

Toilet Training policy

Introduction

It is the policy of Saplings Special School, Goresbridge to ensure that our policies are in accordance with the Child Safeguarding and D.E.S. Guidelines. This policy is designed to safeguard both our pupils and staff and applies to all staff involved with the toilet training of students. It aims to support best practice in toilet training.

Vision and Aims

Staff in Saplings recognise that learning to use the toilet is a big event in a young child's life. Because toilet training is a complex process, there are many issues caregivers and families must consider before and during the process of toilet training for it to be a successful experience for the child.

All children learn to use the toilet at a different stage in their life. The approach to toilet training in Saplings Goresbridge is an inclusive model, involving and supporting the parents of the student with each programme individualised according to the needs of each child. It is imperative that each child is ready to learn to use the toilet. The school and parents will liaise with health professionals and support personnel from external services where necessary at the outset of toilet training to ensure that the child is developmentally ready.

Definitions:

Enuresis occurs when individuals of a certain age have not learned to control emptying their bladder. **Encopresis** occurs when individuals of a certain age are not toilet trained in relation to bowel movements.

General Toilet Training Guidelines

- For primary and secondary enuresis and encopresis medical advice must be sought by families to ensure their child is ready for toilet training and that no medical complications have arisen that would explain these conditions.
- Diurnal enuresis (wetting during the day) will be targeted first by the school. Secondary enuresis and all instances of encopresis must first be referred to the student's General Practitioner or relevant medical healthcare professional and a program will not be implemented until medical causes have been ruled out.
- An initial review meeting will take place with the student's parents, and the multi-disciplinary team to determine if the student has the appropriate prerequisite skills to begin a program and to outline a toileting program.
- Toilet training procedures used in the school will be evidence-based methodologies, appropriate to the level of the student and the procedures will be constantly monitored and updated as appropriate.
- Toilet training will be approached in a calm and relaxed manner. Children will be appropriately rewarded for success but never reprimanded for accidents. Student's will be cleaned and changed immediately. This will be done in a positive and reassuring

manner and in line with our Intimate Care Policy.

- Home-school communication will be paramount during toilet training and any intervention should take place in home and school at the same time to ensure consistency of approach. Any decisions made by the school team will be tailored to the individual and based on the detailed data which will be kept by the school on the toileting intervention, and by reports and advice from external professionals.
- Any advice given to parents will be individual to each student and records will be kept on the school meeting minutes template outlining all advice given.
- Parents will be encouraged to keep records of toileting success and accidents at home.
- Prior to toilet training parents will be asked to complete a form outlining their child's level of independence when using the toilet.
- The bathroom will be a child friendly area. Visual aids will be displayed in the bathroom area outlining all of the steps involved in successful toileting. These visual supports will be provided to parents for use in the home on request.
- The school will follow the structured intervention program as outlined and agreed for each individual student and this will be closely monitored. A large variety of evidence-based approaches can be drawn upon for each program and these include but are not limited to the following: dry pants checks, scheduled toileting, prompted requests, increase in liquid intake, prompt hierarchies and fading procedures, visual supports, enuresis mat or sensor and alarm, and reinforcement strategies.
- 10 minutes is the longest a student will ever be encouraged to remain on a toilet.
- A focus of the intervention will be placed upon teaching a student to independently communicate their need to use the toilet (using verbals, PECS, Lámh, etc).
- Data will be kept by the school to track toilet training success (See Appendix 2 for example to be used where appropriate)
- A review of progress will take place after one month or as previously agreed with parents.

Practice in Intimate Care

In line with the school **Intimate Care Policy** the staff will establish good working practices regarding physical transfer (manual handling), wearing of protective clothing (e.g. gloves) and ensure safe practice in relation to procedures carried out. Where possible, events requiring intimate care assistance will be identified in advance. Should an emergency arise where assistance is required (e.g. out of school activities) and where surroundings are not ideal, the principles of privacy and dignity will be respected.

The Board of Management will provide facilities which afford privacy and modesty and provide sufficient space, heating and ventilation to ensure the student's safety and comfort.

Ratification and Communication

This **Toilet Training Policy** was reviewed and re-ratified by the Board of Management of Saplings Special School Goresbridge at its meeting held on **28th April 2025** and was subsequently communicated to all stakeholders via agreed minutes. It forms part of the school plan and is due for review in the school year 2026/27.

NB This policy is intended to be consulted in conjunction with other school policies concerning child protection, including the school Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment, and policies on Intimate Care, Swimming, Supervision, Data Protection, and Substitute and Temporary teachers etc

Signed: _____

Principal

Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: