Introduction

Potty training is an important milestone in your child's development. We understand that all children develop at their own pace, but research shows it's best for your child's bowel and bladder health to stop using nappies, including reusable nappies, pull-ups and training pants, between 18 and 30 months.

It's really important that children are out of all nappies well in advance of starting Reception year in school. The only exception should be children with a diagnosed medical need, such as a bladder or bowel condition.

Being out of nappies not only helps children to feel confident, healthy and part of the group, it also means teachers can spend more time teaching and supporting children's development in other ways.

Did you know?

83%

of children were out of nappies by 18 months in the 1970s and 1980s.

Today,

1 in 4

children aren't toilet trained when they start Reception.

How do I know when to start?

Almost all children can learn to be clean and dry with the right support, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Children with sensory needs may require additional time and support.

Potty training should be seen as a process and not a single event. It happens over time and children can practise sitting on a potty or toilet from when they can sit up independently.

Research shows it's best for your child's bowel and bladder health to **stop using nappies between 18 and 30 months**. Even if your baby or child has SEND, you don't need to wait to start toilet training.

Toilet training is about learning skills, and these can be taught with extra help and/or a clear routine. The longer you wait, the harder it can be for your child to learn the new routine and feel confident without nappies.

Some children will show signs that it is the right time to stop using nappies. For example, they may know and tell you when they are weeing and the gap between wees will be at least an hour. But many children will not show clear signs and most will never ask to stop wearing nappies, especially if they wear disposable nappies or pull-ups that are designed to keep them feeling dry.

Did you know?

£400

per year

is spent by British families on nappies and wipes alone - potty training earlier would save you all of that.

Around

3 billion

disposable nappies end up in UK landfill sites each year – each one can take up to 500 years to decompose!

More than

£60m

is spent per year by UK local authorities on the disposal of nappies. Potty training helps reduce environmental impact.

Make sure your child is not constipated – they should be doing a soft poo regularly (at least every other day). If you think your child might be constipated, it is important to get help with this before stopping nappies.