**St. Joseph’s Early Years & Out of School Club**

**Dummy Policy**

At St. Joseph’s Early Years & Out of School Club we understand that a dummy can be a source of comfort to a child who is settling and/or upset, and that it may often form part of a child’s sleep routine.

We are also aware that overuse of dummies may affect a child’s language development as it may restrict the mouth movements needed for speech.

St. Joseph’s Early Years & Out of School Club we will:

* discuss the use of dummies within an individual routine.
* only suggest the use of dummies for comfort if a child is really upset.
* immediately clean or sterilise any dummy or bottle that falls on the floor.
* store in a sterilised place with no access for other children.

When trying to discourage a child using a dummy the staff will:

* show the child where the dummy is kept.
* comfort the child and explain in a sensitive and age appropriate manner why the dummy is not needed .
* distract the child with other activities and ensure they are settled before moving away.
* offer other methods of comfort such as a toy, teddy or blanket .

As the child becomes older and forms a bond with their key worker we will work with parents to support them in getting rid of the dummy before the child goes to school.

We will offer ideas based on our experiences with other families who have weaned their child off the dummy. It can be as simple as leaving the dummy for Santa or the Easter bunny and giving lots of praise to the child.

We understand the enormous struggle that some children have letting their biggest form of comfort go and we will work closely to follow parent/carers wishes in the way they decide to discontinue giving their child a dummy.

Adopted Jan 17

For review Jan 19