



# Oscar Bears' Day Care

## Pre-school children - Dummy Policy

It is understood that children who attended pre-school may still use a dummy or bottle. The department for children, schools 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 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 the 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 when possible.

Procedure in the light of this information, the pre-school would strongly recommend that children who use a dummy or a bottle refrain from bringing to the setting. However, should removal of the dummy cause considerable upset and consequently the child is unable to settle, special compensation will be given. Where necessary, each child will be given an appropriate personalised strategy agreed between the pre-school and parents to encourage the phasing out of the dummy and or bottle.

Guidance: supporting children with speech, language and communication needs: guidance for the early years foundation stage.

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