



Early Years Toilet Training Policy

Aims

At the British School Tenerife, we recognise that toilet training is an important developmental milestone in a child's life. Our aim is to ensure that every child feels supported, reassured, and encouraged throughout this process so that it becomes a positive and successful stage in their development.

Toilet training requires continuity and collaboration between home and school. We ask parents to discuss their child's readiness and progress with staff, as open communication is key to success.

Signs That Children May Be Ready for Toilet Training

- Children are usually unable to voluntarily control the muscles that regulate their bladder and bowels until around 18 months of age.
- The child begins to tell you in advance that they are about to urinate or have a bowel movement.
- The child expresses discomfort when their nappy is wet or soiled.
- The child shows awareness when passing urine or stool (typically between 18–24 months).
- The child understands the words "wee" and "poo" — staff and parents should use these terms naturally during nappy changes.
- The child's nappy remains dry for a couple of hours after the last change, showing signs of developing bladder control.
- The child often wakes from naps with a dry nappy.
- The child can walk independently and sit safely on the toilet or potty.
- The child can follow simple instructions.
- The child can partially undress to use the toilet.
- The child can sit still for a few minutes.

Children do not need to display all these signs, but the more indicators present, the more likely toilet training will be successful.

Research suggests that boys may take slightly longer to gain control of their bladders and bowels than girls due to:

- Later neurological development and
- Lower sensitivity to the feeling of wetness.

If a child does not yet show most readiness signs or reacts negatively to toilet training, we recommend waiting a few weeks or months before trying again. Starting too soon can delay progress and lead to frustration for both child and adult.

Toilet Training Procedures

- All staff will be made aware of each child's stage of toilet training and will receive regular updates from staff.
- Parents should inform staff of any special requirements, such as a child's preferred name for the toilet or use of a potty.
- All children must be accompanied to the bathroom and supported appropriately during toilet training.
- Reassurance and praise should be given at every step to build confidence and self-esteem.
- Potties should be emptied immediately after use and cleaned thoroughly with an antibacterial spray.
- Children should be supported to wash their hands with soap and water and to dry them properly.
- All toilet visits and progress will be shared with parents at handover or on Tapestry.

- If a child is struggling with toilet training, the Early Years Lead, staff and parents will discuss next steps together.
- Staff assisting with toileting must be aged 17 or over and DBS-cleared.
- Staff must ensure toilets are clean and supplied with toilet paper before use.
- Staff must wear a disposable apron and gloves when assisting a child with toileting.
- Encourage children to undress and use the toilet or potty independently, offering help as needed.
- When helping boys to urinate standing up, staff must not physically assist with positioning. Instead, gentle verbal guidance or repositioning from behind may be used if necessary.
- Encourage children to clean themselves after using the toilet. Where help is required (for example, after a bowel movement), staff should clean the child carefully, wiping from front to back, respecting privacy, and always explaining what is happening.
- If a child has a toileting accident, staff will assist with changing as necessary. This will occur regardless of age, unless parents have specifically requested their child manage this independently.
- Children should be encouraged to flush the toilet and replace their own clothing, where appropriate.
- Children whose parents and staff have agreed to begin potty training will be prompted to use the potty or toilet regularly throughout the day.
- Parents are asked to provide at least three spare pairs of underwear and several changes of clothing to support this stage.
- Once a child begins wearing pants, we recommend not reverting to nappies or pull-ups (except for naps and nighttime) to avoid confusion and maintain consistency.

Partnership with Parents

Toilet training is most successful when there is clear and consistent communication between home and school. Parents are encouraged to:

- Discuss their child's readiness and progress with the staff.
- Keep staff informed of any changes in routines or approaches used at home.
- Provide sufficient spare clothes and any specific items their child needs.

Policy Review:

This policy will be reviewed every, or more frequently if required by changes in legislation, guidance, or school operational needs.

Written by:	Jenni Garnett		
Agreed Date:	October 2025		
Board of Governors			
	Print Name:	Signed:	Date:
Academic Director:			
	Print Name:	Signed:	Date:
Review Date:	October 2026		