



## Water is Cool in School

**A national campaign to improve the quality of provision and access to fresh drinking water for all pupils in UK primary and secondary schools.**

**Launched in October 2000 by ERIC – Education and Resources for Improving Childhood Continence**

**ERIC** is the UK children's charity that provides support and information on childhood bedwetting (nocturnal enuresis), daytime wetting, constipation and soiling for children and young people, parents and health professionals as well as incontinence in children with special needs

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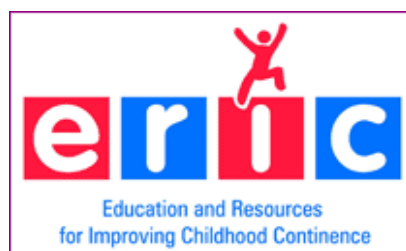
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Better water for pupils campaign website:  
[www.wateriscoolinschool.org.uk](http://www.wateriscoolinschool.org.uk)

Charity registration number 1002424

Better toilets for pupils campaign website:  
[www.bog-standard.org](http://www.bog-standard.org)



# Water is Cool in School Campaign

## The aims of the Campaign

- To increase public awareness of the health benefits to children and young people of drinking adequate levels of water regularly throughout the school day
- To improve the quality of provision and access to fresh drinking water in primary and secondary schools
- To obtain adequate government regulations on drinking facilities in schools

## The reasons for the campaign

The campaign was launched in response to extensive lobbying by the medical profession, particularly by school nurses and children's continence advisors, who were concerned that school children do not drink enough water at school – and that the resulting dehydration contributes to a number of short and long-term health problems, including bladder and bowel problems.

## Campaign activities

- Appointed by the Department of Health to research and guide the Food In Schools Water Provision Project
- Encouraging Coordinators of the Healthy School Programme to take up the provision of water in schools
- Contacting key organisations and individuals to make them aware of the issues and the Campaign
- Producing campaign materials and guidance documents to support schools, parents and health professionals
- Working with local health and education organisations to encourage them to set up regional water initiatives
- Lobbying Government and key decision-makers about the importance of good access to drinking water in schools

## Bog Standard Campaign for Better Toilets for Pupils

ERIC is also the lead organiser of the Bog Standard Campaign. The aim of the campaign is to improve the standard in all pupils' toilets nationwide. It also wants to ensure that children and young people have access to school toilets whenever they need to go. The two campaigns are linked because if pupils are to be encouraged to drink throughout the day, it is important that they be allowed to visit clean, user-friendly toilets when they need to.

Good quality toilets and free access to them are vital to pupils' health. Many children and young people avoid drinking adequately in order to avoid using the toilets at school because they are dirty, smelly, are not private enough, lack basic supplies, or are frequented by bullies and smokers. Avoiding emptying, or not being allowed to empty the bladder and bowels when needed, can lead to serious medical conditions such as chronic constipation, incontinence and urinary infections, sometimes necessitating hospital treatment.

The Bog Standard website [www.bog-standard.org](http://www.bog-standard.org) has been created to raise awareness of the campaign, and to provide information and resources to pupils, parents, school staff and governors, health professionals, designers and architects, journalists and local and national government.

Bog Standard is organised by ERIC and has been developed with School Councils UK, the Community Practitioners' and Health Visitors' Association and the British Toilet Association.

# Water, health and learning

Children need to drink water regularly throughout the school day

## How does drinking water link to health?

- **Drinking adequate amounts of water regularly throughout the day can protect health and contribute to well-being**
- **Drinking adequate amounts of water can help prevent a range of short and long-term health problems from headaches, bladder, kidney and bowel problems to cancer**
- **Water has none of the health problems associated with drinks containing sugar, additives, sweeteners, acids or caffeine**

## How does drinking water improve learning?

- **The key to boosting the capacity to learn is to keep well hydrated throughout the day**
- **When we are thirsty, mental performance deteriorates by 10%**
- **Pupils concentrate better because they are not distracted by the symptoms of dehydration such as thirst, tiredness and irritability**
- **Can aid behaviour management by helping to settle pupils in the classroom**

