

PROMOTING HEALTH AND HYGIENE – USE OF DUMMIES

At Wingate Childcare 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.

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 food and eventually to talk. As children 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.

Wingate Childcare will

- Discuss the use of dummies with parents as part of individual care plans
- Only allow dummies for comfort if a child is upset and/or as part of their sleep routine
- Store dummies in children's bags to prevent cross-contamination with other children
- Clean or sterilise any dummy that falls on the floor or is picked up by another child

When discouraging the dummy staff will

- Comfort the child and, if age/stage appropriate, explain in a sensitive and appropriate manner 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 at sleep time or when they go home

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).

Reviewed by Hannah Hedley	Review date 18 th January 2023
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