**POTTY/TOILET TRAINING POLICY**

The staff at Baby Bears Day Care are experienced in helping children to potty/toilet train. If you think your child is developmentally ready to start using the potty/toilet we will endeavour to support you and your child to the best of our ability. Potty/toilet training can be a very daunting process for parents/carers and child but please be assured that our staff will work with you to ensure the process is a smooth one. Please be aware that it can take longer for a child to potty/toilet train at nursery as there is so much more happening within the environment than at home. Therefore we ask you to start potty/toilet training your child at home for a short period of time before it is introduced at nursery.

Children are able to control their bladder and bowels when they’re physically ready, and when they want to be dry and clean. Every child is different, so it’s best not to compare your child with others.

Bear in mind the following:

* Most children can control their bowel before their bladder.
* By the age of two, some children will be dry during the day, but this is still quite early.
* By the age of three, 9 out of 10 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 the age of four most children are reliably dry.

It usually takes a little longer to learn to stay dry throughout the night. Although most children learn this between the ages of three and five, it is estimated that a quarter of three-year-olds and one in six five-year-olds wet the bed.

**When to start potty/toilet training**

It helps to remember that you can’t force your child to use a potty/toilet. If they're not ready, you won’t be able to make them use it. In time they will want to use it; your child won’t want to go to school in nappies any more than you would want them to. In the meantime, the best thing you can do is to encourage the behaviour you want.

Most parents/carers start thinking about potty/toilet training when their child is around 18 to 24 months old, but there’s no perfect time. It’s probably easier to start in the summer when there are fewer clothes to take off (and wash!). Do it over a period of time when there are no great disruptions or changes to your child’s or your family’s routine.

You can try to work out when your child is ready. There are a number of signs that your child is starting to develop bladder control:

• They know when they’ve got a wet or dirty nappy.

• They get to know when they’re passing urine and may tell you they’re doing it or in advance.

• 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).

• Has regular, soft, formed poo’s at relatively predictable times, and doesn't poo during the night.

• Has dry periods of at least one or two hours or wakes up with a dry nappy after a nap. This shows that her/his bladder muscles are developed enough to hold her/his wee in and store it.

• Can pull her/his pants up and down with only a little help.

• Shows an interest when you go to the bathroom.

• Shows signs of discomfort when her/his nappy is wet or dirty.

**Baby Bears follow the below protocol:**

1. Please inform staff when you begin to try this at home. After a short period of time at home, we will start encouraging your child to sit on a potty (or toilet if this is what is being used at home). We will try to copy your routine as close as possible to maintain continuity for your child. (Please note that potty’s will be located in the children’s toilet area and at each nappy station as part of the learning process – Children will learn to make the connection that when they need to pee, they go to the toilet).

2. When your child is ready for training at nursery, we strongly recommend that your child arrives in knickers/pants. This encourages the child to feel the difference in underwear and allows them to feel if they have an accident. The other option is for your child to be in a ‘pull up’. Encouraging them to use them as ‘pants/knickers’ when using the potty, rather than taking off a nappy.

3. Your child needs to wear suitable clothing when potty/toilet training (no belts, dungarees, popper vests or baby grows). Also, we request that you bring in sufficient spare clothes for the staff to dress your child if they should happen to have an accident. (This includes spare socks + shoes).

4. Whilst your child is potty training the staff will keep you informed on their progress.

5. We will put your child back in pull-ups/nappy (please provide) for relaxation/sleep time, until your child is dry throughout the day.

6.If your child has no more spare clothes we will need to put them back in to pull-ups. When starting out, if your child has several accidents over a period of a couple of days, it may be that your child is not ready yet. It would be in your child’s best interest to stop the training for a while and look out for the signs that would suggest your child may be ready again.

7. Accidents will be dealt with calmly, sympathetically and in a way which does not make the child think they have done wrong.

We understand that due to changes in routines or at home some children may regress. If your child has been dry for a while and they begin to have accidents your key person will work with you and support your child through this time. They will not be put back into ‘pull ups’ as this may make them more insecure but will be encouraged more than usual to use the toilet.