**Children will achieve more when both their health and learning needs are met. Ensuring access to water at all times and promoting a regular water intake is a vital role for schools in promoting health and providing a healthy learning environment.**

# The effects dehydration has on health and learning

## What is dehydration?

Dehydration is simply not having enough water in your body. It may result from not drinking enough and/or from losing body water and can develop rapidly or slowly. Classroom conditions (central heating, summer temperatures, and sun through windows) and physical activities, including sport and active play, cause pupils to lose a lot of water quickly. Some pupils are unable or unwilling to drink adequately for their age or activity levels on a regular basis at school, contributing to the cumulative effects of dehydration (chronic i.e. long-term dehydration).

The sensation of thirst is not triggered until we are dehydrated (a loss of 1-2% of body weight in water), so it is important to encourage pupils to drink regularly whether they feel thirsty or not. In a child weighing 30kg, 1% equates to a water loss of 300ml (about the amount of water in a very large glass).

Water makes up about 80% of the brain and is an essential element in neurological transmissions. Poor hydration adversely affects a child's mental performance and learning ability. Studies show that once thirst is felt, mental performance including memory, attention and concentration decreases by 10 per cent. This decline in mental performance deteriorates progressively as the degree of dehydration increases.

**Mild day-to-day dehydration can cause a variety of symptoms, which vary from person to person but may include one or more of the following:**

<b>thirst</b>	<b>diminished physical and sports performance</b>
<b>dark and concentrated urine</b>	<b>diminished mental performance</b>
<b>tiredness</b>	<b>headache</b>
<b>reduced alertness</b>	<b>dry cough</b>
<b>reduced ability to concentrate</b>	<b>dry mouth and bad breath</b>
<b>irritability</b>	<b>dry eyes</b>
<b>stomach ache</b>	<b>light-headedness</b>

**Dehydration can contribute to a number of health problems including:**

- constipation and soiling
- bed-wetting, day-time wetting
- kidney and urinary tract infections
- acute appendicitis

**Dehydration is a risk factor for certain chronic diseases**

- kidney and bladder stones
- gallstones
- cardiovascular disease
- some cancers (notably colon, breast and bladder)

**Most children show no obvious visible signs of dehydration**

**Diffuse symptoms such as lethargy, irritability and lack of concentration may be considered normal during most afternoons in class, however we now know that these signs may be due, at least in part, to the effects of dehydration.**

**Symptoms of dehydration can be difficult for teachers to spot.**

# Dehydration and toileting problems

Dehydration can contribute to health problems such as bed-wetting, daytime wetting, urine infections, constipation and soiling.

## Misconceptions

A recent questionnaire in a sample of schools revealed that most teachers think that children have continence problems because their parents have not toilet trained them properly. While we do not always know why some children have wetting problems, we do know that it is not due to poor toilet training - or laziness or lack of will power. We know that inadequate fluid intake during the day can cause or exacerbate bladder and/or bowel problems.

## Wetting problems

There is a link between not drinking enough and day and nighttime wetting problems. If children do not drink adequately during the day, their urine becomes concentrated. This can irritate the bladder and may contribute to daytime wetting. Not drinking enough can also reduce the amount of urine the bladder can hold. If children drink most of their daily fluid when they get home, their bladder has to deal with this later in the day and this is particularly unhelpful for children with a bedwetting problem. This affects about 1 in 11 nine year olds in the UK.

A vital element of treating these problems is an adequate and regular intake of water during the day. When children start drinking more, they may initially need to go to the toilet more. Once their bladder capacity has improved, they will need to go less frequently but will produce larger quantities of urine.

## Urine infections

Drinking water regularly throughout the day is important in the prevention of urinary tract infection (UTI). Not drinking enough allows bacteria to develop in the urine which can increase the risk of UTI. UTIs can also be a cause of wetting problems and poor school attendance. UTI can be difficult to detect in children and can sometimes travel up to the kidneys where it becomes much more serious and can cause renal (kidney) disease. If not fully treated it can ultimately lead to kidney failure.

Concentrated urine (where it's too strong due to not enough water being drunk) also increases the risk of kidney stones.

