



Chapel End Primary School
Bottles, Cups and Dummies Policy

'Mission Statement.'

**We aim to provide our children
with the highest possible standard
of education, through quality
teaching and learning, in a happy
caring environment.**

**We will do the best WE can to enable our children to do the
best THEY can.**

This policy was approved by:	Full Governing Board
Date	Summer 2023-2024
Review Date	Summer 2025-2026

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021)

Reference: 3:45. 'The provider must promote the good health, including the oral health, of children attending the setting'.

With increasing understanding of the impact of bottles, cups and dummies on children's development it is key that early year's settings consider their role in promoting their good use and how a policy would support this in practice. Although it is not statutory for settings to have such a policy, we believe we have a professional responsibility to provide care, based on evidence and best practice. The research that is available, along with considerable feedback from speech and language, dentistry and dietetic professionals, highlights that the use of bottles, cups and dummies can have a direct impact on children's oral health, speech and language skills and even general health.

Intent

It is our aim to work with parents to ensure that the children in our care receive the best outcomes. This policy is designed to support staff and parents on the best way to use bottles, cups and dummies with their children. It focuses on the importance of good practice in supporting children to move on to open cups and give up dummies at the right time to ensure that children's speech and language development is not hindered. The links between ear infections, gastrointestinal infections, speech development difficulties and dental decay due to the inappropriate use of bottles and dummies is quite significant when considered in conjunction with the impact that poor overall communication development has on children's life chances and futures.

Best Practice and Implementation

Bottles

- The NHS recommends that over the age of **12 months** your baby should be having their drinks from an open or free flow cup without a valve, and it is advised that at all mealtimes you offer a cup with the meal rather than a bottle. As the children who are attending our provision will all be over the age of two, bottles will not be required.

Cups

- Our provision will offer sip cups, (but these will be un-valved so that children do not have to suck hard to access the drink) or open cups.
- Children will be given opportunities to play with empty cups so that they can explore and get used to holding them.
- Staff will remain calm and patient when giving children drinks and will mop up any spills without comment.
- Staff will support and promote children's well-being by giving lots of praise.

Dummies

- The NHS suggests parents stop using a dummy completely by **12 months** and that the dummy be used to aid sleep only from six months onwards. This is because regular use of the dummy when your child is awake and playing can lead to speech delay. We will discuss this advice with parents as their child starts at our setting.
- If using a dummy, we, as professionals, will recommend that parents choose an orthodontic dummy as the shape of the teat causes less damage to teeth.
- A dummy will only be used within the setting for sleep / nap times or to soothe when upset.
- Practitioners will build relationships with their key children and will learn to tune into their cries to understand what they need.
- Practitioners will attempt to find alternative ways of soothing / distracting the child using a dummy as a final resort (e.g. gentle singing, humming, whispering, providing a favourite toy or listening to relaxing music).
- All dummies will be thoroughly cleaned and will be stored in a labelled, clean, individual container, not a plastic bag.
- All staff will be trained to use the 'Look, Listen and Think' rule.

LOOK at the child - Can you see something that is making them sad? Can you fix it?

LISTEN to their cries - you might be able to tell what they want by their different cries.

THINK about what else could help - try distracting them with a song, cuddle, favourite toy etc.

Working in Partnership with Parents

The setting will work in partnership with parents and will offer ideas and strategies to move the child on to the next stage of their development in accordance with the 'Bottles, Cups and Dummies' Policy.

Links with other Policies

This policy takes into account the following policies:

- Health and Safety Policy, ensuring that we keep children safe and healthy
- SEN policy
- Learning and Development policy to ensure that children can achieve the best outcomes
- Sleep and Rest Policy
- Self-Regulation Policy
- Food Hygiene and Healthy Eating Policy