

## Young Parents Centre Nursery

### Use of Dummy Policy

At Young Parents Centre Nursery 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 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.

Our nursery:

- Discuss the use of dummies with parents as part of babies' individual routines
- Only allow dummies for comfort if a child is really upset and/or as part of their sleep routine
- Store dummies in individual hygienic dummy boxes labelled with the child's name to prevent cross-contamination with other children
- Immediately clean or sterilise any dummy or bottle that falls on 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 manner why the dummy is not needed
- 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

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).

**Date of Policy** – October 2017

**Date of Review** – October 2019

**Signed**

**Nursery Manager.....MC Chair.....**