## Constipation and soiling

Chronic constipation is a very common complaint affecting children and young people. Inadequate fluid intake is one of the most frequent causes of constipation. Preventing constipation is important, not least because this condition is a risk factor for colon cancer. Soiling (involuntary escape of stools) is associated with chronic constipation.

# The importance of water before, during and after exercise

Because water makes up a major percentage (over 70%) of our bodies, small changes in hydration can have dramatic effects in sporting performance. A 2% fall in hydration (the level at which most people experience thirst) has a significant impact on strength and endurance: the difference between winning and losing!

One of the most important functions of water is to regulate body temperature and to cool the body. As we exercise, our muscles generate heat, which raises body temperature. When the body gets hot, it sweats and this evaporating sweat cools the body. If we do not replace the water lost, we become dehydrated and the body may overheat - a rise of only 0.5°C can make you feel unwell.

Although we live in a temperate climate, it is worth remembering that children are much less heat-tolerant than adults. The same level of dehydration has a greater adverse affect on children's performance than on adults. Children get hotter during exercise, tolerate hot weather less well and depend critically on water to help control body temperature. In addition, children have a less developed thirst response and may not understand the need for increased fluid consumption.

During exercise and periods of active play (inside or out, summer or winter) children can lose water at a high rate. An hour of just moderate and/or intermittent exercise can result in a 30 kg child losing 2% of body weight in water (around 600mls of water) – and even more in hot conditions. The performance of even brief periods of exercise – too short to result in significant sweat losses – is impaired in individuals who begin exercise under-hydrated.

It is in a school's best interest to promote water when exercising. Dehydration makes exercise feel harder and more tiring, leading to reluctance to exercise. If they return to the classroom dehydrated, it will also affect their mental performance, energy levels and behaviour. In the long-term, the effects on health from failing to rehydrate between bouts of exercise are significant.

To prevent dehydration, pupils should be encouraged to carry personal water bottles and to drink freely throughout the day. Pupils should drink before exercise and at regular intervals during and after, even if they do not feel thirsty. Researchers advise that to restore normal fluid balance after exercise, we should consume at least the equivalent of 1.5 times (i.e. 150%) the fluid lost during exercise. Children's water intake needs to be supervised, as most do not instinctively drink enough to replace fluids lost during exercise. Water breaks and regular reminders to drink are advisable.

Specifically during warm weather the guidelines are: 250ml one hour before exercising and then 125-250ml ten minutes before exercise. (These quantities should be doubled for adolescents.) During exercise, children should drink 100-125ml every 15 minutes (adolescents 125-250ml in the same time period.) They should continue to drink after exercise, even if they don't feel thirsty.

If children are well hydrated, exercise will feel easier and more enjoyable, muscles will ache less at the end of the day, all helping to create positive attitudes towards exercise and encouraging children to exercise more willingly another day. At a time when there is concern that exercising levels are decreasing and levels of obesity rising, drinking water is a valuable tool that should not be neglected.

# Water provision in school

Access to drinking water is a fundamental human right and vital for good health and well-being

Every school should provide drinking water, which is:

- free of charge
- fresh
- chilled in summer
- from a mains water supply
- readily available at all times
- to all pupils, ensuring equal access to those with special needs or disabilities
- from a number of points around the school, including within the dining area
- from modern, clean and regularly maintained dispensers (mains-supplied water coolers, modern water fountains with a swan neck, bespoke taps and sinks)
- not from outlets (taps, fountains or any other type of dispenser) in or near toilet areas

Pupils should be:

- provided with clean drinking vessels, if drinking from taps
- permitted to carry water with them and consumption encouraged in class, during break and lunch time, before, during and after exercise and during extra curricular activities.
- able to use toilets that are clean, well-stocked and safe, whenever they need to
- listened to regarding complaints and suggestions relating to the provision of water and toilets

# Overcoming teacher concerns

Teachers may have concerns about the impact of increasing water provision in schools. These can range from concerns about water fights to maintaining good hygiene. Careful management and consultation with pupils can avoid and tackle these issues.

