

Innsworth Preschool Toileting Policy

Last Updated: June 2026

1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 Overview: This policy outlines Innsworth Preschool's approach to supporting children with toileting, toilet training, intimate care, toileting accidents, and related personal care routines.

1.2 Objective: Its purpose is to clarify the shared responsibilities between parents and the preschool and to ensure that all toileting support, including developmental toilet training and intimate care, is provided in a manner that is safe, dignified, hygienic, inclusive, and realistic within a group-care environment.

2. Legal and Statutory Framework

2.1 Compliance: This policy is a core component of our duty of care and is underpinned by our statutory duties and relevant guidance, including:

- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), including safeguarding and welfare requirements relating to health, hygiene, supervision, ratios, suitability, and children's safety.
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004.
- The Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice.
- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, including risk assessment.
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), including cleaning products and body fluids.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) guidance, applied operationally through our Infection Control Policy.
- The setting's related policies, including Safeguarding, SEND, Infection Control, Health and Safety, Suspension and Termination of Place, Meals and Enhancement Services, and Records Retention policies.

3. Our Principles

3.1 Approach: The preschool's approach to toileting is based on the following principles:

- **Child-Led Development:** Readiness is led by the child's pace and development, not solely by age or by parental preference.
- **Positive and Dignified Approach:** Children will never be shamed or punished for toileting accidents. Staff will explain actions to the child in age-appropriate language and encourage independence calmly and positively.
- **Partnership with Parents:** Successful toileting support depends on a consistent partnership between home and the preschool. Toileting support cannot work properly as a one-sided service where the preschool is expected to resolve toileting difficulties without consistent support from home.
- **Group-Care Readiness:** Toileting skills shown at home may not immediately transfer to a busy preschool environment. A child may be toilet trained at home but still require further support, consistency, confidence, or developmental readiness before they can manage toileting safely and reliably within group care.
- **Temporary Support Where Needed:** Nappies, pull-ups, or pants/underwear may be recommended depending on the child's needs and readiness at preschool. Pull-ups may be used as a temporary bridge while a child builds confidence, independence, and consistency in the preschool environment.
- **Clear and Consistent Rules:** The preschool supports over 70 families with different circumstances, expectations, backgrounds, cultures, routines, requests, and children with different abilities and needs. We must apply rules, policies, safeguarding responsibilities, hygiene procedures, legal requirements, staffing ratios, and group-care routines fairly and consistently, even where a family may feel differently about a particular decision.
- **Safety and Hygiene:** Toileting routines must protect children's dignity, hygiene, infection control, safeguarding, and the safe running of the session.

4. Procedures and Responsibilities

4.1 The Parent-Preschool Partnership: While toilet training often begins at home, we adopt a collaborative approach.

Advance Discussion and Agreement: Parents must tell the preschool in advance about any significant change to a child's toilet training arrangements for preschool sessions. This includes moving from nappies to pull-ups, moving from pull-ups to pants or underwear, stopping pull-ups, changing toileting prompts or routines, or changing the supplies sent in.

These changes must be discussed and agreed with staff before they start at preschool. Parents must not announce a significant toilet training change at the door on arrival, and staff should not be left to discover a change by chance during the session. Children must not arrive in pants or underwear for the first time without prior discussion and agreement with staff.

Planning for Preschool Sessions: Staff need time to plan appropriate support, ensure sufficient spare clothing and supplies are available, consider hygiene and safeguarding arrangements, and make sure the child's needs can be supported safely within the group environment.

A parent saying that a child is toilet trained at home will be considered as useful information, but it does not automatically mean the child is ready for independent toileting at preschool.

Parents are also provided with our **Toileting and Personal Care Expectations** letter as part of the enrolment pack. This explains our approach to toileting, pull-ups, accidents, spare clothing, and working together in parent-friendly terms.

- **Readiness:** Staff will proactively recommend toileting readiness based on their observations of the child's developmental signs, confidence, communication, independence, and ability to manage toileting within the preschool environment.
- **Operational Authority:** We work in partnership with parents, but the setting's operational decision on what can be delivered safely in a group-care environment applies during preschool sessions. This includes decisions relating to ratios, hygiene, safeguarding, supervision, dignity, and the needs of the wider group.

