



## **Dummy Use policy for All Saints CE Primary School Nursery**

### **Ethos**

At All Saints Nursery we recognize that a dummy can be a source of comfort for a child who is upset and that it may often form part of a sleep routine, however we also recognise that overuse of dummies may affect a child's language development as it may restrict the mouth movements needed for speech.

Young children spend lots of time making sounds and exploring their own mouths and voices before they begin to use words. In doing so they are not only practicing and developing the skills needed for speech, but they are also encouraging other people in the world to notice them and communicate with them.

Although dummies can be used as a source of comfort for lots of young children, some research has shown that children who suck dummies through the day make fewer sounds, gain less experience of using their voices, and hear less language from adults around them.

When a child has a dummy in their mouth they are less likely to experiment or copy making sounds. A dummy also hampers interaction with other children and could be a cause of speech delay. If children are allowed to continue to suck a dummy and talk with it in their mouths there is also a risk that the child will learn distorted patterns of speech because the teat prevents normal movements at the front of their mouth. These patterns may be difficult to change later on.

In light of this information we strongly recommend that children who use a dummy refrain from bringing it to the setting and use it for soothing and comfort only. However, should removal of the dummy cause considerable upset and consequently the child is unable to settle, special compensation will be given. Where necessary, each child will be given appropriate strategy agreed between nursery and parents/carers to encourage the phasing out of the dummy.

### **Aims**

- To raise awareness of the negative impact dummies can have on a young child's development
- To work in partnership with parents to support their child in becoming less dependent on a dummy throughout the day

As part of this policy we ask parents/carers to:

- Work towards using the dummy for soothing only
- Work with their child's key worker to create an agreed strategy
- Provide an individual hygienic dummy box labelled with their child's name (should this be agreed)

Staff will:

- Comfort the child and explain in a sensitive and appropriate manner why the dummy is not needed
- Distract the child with other activities and ensure they are settled before leaving them to play
- Offer other methods of comfort such as a toy, teddy or blanket
- Explain to the child they can have their dummy when they go home
- Offer support and advice to parents to discourage dummy use during waking hours at home and suggest ways which the child can be weaned off their dummy through books and stories

In special circumstances staff will:

- Allow dummies for comfort if a child is really upset, for example, if they are new to the setting or going through a transition
- Store dummies in individual hygienic dummy boxes labelled with the child's name to prevent cross-contamination with other children
- Immediately clean or sterilise any dummy that falls on the floor or is picked up by another child

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