

6.10 Use of Dummies Policy and Procedure

We want the children in our care to feel safe, secure and comfortable. It is part of our role to ensure that the child has a consistent approach with home and other settings, this includes the use of dummies and comforters to assist with their settling in process. Many children, especially younger children, find a dummy of great comfort, especially in the first few weeks when they are settling in to preschool. However, in line with current research into the effects of long term use of dummies, we will encourage children to give up their dummies once they are settled and comfortable in the setting.

Some useful information can be found on the National Literacy Trust website. However, if you would like a hard copy please speak to a member of the Management Team.

Of course, this is only advice but we are sure that parents/carers will agree that it would be in the child's best interest for them to be weaned off dummies before they start preschool or, if this is not possible, whilst they are at preschool so that they are able to get the most out of their time with us. Speech and communication is at the route of everything we do and it is vitally important that your child has the opportunity to communicate as much as possible.

We realise that this transition may be more difficult for some children than others. We will work with you and your child to overcome these barriers and will share our approach with you and any other setting the child attends to ensure a consistent approach for the child.

Set out below is our procedure for helping children to give up their dummies:

When a child first attends preschool with their parents/carers for a visit, the key person will discuss the child's needs with regards to comforters/dummies. We appreciate that leaving a parent/carer and coming to a new environment can be very upsetting for a small child and to help make this transition as positive as possible, we will of course encourage the use of comforters to help the child feel safe and secure. Once the child begins to settle, we will work with them to encourage them to give up their dummy. We will work with the child to gradually decrease their dependence on the dummy until we reach a situation where they no longer need it at all.

We would like to encourage parents to share this process with us and, if at all possible, continue this weaning from the dummy at home.

Whilst the child is weaning off the dummy, we will store it in a special "dummy" box. Each member of the team will be made aware of the child's current stage of weaning and will work with the key person, the parents and the child to ensure that the transition runs smoothly. The key person will have special responsibility for communicating with the parents regarding the best approach for weaning the child from their dummy. If necessary,

this may take the form of a sticker book/star chart as it is surprising the positive impact this simple reward can have on a child's behaviour.

If you would like further information on the use of dummies, or any advice on how to wean your child off dummies, please speak to one of the Preschool Team.

Your child is at the heart of everything we do and we appreciate your support with this important step.

Signed on behalf of the Anthony Roper Pre-school & Kindergarten CIO

..... (Chair/Treasurer)

Reviewed

Date of next review