- **Parent Cooperation:** Parents must work with the setting on toileting. If parents do not follow agreed toileting guidance, this may affect the support we are able to provide and may require a further discussion about whether the child's toileting needs can be safely and practically managed within the session.

4.2 Safeguarding Controls in Practice: To ensure the safety of both children and staff, we implement the following core controls:

- **Visibility and Awareness:** Staff must verbally notify a colleague before entering the changing or toilet area and upon exit. The colleague confirms awareness.
- **Staff Protection:** We follow safer working practice. Staff must not undertake intimate care in circumstances that create avoidable one-to-one isolation.
- **Isolation:** Staff should ensure they are not completely isolated with a child behind a locked door. The door must remain unlocked, and staff should position themselves to preserve dignity, for example by using a screen or appropriate angle, while enabling safeguarding awareness, for example by remaining within sight or sound of colleagues.
- **Privacy and Dignity:** Staff will support children as discreetly as possible and will only discuss toileting matters with staff or parents who need to know. Children's toileting needs, accidents, and personal care routines will be handled respectfully, privately, and with dignity.
- **Intimate Care Log:** Every instance of personal care, including changing soiled clothing, nappies, or pull-ups, is recorded. Entries include the time, staff member, second staff member aware, the child's response or distress level, and any unusual observations such as marks, rashes, soreness, or signs of discomfort. A Body Map is completed where relevant.
- **Parent Notification:**
 - **Immediate Contact:** Required for injury, unusual marks, suspected UTI symptoms, blood, significant distress, safeguarding concerns, or any other concern requiring immediate parental awareness.
 - **End-of-Session Update:** Provided for minor redness, standard nappy rash, toileting accidents, or routine personal care updates

where immediate contact is not required. All communications are recorded.

4.3 Attendance Expectations:

- **Parent Supply Duty:** Parents must provide sufficient daily supplies, including the correct size and fit of nappies or pull-ups, wipes, nappy sacks, and labelled spare clothes that are easy to change, such as elastic-waist trousers or leggings.
- **Spare Clothing:** Parents must provide enough named spare clothes each day. This should include underwear, socks, trousers or leggings, and any nappies, pull-ups, wipes, creams, or nappy sacks requested by the setting.
- **Underwear/Pants Readiness:** Pants or underwear are appropriate only when readiness indicators are met in the preschool environment, not solely at home. As a general process, children should move from nappies to pull-ups and then to pants or underwear. This staged approach helps children build confidence and independence while reducing distress, repeated clothing changes, hygiene risks, and disruption to the session. Exceptions may be considered where appropriate, including where medical, developmental, SEND, disability-related, or other individual circumstances apply.
- **Pull-Ups as a Temporary Bridge:** We understand that, from a parent's perspective, being asked to use pull-ups at preschool can feel like a backwards step, especially if the child may be using the toilet at home. However, pull-ups are not used to hold a child back. They are normally intended as a temporary support, not a long-term replacement for toilet training. Children in pull-ups are still encouraged and supported to use the toilet, follow routines, communicate with staff, and build independence.
- **Different Behaviour at Home and Preschool:** It is very common for children who may be toilet trained at home to need additional support at preschool. Home is familiar, but preschool is a different environment with different toilets, routines, adults, expectations, distractions, and a wider group of children. Children may need time to build confidence, trust, and independence before they can manage toileting reliably in preschool.
- **Frequent Accidents in Group Care:** Where a child is having frequent wetting or soiling accidents at preschool, the setting may require the child to

return temporarily to pull-ups or nappies while toileting skills continue to develop. This decision will be based on the child's individual circumstances, dignity and wellbeing, hygiene and infection control, staff ratios, safeguarding, and the needs of the wider group. The setting will discuss this with parents and keep the arrangement under review.

- **Repeated Accidents in Underwear:** Repeated accidents in underwear can sometimes make toileting harder for the child, not easier. Some children may feel embarrassed, upset, or distressed if they have an accident in their pants during the session. Pull-ups can provide a practical middle ground, allowing the child to continue working on independent toileting while making accidents easier, calmer, and less distressing to manage.
- **Limits of Group-Care Support:** The preschool is a group-care setting and cannot provide continuous one-to-one toileting support unless this has been specifically assessed and agreed as part of the child's individual needs and the setting's available capacity. Requests for staff to take a child to the toilet at very frequent intervals, such as every 15 or 30 minutes throughout the session, may not be practical within staffing ratios, supervision requirements, safeguarding arrangements, and the needs of all children attending. Staff will provide reasonable prompts, encouragement, and support, but toileting arrangements must be realistic and sustainable within group care.
- **Accidents:** If accidents exceed what can be managed safely within ratios, for example persistent soiling requiring constant one-to-one care, we may call the parent to collect, agree a temporary reduction plan, or hold a review meeting.