Although schools may fear that personal water bottles will lead to mess, disruption and endless trips to the toilet, reports from schools show that these fears are largely unfounded and the benefits greatly outweigh any disadvantages. Many schools report that the pay off is considerable in terms of improved relationships with pupils, better concentration in class, calmer behaviour and happier, healthier children.

Water bottles can be distributed to all pupils on the same day (during tutor groups or PSHE lessons), in order that no one group feels excluded. Alternatively, pilot the scheme (e.g. with one year group) to allow you to iron out any glitches and, make the pilot group feel special which will encourage them to behave responsibly – and make other years keen to be involved and equally responsible.

Concerns	Findings/suggested solutions
Children will misbehave	Teachers have found that any initial silliness soon vanishes. Involving children from the outset in any water provision planning and arrangements will encourage ownership and responsibility.
Children will disrupt lessons because of needing to visit the toilet more	Expectations of pupils needing to go to the toilet more frequently are not, in reality, met. For most of us, the bladder soon adjusts to cope with a larger intake. This usually happens within a few weeks. Some schools have found that the number of toilet visits decrease, as children no longer need to ask to go to the toilet as a means of gaining access to a drink. There is concern among health professionals that some children do not in fact go to the toilet <i>enough</i> at school.
Bottles will get mixed up and be unhygienic	Bottles should be clearly named with a permanent marker or washable label to avoid owner confusion. Bottles should be re-marked regularly.
Books and work will be spoiled due to spillages	Sports caps minimize spillage. Some schools prefer screw tops and pupils become accustomed to taking care.
Children will fiddle with bottles during lessons	Some children may do so but these are children who would otherwise only have fiddled with something/somebody else! These may be kinaesthetic learners who may actually benefit from fiddling with a bottle as they listen! (See following response).
Children will suck on/chew caps	The ones who do this are also the ones who would otherwise suck/chew pencils, pens and fingers! (See previous response). This is best dealt with good humour and other pupils can be encouraged to remind offenders to stop. Reward abstinence! In primary schools, bottles can be kept in a basket in the center of each group of desks, and replaced after drinking.
Frozen bottles will make a mess as they thaw	Bottles can be placed in clear plastic bags to minimize this. Or, better still, provide pupils with chilled water for refilling or changing water as required.
Children may put other drinks in their bottles	Transparent bottles will minimize this risk and regular spot-checks can be made. Involving pupils from the outset and regularly promoting the benefits of and reasons for water will also help avoid this.
Bottles may be unhygienic	Bottles should be washed thoroughly daily in warm soapy water and left to air dry upside down. Children should be encouraged to wash hands regularly to minimize contamination. Children should be discouraged from sharing bottles.



# Checklist for water provision for schools

## School culture

- Are pupils, parents, staff and governors aware of the importance of drinking water regularly throughout the day?
- Are staff who teach PE made aware of the importance of hydration before, during and after exercise?
- Is water consumption actively encouraged at all times?
- Where is the policy of encouraging water consumption promoted? e.g. in the school prospectus; website; notice board; posters; guidance for new/supply staff; newsletters to parents, governors' annual report
- Have you linked drinking water to the curriculum at each key stage?
- Do you have a written water policy?
- Does practice mirror written/unwritten policy? (Check with pupils)
- Do all teachers support the policy?
- Are staff encouraged to lead by example and drink water in front of pupils?

## Involving pupils

- Have you consulted and involved pupils from the outset? e.g. where and how water will be provided?
- Have pupils helped draw up a code of conduct?
- Do you listen to and act on pupils' complaints and suggestions?

## Provision

- Is drinking water free of charge at all times?
- Are there adequate numbers of water outlets for the number of pupils?
- Is drinking water available from a number of outlets around the school?
- Do pupils have access to water at all times? (Consider time constraints, class and break time policies)
- Is water also freely available outside of the standard school day? e.g. breakfast clubs; extra curricular activities; school trips?
- Are water outlets (including taps and fountains) appropriately sited? (Safe; accessible; hygienic; strictly not in or near toilet areas)
- Is drinking water accessible to all users? (Including pupils with special needs or disabilities)
- Are water dispensers modern and attractive? (e.g. water coolers)

### Note:

More dispensers are required:

1. to match the number of pupils
2. if the school is on a large or split site
3. if pupils are restricted to set times to drink/fill drinking vessels
4. if pupils drink directly from traditional water fountains (Should be a minimum ratio of one fountain to 30 pupils)

## Quality of water

- Are water supplies fed from the mains and not storage tanks? Have you checked this with a qualified body? e.g. regional water supplier? The Drinking Water Inspectorate?
- Is the water palatable from all the outlets? (consult with the pupils)
- Is it chilled in summer?

