



General Welfare Requirement: Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare

Suitable premises, environment and equipment, outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture and toys must be safe and suitable for purpose

Use of Dummies in Nursery

At Cherry Blossom Nursery and Preschool we understand that a dummy can be a source of comfort for a child who is settling and /or upset, and that it may form part of a child's sleep routine.

We also recognise that overuse of dummies may affect a child's language development as it may restrict the mouth movements needed for speech. 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 foods 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.

Cherry Blossom Nursery and Preschool will:

- Discuss the use of dummies with parents/carers as part of the babies 'My Day' plan.
- Only allow dummies for comfort if a child is really upset eg if they are new to the setting and/or as part of their sleep routine.
- Store dummies in individual pots labelled with the child's name to prevent cross contamination.
- Immediately clean or sterilise any dummy/bottle that falls to the floor or is picked up by another child.

When discouraging the dummy staff will:

- Make each child aware of a designated place where the dummy is stored.
- Comfort the child and, if age/stage appropriate, explain in a sensitive and appropriate way why they do not need their dummy.
- 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 or at sleep time.

We will also offer support and advice to parents/carers 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 - age appropriate.

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Karen Elliott

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