4.4 Supporting Children with SEND, Medical, Developmental or Disability-Related Needs: We are committed to supporting children sensitively and making reasonable adjustments where required and where these can be safely and practically managed within the setting.

- **Individual Consideration:** Where a child has a medical, developmental, disability-related, SEND, or additional need affecting toileting, we will consider this sensitively and work with parents to understand the child's needs.

- **Information Sharing:** Parents must share relevant information with us as early as possible, including any medical advice, additional needs, developmental concerns, toileting plans, professional guidance, or support already in place. This helps us make appropriate decisions and provide the right support.
- **Support Plans:** A full Individual Healthcare Plan (IHCP) is required for long-term medical needs. A Short-Term Toileting Support Plan may be used for temporary regressions, illness, transition support, or short-term toileting concerns. This may define triggers, duration, prompts, supplies, hygiene adaptations, review date, responsible staff, and parental consent.
- **Reasonable Adjustments:** We will always try to support children appropriately and make reasonable adjustments where required. This will depend on the child's individual needs, the group-care environment, staffing, ratios, hygiene, dignity, safeguarding, and the setting's ability to meet the child's needs safely.
- **Operational Limits:** An adjustment is not considered reasonable if it creates a documented risk to the safety of the child, other children, or staff, or requires a staffing ratio or level of support that we cannot safely sustain. If needs cannot be met safely within reasonable adjustments and available staffing or space, we will convene a review, including multi-agency involvement where appropriate, and consider all options. This may include temporary adjustments, reduced attendance, alternative support, or alternative provision, managed where appropriate through the Suspension and Termination of Place Policy.

4.5 Infection Control:

- **PPE:** Staff wear disposable gloves and aprons for all soiled clothing, nappy, or pull-up changes. PPE is provided as a setting cost.
- **Handwashing:** Staff and children must wash hands after every toileting or intimate care incident. Soap and water is the standard. Where a child cannot tolerate handwashing due to SEND, disability, sensory needs, or another identified need, we will apply an agreed interim method, such as wipes, documented in the child's Support Plan, with a plan to build tolerance where appropriate.

- **Cleaning:** Toileting areas, changing areas, and any affected surfaces are cleaned and disinfected in line with the setting's Infection Control Policy and COSHH arrangements.
- **Medical Concerns:** Where staff observe sudden changes in toileting, pain, blood, unusual odour, repeated constipation or diarrhoea concerns, signs of a possible UTI, or any other concern linked to toileting or intimate care, parents may be contacted and advised to seek medical advice.
- **Creams and Toileting Products:** Staff will only apply creams, ointments, or toileting-related products where written parental permission has been provided and the item is clearly named, in date, suitable for the child, and accompanied by clear instructions.
- **Soiled Clothing and Underwear:** Staff are not able to rinse, wash, clean, scrub, soak, or handwash clothing or underwear onsite. This includes wet, soiled, or heavily soiled items. The preschool does not have laundry facilities, and staff cannot clean children's clothing as part of the session.

Wet or lightly soiled clothing will be placed in sealed bag(s), stored in a designated area away from food and children's play areas, and returned to parents at collection. Parents are responsible for laundering clothing returned home.

- **Heavily Soiled Underwear:** For the purpose of this policy, "heavily soiled underwear" means underwear that contains faeces or is contaminated to a level where returning it home would create an avoidable hygiene, odour, infection control, dignity, or safe-storage concern.

Where underwear is heavily soiled, it will be disposed of hygienically. This is to protect hygiene, dignity, infection control, and the safe running of the session. Staff will use their professional judgement when deciding whether underwear should be bagged and returned or disposed of hygienically. Where heavily soiled underwear has been disposed of, parents will need to replace this with fresh spare underwear for future sessions.

4.6 Parental Responsibility:

- **Spares:** It is a requirement that parents provide a full supply of labelled spare clothing daily. This includes underwear, socks, trousers or leggings,

and any nappies, pull-ups, wipes, creams, or nappy sacks requested by the setting.