## Cleaning and maintenance

- Are all water outlets included in monitoring, maintenance and cleaning regimes?
- Are drinking vessels kept clean? (Water bottles and non-disposable cups washed daily; cups, if shared, washed after each use).
- Are water pipes (taps/coolers/fountains) flushed through after periods of non-use?

## Sustaining water consumption

- Have you planned how you will monitor and evaluate the impact of your water provision?
- Have you planned a strategy to maintain increased levels of drinking water?

## Lunchtime

- Do the dining arrangements encourage pupils to drink adequate water?
- Is drinking water free of charge?
- Is it provided to all pupils? Including pupils with packed lunches from home?
- Is the water pleasant in terms of taste and temperature? (This is often not the case when water sits in jugs and is not freshly drawn.)
- Could fresh chilled water be provided in the dining hall? (e.g. from mains-fed dispensers fitted with chilling units)
- If provided in jugs, where can jugs be refilled?
- Do supervisors refill them as and when needed?

## During lessons

- Are pupils actively encouraged to drink water during class?
- Are bottles of water allowed on desks?
- If bottles are kept out of arm's reach, such as at the side of the classroom, are they away from sunlight and sources of heat? Are regular reminders and water breaks scheduled?
- What happens if a pupil forgets/loses his/her bottle?
- If the school does not allow water bottles in class, are all the children encouraged to go and get a drink, more than once if necessary, over the course of a lesson/afternoon? (Pupils can dehydrate quickly in warm, stuffy classrooms or after exercise so long drinks are necessary. A few sips from a fountain will not suffice)
- **Note:** If pupils are allowed water bottles, these are best kept within arm's reach on pupils' desks (but kept out of science labs or IT suites).

## Throughout and beyond the school day

- Are pupils actively encouraged to drink before, during and after PE lessons?
- What about sports matches/training sessions/ sports day? At home and away fixtures?
- What about clubs, societies, rehearsals etc?
- Do you actively encourage pupils to have fresh drinks at the end of the school day for those staying on for after school activities?
- Do you schedule time for pupils to drink and use the toilet prior to after school activities? Can activities start a few minutes later?
- Do you have a sun safety policy? (Water, hat, high-factor sun cream, shade, regular breaks, staff trained to recognise and deal with sun stroke)
- Are pupils regularly reminded to bring in, and actively encouraged to use, a bottle of water, hat and sun cream during the warm weather?

**Note:** personal water bottles are needed for all PE and sports fixtures, during all seasons of the year.

### School trips and residential courses

- Are adequate water and toilet breaks scheduled for coach trips lasting an hour or longer?
- Are reminders to provide water bottles included in provision lists and letters to parents? (More than one bottle may be needed if refills are not readily available)
- What happens if a child forgets/loses his/her water bottle?
- Do staff actively encourage pupils to have healthy drinks?
- Do staff schedule water breaks and actively remind pupils to drink regularly on trips?

### Water bottles:

- Are bottles washed and refilled daily?
- If not washed at school, are parents regularly advised as to correct washing and filling procedures?
- If not kept on desks, are regular water breaks and reminders scheduled?
- Where and when can pupils refill/refresh their bottles?
- Are children encouraged to take a bottle of water to sports' sessions and extra curricular activities? (And use them?)
- Are safety procedures in place to keep bottles away from electrical equipment and science labs?
- Are bottles named?

### Modern water facilities

e.g. mains-supplied water coolers, modern chilled fountains with a swan neck

- Are they accessible to all pupils at all times?
  - Are drinking vessels provided for all pupils?
  - If bottled water coolers, are bottles changed promptly?
  - If filters are used, are these changed regularly?
  - Could bottled coolers be changed to mains-supplied water?
  - Could coolers be connected to mains drains?
  - Are dispensers serviced and sanitised before the beginning of each term?

