

St Marychurch Pre-school

Bottles, Cups and Dummies Policy

Statement of intent

Our setting believes that we have a professional responsibility to provide care based on evidence and best practice. The research that is available, along with considerable feedback from speech and language, dentistry and dietetic professionals, highlights that the use of bottles, cups and dummies have a direct impact on children's oral health, speech and language skills and even general health.

Aim

We aim to work with parents to ensure that the children in our setting receive the best outcomes and wish to support parents on the best way to use bottles, cups and dummies with their children. To support children to move on to open cups and give up dummies at the right time to ensure that children's speech and language development is not hindered. To avoid the links between ear infections, speech development difficulties and dental decay due to the inappropriate use of bottles and dummies that impact on the poor overall communication development on a child's life chances and futures.

Methods

Best practice:-

Bottles

- Babies should never be left propped up with bottles, as this is both dangerous and does not meet their emotional needs.
- It is not recommended that babies and young children are given bottles to 'feed to sleep'.
- It is recommended that from 12 months, bottle use is reduced with the aim of making a complete withdrawal as soon as possible after that.

Cups

- Babies can be given the opportunity to drink from a cup from weaning at 6 months or when they can sit up unsupported and hold something on their own.
- Babies can be weaned immediately to an open cup with small amounts of liquid to reduce the risk of spills as well as plenty of help and patience from the adults around them.
- The setting will offer sip cups, but these will be unvalved so that children do not have to suck hard to access the drink, where appropriate.
- Practitioners will support and promote children's wellbeing by giving lots of praise.

Dummies

- We will recommend that from six months dummy use is reduced with the aim of moving on completely from 12 months.
- If using a dummy we as professionals will recommend that parent's choose an orthodontic dummy as the shape of the teat causes less damage to teeth.
- A dummy will only be used within the setting for sleep/nap times or to soothe when upset, if necessary.
- Practitioners will build relationships with their key children and will learn to tune into their needs.
- Practitioners will attempt to find alternative ways of soothing and will only use a dummy as a last resort.
- All dummies are to be stored in labelled, clean, individual containers, not plastic bags.
- Any dummies provided from home should be transported to us in its own named *sterilised* clean individual plastic container and used to store the dummy whilst at the setting, not in a plastic bag or loose.

- Practitioners will work with parents regarding weaning strategies such as using sticker charts, giving to Father Christmas/Fairy. From the age of 30 months practitioners will be letting the child and parent know that the pre-school is not the place for them to be using a dummy although it may be left in a clean plastic container to give re-assurance. Parents will be encouraged to accept or provide an alternative comfort source for the child.

Working in Partnership

The setting will work in partnership with parents and will offer ideas and strategies to move the child on to the next stage of their development in accordance with our Bottles, Cups and dummies' document.

Signed _____ Position Chairperson Dated _____

We aim to provide a safe, stimulating, caring, happy Pre-school where all children and their families are welcome. We provide a curriculum based on the Early Years Foundation Stage using individual children's interest and needs.