

Dummy Policy

Policy Statement

It is understood that when children start preschool they may be using a dummy. The Department for Children, School and Families have issued a document called "Supporting children with speech, language and communication needs: Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage", from which the following quotation can be found: *"Dummies and bottles can contribute to delayed communication development"*.

Babies and young children spend lots of time making sounds and exploring their own mouths and voices before they begin to use words. In doing so they are not only practicing and developing the skills needed for speech but they are also encouraging other people in the world to notice them and communicate with them. Children who suck dummies through the day make fewer sounds, gain less experience of using their voices, and hear less language from adults around them.

If toddlers are allowed to continue to suck a dummy and talk with it in their mouths, there is also a risk that the child will learn distorted patterns of speech because the teat prevents normal movements at the front of their mouth. These patterns may be difficult to change later on. Although a dummy or bottle can be a source of comfort when a child is upset, and may form part of a child's sleep routine, parents should be encouraged to use it only at these times, and to phase out dummies and bottles as soon as possible.

Procedure

In the light of this information, our preschool would strongly recommend that children who use a dummy refrain from bringing it to the setting. However, should the removal of the dummy cause considerable upset and consequently the child is unable to settle, special compensation will be given. If necessary, children will be given a strategy, over a six week period, agreed between the preschool and parents to encourage the phasing out of the dummy.

Guidance: 'Supporting children with speech, language and communication needs: Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage

This Policy was adopted by: Brize Norton Village Preschool

On: 4th August 2025

Date to be reviewed: August 2026

Signed on behalf of provider: _____

Name of signatory: M.Dix

Role: Chair of Preschool Committee