**Note:** If water is chilled, filters are usually neither recommended nor necessary.

### Taps

- Are the taps bespoke? (For drinking water only)
- Are they clearly and correctly labelled as drinking water?
- Are drinking vessels provided for all pupils? If non-disposable, are they washed after each use in hot, soapy water and rinsed?
- Are sinks kept clean and empty?

### Traditional drinking fountains

- Are they easy for a child to operate and drink from?
- Is the water jet high enough? (Likely to be lower when the water pressure drops)
- Can children drink without having to suck on or touch the metal spout with their lips?
- Are there sufficient fountains? (Minimum one per 30 pupils)
- Are there additional drinking sources throughout the school day? Even at 1:30 ratio, these fountains do not provide an adequate daily intake of water if drunk from directly.
- What arrangements are made after exercise and during hot weather to provide additional drinks? If drunk from directly, these fountains do not suffice.

### **Vending machines and tuck shops**

- Is plain, still water available?
- Is it attractively priced?
- Are there other healthy options? (e.g. pure fruit juice and chilled milk)
- Are hot drinks available?

#### **Note:**

1. Vending machine drinks are not an acceptable alternative to free, quality drinking water, which a school has a duty to provide for all pupils at all times throughout the day.
2. In winter, when cold, plain water can lose its appeal, flavoured drinks and hot drinks are a useful addition for consumption outside of lessons.

### **Ask yourself**

Would you be happy to drink solely from the pupils' water facilities?

### **Finally, don't forget: The toilets**

- Can pupils go to the toilet whenever they need to?
- Are the toilets user-friendly? (Clean, welcoming, well maintained and stocked, private, safe)

### **Ask yourself**

Would you be happy to use the pupils' toilets?

## **Water is Cool in School Campaign 2005-6**

**Visit [www.wateriscoolinschool.org.uk](http://www.wateriscoolinschool.org.uk)**

# Checklist for choosing suppliers and water facilities

## Choosing water suppliers

- Does the installer include a thorough site visit before installation?
- Does the company offer a reliable service? (ask for several references)
- Are they members of the EPDWA? (European Point of Use Drinking Water Association)
- Does the company (or fitting sub-contractor) have Corgi-approved plumbing certification?
- What are the installation terms and conditions?
- What are the annual support and maintenance costs and what do these include?
- If renting, does the company include insurance in its annual maintenance package?
- If renting, are upgrades to more modern machines included?

## Water coolers

Water coolers can provide excellent access to chilled drinking water and children like using them, but they have to be of a certain specification to be effective. Schools can be challenging locations for coolers so it is important to minimize potential problems from the outset

- Are they robust? (ideally metal casing)
- Are they 'POU'? (point-of-use i.e. plumbed into the mains)
- Are they direct chill to increase capacity? (no storage system which can lead to a build up of bacteria)
- Can they dispense a minimum of 25 litres of chilled water per hour? (Beware: claims may not match reality)
- Can they be directly connected to waste drains or large capacity waste drainage system?
- If there is a drip tray, is it large and deep enough? (minimum 1 litre capacity)
- Is there a minimum distance of 16cm between the dispenser spout and the drip tray to fit most 500ml bottles? Is the spout recessed? (more hygienic)
- Are there push button fillers (which only fills while depressed) rather than taps that can snap off and are expensive to replace?
- Is there a safety device to interrupt water supply in case of leaks?
- Is there an isolating and non-return valve fitted to the point of connection to the school water supply?
- Is there a pressure-regulating valve on pipes?
- Is there an anti-bacterial UV light in the tank to ensure hygiene?
- Are filters, if required, certified as meeting NSF/WRAS/EPA/FDA or European Equivalent standard?
- Is the cooler floor-standing or is a table-top model (e.g. in classrooms) more convenient?
- Can the coolers be bolted to a wall so it cannot be tipped over? (table top coolers also need securing)
- Do they meet all EC industrial standards?
- Are the coolers, pipework, valves etc WRAS approved (Water regulations Advisory Scheme)?
- Are they environmentally friendly? (CFC-free design)
- Is any water tubing (connecting to water supply) of food grade standard?
- Is any tubing properly secured along the length of its route? (to prevent leakage and vandalism)
- Are coolers a colour that will not quickly look grubby? (i.e. ideally not white)

