all children is discriminatory and therefore unlawful under the Act. All such issues should be dealt with on an individual basis, and settings are expected to make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of each child.

Before the child begins attendance it is important to:

- Gather information from parents, child and any professionals involved;
- Establish effective partnership with parents, child and any professionals involved;
- Focus on health and safety implications and determine whether a risk assessment is required;
- Decide, in consultation with parents/ carers, whether you need further advice from Health or Children's Services;
- Arrange for any specialist advice, training, resources to be in place before the child begins attendance;
- Agree a plan with parents/ carers and child and make a written note of your agreement;
- Make sure that all staff are informed and clear about their responsibilities.

It is important for all parties to monitor and review the plan regularly to ensure it is still appropriate and meeting the changing needs of the child.

It is reasonable to discuss the level of independence with toileting before a child starts school. However, it is not acceptable to deny, delay or reduce attendance at pre-school or reception simply because a child has special toilet requirements. It is important to agree a plan which will work towards maximum independence and support the child's attendance in the educational setting.

### **Good Practice Guidance**

Each child and situation is of course unique. However Headteachers may find the following guidance helpful in deciding what "reasonable steps" should be taken to support pupils who require toilet training.

It is anticipated that existing staff will volunteer to support pupils with toilet training or special toileting arrangements in school and preschool. Where incontinence is caused by an underlying impairment, it is a necessary reasonable adjustment for staff to carry out personal care. When recruiting new staff it is important that duties relating to personal care are specified in the contract of employment (see Appendix for an example of such a job description). Managers should ensure that staff carrying out such procedures feel confident and supported by relevant training and protocols to ensure the dignity of the pupil and protection of the staff.

If the child is not able to use the toilet independently on entry, schools have found a variation on the following procedures usually addresses the difficulty.

- Gather as much information as possible from the parents and carers and child. How have they tried to introduce toilet training at home? What happens at home? Has the child any regular routines or daily patterns which could inform the routine set-up by the school? Have the parents/carers noticed any particular difficulties, or phobias which the school should be aware of? Can the parents/ carers suggest a strategy or procedure for dealing with the problem?
- An appropriate toileting programme will need to be discussed and agreed so that the child, parents/ carers and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities. The plan must state regular monitoring and review strategies. The plan should give careful consideration to choosing which adults should be involved in toileting care. Schools and pre-school settings should give a written copy of the programme to the parents/ carers.
- Clothes should be easy for the child to pull up and down. Wherever possible it is better to train the child with appropriate clothing rather than continuing to rely on the nappy or training pants.
- Staff should ask parents/ carers to provide the school with a couple of appropriate changes of pants/trousers etc in case of accidents.
- It is the responsibility of parents / carers to deal with wet/soiled clothing. Staff should liaise accordingly and make the necessary arrangements.
- Organise that a member of staff familiar with the child is given the responsibility of taking the child to the toilet at fixed appropriate intervals throughout the morning/day. Whenever possible arrange toilet visits during "break" time in the child's day to day routine. Careful observations and discussions with the child may identify when the child "needs to go".
- Ensure that the routine established in school is strictly maintained from the start and try hard to avoid accidents. If necessary shorten the time between visits to the toilet so that the child gets into the habit of being dry.
- Children may be anxious and pre-occupied by toilet difficulties but usually respond to praise, encouragement and confidence building. It is important to promote self esteem in other areas.

- Make drinking water easily accessible for all children and encourage them to have "little and often" rather than in huge amounts at a time.
- Reminders to use the toilet should be discreet and staff may consider the use of signs, pictures or code words.
- Make little fuss over accidents that do occur and ensure that they are dealt with swiftly, appropriately, sympathetically and in a calm low-key way. Give extra attention when they have made the effort to go to the toilet independently.
- No child should be left wet or dirty for a parent/ carer to change later.
- It is not reasonable to expect parents or carers to be on emergency stand-by to change children during the school day.
- After a period of training it may be sufficient to remind the child to go to the toilet on their own. Be positive and patient and praise the child for effort.
- Where difficulties persist there may be more complex issues to consider and further guidance and support may be needed from other professionals. It is important to discuss your continuing concerns with parents/ carers and seek their agreement before involving further professional guidance and support.

### **Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

In addition to the good practice guidance described above the following considerations may apply:

- In consultation with parents, health service staff will provide any relevant medical information, training and advice.
- It may be appropriate to consult the Specialist Teacher Adviser for Children with Physical Disabilities for health and safety guidance, training for staff supporting children who are non-weight bearing and who require manual assistance to use the toilet and guidance on future toilet facilities in school.
- They will assist with risk assessments if necessary.
- Specialist equipment may be accessible through the Early Education and Child Care Unit or Specialist Teacher Advisory Service.
- It is important to anticipate toileting needs for these pupils before planning off site activities.

