

## Dummy Policy

We recognise that a dummy can be a source of comfort for a child who is settling and/or upset, and that it may often form part of a child's sleep routine.

As babies get older they need to learn to move their mouths in different ways, to smile, to blow bubbles, to make sounds, to chew food and eventually to talk. As babies move their mouths and experiment with babbling sounds they are learning to make the quick mouth movements needed for speech.

The more practice they get the better their awareness of their mouths and the better their speech will be. The overuse of a dummy may restrict these movements from taking place and therefore affect a child's language development.

The nursery aims to:

- Discuss the use of dummies with parents as part of babies' Individual Care Plans.
- Only allow dummies for comfort if a child is really upset (for example, if they are new to the setting or going through a transition) and/or as part of their sleep routine.
- Store dummies in individual hygienic dummy boxes labelled with the child's name to prevent cross-contamination with other children, these are to be provided by parents.
- If a dummy or bottle falls on the floor or is picked up by another child, this is cleaned immediately and sterilised where necessary. When discouraging the dummy staff will:
  - Have a designated place for the dummy to be stored, which the child will be aware of.
  - Comfort the child and if age/stage appropriate explain in a sensitive and appropriate manner why they do not need their dummy.
  - Distract children's attention 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 or at sleep time. We will also 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 (when appropriate).