

Thomas Gray Primary School  
DUMMY POLICY

At Thomas Gray Primary we recognise that it is important to observe children closely and to listen carefully to them in different situations to ensure we are clear what their needs are. Many children with speech, language and communication needs will make good progress with the support that can be offered within an effective setting.

Babies begin to communicate from birth, and are eager and ready to further their communication skills by interacting with caring, sensitive adults. From their first sounds, their first eye contact or their first attempts to copy mouth movements. Dummies can contribute to delayed communication and 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. 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 them in their mouths, there is also a risk that they 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. Policy in setting should reflect this.

**How the policy will be enforced**

- Dummies will be stored in a designated place in the room.
- For two year olds, the use of dummies will be discussed in their individual care plan, and arrangements to suit their needs will be made. **When a child moves into the Nursery they will keep them at home.**
- **For two year olds**, dummies will only be allowed to be used if child is really upset for comfort (for example if there is problems at home, they are new to the setting) then when child is settled it is put back in designated place.

**Staff should**

- Comfort child and explain why they are not allowed the dummy in a sensitive and appropriate manner.
- Distract children's attention with other activities and ensure they are settled before leaving them to play.
- Offer other methods of comfort such as toy, teddy or blanket.
- Explain to the child they can have their dummy when they get home or at bed time.
- Ensure parents are aware of why dummies are inappropriate for toddlers and suggest ways in which child can be weaned off them.
- Offer parent support.

Signed: A.P. Taylor Date: 10-07-18  
Chair of Governors

Signed: [Signature] Date: 10-07-18  
Headteacher

Date to be reviewed: July 20