### Notes:

- Filters should only be used to improve taste and sediment, if desired. Filters do not make unsuitable water potable
- The cooler company should be able to supply a school with peroxide sprays and/or propriety wipes (of a kind intended for water cooler use) to clean the cooler taps daily
- The cooler company may be able to source/supply special absorbent matting to place around coolers in case of spillage/leaks

### Water fountains with swan neck

- Do they meet all EC industrial standards?
- Is there a junior height model available if necessary? (swan necks can snap off if children pull on them in an effort to reach them)
- Is the swan neck high enough to allow filling of bottles?
- Are they direct chill? (no storage system as these can lead to a build up of bacteria)
- Can the swan neck be fixed to prevent it swivelling round?

### Water bottles

- Are they made of good quality plastic? (disposable bottles are only suitable for short-term use)
- Do they meet all EC industrial standards and certification? (see below)
- If fitted with a sports cap, is it robust? (some companies will supply extra caps)
- Does the bottle top seal properly? (test when full by shaking upside down)
- Is the neck of the bottle wide enough to allow easy washing?
- Is it easy to put the lid back on after filling?
- How easy is it to pull up the nozzle on a sports cap for drinking?
- Does the bottle split when dropped on a hard floor a few times? (test full of water)
- Schools are advised to ask suppliers for proof of at least one of the following accreditations. If their equipment has no such accreditations, look elsewhere:
  1. Bottles conform to British & European Standard EN 71 parts 1-3 (certifies plastic used conforms to standards)
  2. The raw material used to manufacture the bottles such as inks and the raw polyethylene are taken from approved lists provided by European food stuff laws (usually a knife and goblet symbol)
  3. FDA approved for worldwide use (FDA is the US Food and Drug Administration)
  4. Bottles conform to Plastics Materials & Articles in Contact with Food Regulations 1992 and/or 199 (these certify the plastic does not affect the food or drink in contact with it)

### Installation of water facilities

- Ideally, have inspection of current water supply by qualified body (some regional water companies can do this for a charge or check with your LEA) to confirm that the water supply is from the mains and potable
- Clarify expectations of the company and any school input at the start
- Establish a single point of contact in the school and company
- Ensure regular dialogue via telephone or fax/email
- Request a thorough site visit prior to installation
- Conduct a risk assessment prior to installation
- Select practical and open locations for dispensers in partnership with installers, such as
  - Wide corridors (avoid obstructions and fire exits)
  - Common rooms
  - Dining halls & assembly halls
  - Class rooms (away from electrical equipment)
  - Adjacent to admin and staff areas
  - Adjacent to changing rooms & gymnasiums (providing hazards are minimized)
  - **Not in toilets, science labs or IT suites, under any circumstances**
- Establish details for the installation, including
  - schedule
  - specification of machines and any piping/electrical installations
  - what, where and how the installation will take place
  - immediate and on-going costs
- Appoint the site manager as key point of contact for the installation
- Children should be given instruction in how to use water coolers correctly

# Sample drinking water policy

**School name**

**Date of policy implementation**

**Date of next review**

This document is freely available to the entire school community. It has also been made available in the school newsletter, website and prospectus.

## **Aims**

- To ensure open access to fresh drinking water at all times during the day to promote the health, wellbeing and learning opportunities of all pupils and staff.
- To provide an environment that provides drinking water as a pleasurable experience to decrease the consumption of fizzy and sweet drinks.

## **Rationale: Why we are writing this policy?**

- The school recognises that drinking water is essential for health and wellbeing and recognises the links between mental and physical performance, pupil behaviour and drinking water regularly throughout the day.
- The school recognises that current provision and practices negate our aims.