- **Named Belongings:** All clothing, bags, supplies, and personal items must be clearly named. Staff will take reasonable care with children's belongings, but the setting cannot take responsibility for unnamed items that are lost, mixed up, or difficult to identify.
- **Immediate Remedy:** If no suitable spare clothes, nappies, pull-ups, wipes, or other required supplies are available and the child is soiled or wet, the parent will be required to collect the child or bring clothing and supplies promptly to maintain dignity and hygiene.
- **Emergency Spares:** If the preschool provides emergency spare clothing, these must be laundered and returned within 48 hours. Failure to return items may result in a charge reflecting the reasonable replacement cost.
- **Failure to Provide Supplies:** Repeated failure to provide suitable supplies may be treated as a welfare, hygiene, operational, or safeguarding concern, depending on the circumstances. The setting may require a meeting with parents to agree how the child's needs will be safely met.
- **Failure to Follow Toileting Guidance:** Where parents repeatedly do not follow the setting's toileting guidance, fail to provide required supplies, or make changes to toileting arrangements without prior discussion and agreement, the setting may require a meeting to review whether the child's toileting needs can be safely, hygienically, and practically managed within the preschool session.

Continued non-cooperation may be managed under the setting's relevant parent terms, safeguarding, suspension, or termination procedures where appropriate.

4.7 Clear and Consistent Rules for Families:

At Innsworth Preschool, we genuinely want to work positively with all families. We support over 70 families, with different circumstances, expectations, requests, backgrounds, cultures, home routines, and children with different abilities and needs.

Families may have different expectations or may not always be aware that, as an early years setting, we have rules, policies, safeguarding responsibilities, legal requirements, hygiene procedures, staffing ratios, and group-care routines that we

must apply fairly and consistently. This includes situations where a family may feel differently about a particular rule, procedure, or decision.

We do not expect families to read every policy in full, although our policies are available for anyone who wishes to look at them. What we do ask is that families trust that staff are experienced early years professionals who understand what we can and cannot do, and who know how to support children safely and appropriately within a group-care environment.

At times, this means we may need to explain rules, boundaries, or requirements clearly. This is never because we do not want to support a child or family. It is because we have to make decisions that are fair, safe, consistent, and workable for the whole setting, while still doing our best to provide the best possible care, support, and experience for each child.

5. Optional Services

5.1 Nappy and Wipes Service: Parents of children in nappies or toilet training may opt into the setting's Nappy and Wipes Service where applicable. Parents who do not opt in must provide sufficient suitable nappies, wipes, creams, nappy sacks, and changing items in a small named bag or pouch.

- **Optional:** This service is entirely optional. Parents opting out must provide sufficient supplies daily. Failure to do so may require immediate parent remedy or collection to maintain hygiene and dignity. Please refer to our Meals and Enhancement Services Policy.

6. Safeguarding Escalation

6.1 Triggers: Toileting concerns will be escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) if staff observe:

- Persistent accidents significantly beyond developmental expectations.
- Signs of significant distress, fear, or avoidance during care routines.
- Physical indicators such as marks, rashes, soreness, injuries, or unexplained discomfort requiring review.
- Medical red flags, including possible UTI symptoms, constipation symptoms, blood, pain, unusual odour, or sudden changes in toileting.

- Potential neglect indicators, including repeated lack of supplies, recurrent severe rash, repeated soiled attendance, poor hygiene, or repeated failure to engage with the setting's toileting guidance.
- Any toileting or intimate care concern that may indicate a safeguarding, welfare, medical, or emotional wellbeing issue.

7. Monitoring and Review

7.1 Ratios: Toileting support is delivered without compromising supervision or ratios. If providing one-to-one toileting support would reduce supervision below safe levels, staff will consolidate children, seek cover, or call for management support.

7.2 Records: Intimate care and toileting logs are retained in line with our Records Retention Schedule, and longer where they form part of a safeguarding chronology.

7.3 Training: All staff receive intimate care, infection control, safeguarding, and safer working practice training during induction, including Body Map recording where relevant, with annual refreshers. Competency is observed and signed off.

7.4 Review: This policy is reviewed annually, or earlier where legislation, guidance, practice, incidents, complaints, or operational needs indicate that review is required.