### **Health and Safety Considerations**

The Local Authority, Headteachers and Governors have a duty to safeguard the Health and Safety of pupils and staff. Schools and other settings registered to provide education will already have hygiene or infection control policies as part of their Health and Safety policy and will follow these when managing a child with toileting needs. Ensure all known allergies are considered when planning and carrying out each child's toileting programme.

### **Child Protection concerns**

The normal process of changing a nappy should not raise child protection concerns, and there are no regulations that indicate that a second member of staff must be available to supervise the nappy changing process to ensure that abuse does not take place. Few settings will have the staffing resources to provide two members of staff for nappy changing and CRB checks are carried out to ensure the safety of children with staff employed in childcare or education settings. Where there are concerns the usual child protection procedures should be followed.

### **Further information and advice**

For general help or advice about this guidance please contact:

- The Senior Area Inclusion Co-ordinator at the Early Education and Child Care Unit Tel: 01962 813875
- The Team Leader, Specialist Teacher Adviser for Children with Physical Disabilities Fleet Local Office Tel: 01252814777

**This policy will be reviewed in the Spring Term 2011.**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

## **Appendix (to Guidance on Toileting Needs)**

### **Learning Support Assistant**

#### **Job Description**

##### **Teaching, Learning and the Curriculum**

- To carry out contractual duties and responsibilities for the school as allocated by the Headteacher.
- To work as part of the Learning Support team under the direction of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.
- To prepare occasional materials as necessary under the direction of the mainstream teacher.
- To support the teacher's classroom management and organisation.
- To help students organise themselves and their equipment. To explain tasks in class and help to record homework where appropriate.
- To carry out special duties if the student's statement specified, e.g. in the case of a physical disability some help with exercise may be necessary or maintain frequent liaison with parents in order to monitor the disability.
- To provide, where necessary, written details of students' progress/behaviour to assist Annual Reviews and/or other assessment.
- To become familiar with the aims and objectives of Annual Reviews and the targets of IEPs for the students with whom they are working.
- To attend Developmental Learning Support meetings and staff meeting when appropriate.

##### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Participation in the evaluation of the support programme.
- Providing regular feedback about the child to the teacher.
- Contributing to reviews of the student's progress.

##### **Leading, Managing People and Relationships**

- Drawing on knowledge of various forms of special needs, the development of an understanding of the specific needs of the child/ren concerned.
- Taking into account the special needs involved, aiding the child/ren to learn as effectively as possible both in group situations and on his/her own by, for example:
  - Clarifying and explaining instructions;
  - Ensuring child is able to use equipment and materials provided;
  - Motivating and encouraging child as required;
  - Assisting in weak areas, e.g. language, behaviour, reading, spelling, handwriting, presentation, etc.
  - Helping students to concentrate on and finish work set;
  - Meeting physical needs as required whilst encouraging independence;
  - In liaison with class teacher devising complementing learning activities.
- In respect of students with physical disabilities, the following may also be necessary:
  - Supervision and/or help moving around the site Supervision in the playground;
  - Supervision and support in PE/games lessons;
  - Carrying out alternative PE/games programmes;
  - Carrying out physiotherapy/occupational therapy programmes;
  - Carrying out a programme of independence training;
  - Help with toileting which may include changing nappies, catheterisation;

- Help with eating;
  - Help with practical tasks;
  - General support in and around the classroom;
  - Help with use of alternative methods of recording: use of concept keyboard; use as amanuensis etc.
  - Ensuring safety;
  - Helping a student whose condition causes fatigue of a high level of absences to catch up with class work.
- Establishing a supportive relationship with the child/ren concerned.
  - Encouraging acceptance and inclusion of special needs child with other children in school.
  - Develop methods of promoting/reinforcing child's self-esteem.
  - Where appropriate, the development of a relationship to foster links between home and school.

### **Managing Resources**

- Assisting, with class teacher (and other professionals as appropriate), in the development of a suitable programme of support for child/ren with special needs.
- In conjunction with the class teacher and/or other professionals the development of a system of recording child's progress.
- The maintenance of child/ren's progress records.
- Liaison with other members of the team supporting the child/ren as and when the need arises.

### **Improvement**

- Attending relevant in-service training.

### **Accountability**

- Being aware of school procedures.
- Such other duties as may be reasonably allocated or directed within the purview of the post.
- To maintain confidentiality where appropriate.

The job description may be reviewed at the end of the Academic Year or earlier if necessary. In addition it may be amended at any time after consultation.

### **Notes**

- Hours of work will be decided by the Headteacher.
- Hours of work may be subject to change for operational reasons.
- Responsibilities may be changed or adapted by the Headteacher in view of the changing needs/policies of the school. Some tasks may be modified, delegated or deleted in the light of further appointments.
- These duties and responsibilities outlined to be undertaken in consultation with the Headteacher.