## **Objectives: What do we want to achieve?**

- To work towards ensuring that this policy is both accepted and embraced by the whole school community - school management, staff, pupils, governors, parents, site manager, cleaning and catering staff.
- Review formal curriculum to ensure information relating to drinking water is consistent and up-to-date and provide additional information where necessary.
- Install mains-fed water coolers in hygienic and safe provision points, including the dining and sports halls.
- Remove water facilities from toilet areas
- Establish water bottles for pupils and staff.
- Ensure that the vending machine includes still water, milk and pure fruit juice at attractive prices to promote healthier eating and drinking.
- Ensure that the canteen supplies jugs of fresh drinking water on the dining room tables.
- Increase the cleaning of the pupils' toilets to twice a day and ensure open access to toilets at all times so that toilets do not discourage drinking.

## **Guidelines: How are we going to meet our objectives?**

### **Policy acceptance:**

- Promote the health and learning benefits of drinking water before the installation of facilities, thereafter regularly to the whole school.
- Include drinking water at INSET day to inform staff and invite governor(s) on the effects of dehydration and benefits of drinking water.
- Publicise the water policy through the prospectus, school website, assemblies, poster advertising, annual report, newsletters and at meetings.
- Hold a water promotion activity at the beginning of each school year

### **Formal curriculum:**

- Set up cross-curricular working group to audit drinking water topics at each key stage

### **Coolers:**

- Check water supply is mains fed.
- Source suitable cooler and absorbent mats suppliers
- Assess suitable sites for installation.
- Remove water fountains from toilet areas.
- Establish health and safety guidelines.
- Maintenance and cleaning standards of water facilities to be incorporated into existing schedules.

### **Water bottles:**

- Pilot pupils providing their own with the proviso that they are made of plastic and are transparent.
- Source suppliers for school bottles.
- Establish and communicate cleaning procedure.
- Establish health and safety guidelines.

### **Vending:**

- Inform suppliers that healthier choices must be made available at attractive prices, or terminate contract.

### **Canteen:**

- Consult with caterer and buy jugs with lids. Canteen supervisor will ensure water jugs are cleaned daily and filled when empty throughout lunch.

### **Toilets:**

- Consult with LEA over extra cleaning. If necessary, school to fund. Consult with staff, pupils and site manager how to ensure toilets are kept clean and to ensure open toilet policy.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation: How do we know our objectives are being met?**

### **Policy acceptance:**

School council and link Healthy School co-ordinator to conduct surveys and report to senior management.

### **Formal curriculum:**

Head of Year to receive summary and observe sample of lessons, if possible.

### **Coolers and water bottles:**

Health and Safety team to assess provision as part of termly assessment. A comments box to be placed next to the school office. Drinking water provision will be scheduled for inclusion at all school council, staff, governor and parent meetings and reviewed annually.

### **Vending:**

School secretary to review vending content once per month to ensure supplier is meeting with school wishes.



### **Canteen:**

Water provision in the canteen to be included in general water provision monitoring (see coolers and water bottles).

### **Toilets:**

Toilets to be inspected during normal usage hours using daily, monthly and termly/annual monitoring tools/checklists. A comments box to be placed next to the school office. Toilets will be scheduled for inclusion at all school council, staff, governor and parent meetings and reviewed annually.

### **Notes**

- School working to achieve National Healthy School status.
- This policy document was produced in consultation with the entire school community, including pupils, parents, school staff, site manager, catering staff, governors, LEA representatives, school nurse, community dietician and local Healthy School Standards representative.
- This school actively supports healthy drinking and eating throughout the school day.

### **Guidance for schools**

#### **Possible indicators of success include:**

- more people drinking water
- increase in individual water consumption
- more positive attitudes to drinking water
- more awareness of the importance of drinking water
- decrease in sales of sugary and fizzy drinks
- less reports of headaches and stomach aches
- less reports of tiredness in class
- calmer behaviour in class
- fewer cases of urinary tract infections
- decrease in wetting and soiling problems
- less colds and sore throats
- more enthusiasm in taking part in physical activities
- reduction in absenteeism
- positive feedback from parents and teachers
- less vocal chord strain among teachers

Increased uptake, improved attitudes and awareness of drinking water could be monitored by surveys before and after promotion