

Oral Health Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (2023) state how early years providers MUST promote good oral health of children who attend their setting.

The Department of Education state:-

'Oral health is important, even with baby teeth. This is because children's baby teeth:

- *help them to bite and chew*
- *support speech and language development*
- *help them feel confident when they smile*
- *make space for and help to guide adult teeth*

Good oral health also keeps children free from toothache, infection and swollen gums.'

More information can be found by clicking on the link below:-

<https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/safeguarding-and-welfare/oral-health>

Remember:-

- Teeth should be brushed at least twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste
- Children should visit a dentist as soon as their first tooth appears and attend regular 6 monthly checkups
- The consumption of high sugary and acidic foods should be kept to a minimum

What The Life Nursery does to promote good oral health:-

- Provide children with healthy and nutritional snacks
- Encourage parents and carers to provide healthy lunch boxes
- Provide children with fresh drinking water at all times
- Milk is available for children at snack times
- Dummies are discouraged in nursery (speak with parents/carers)
- Bottles with teats are discouraged in nursery (speak with parents/carers)
- We have an 'oral health display board' which helps to promote good oral hygiene to our parents/carers as well as our children, together with staff
- Provide activities to help children further extend their development in all areas of learning eg dentist role play, sharing experiences of visiting the dentist through circle time and discussing how they feel when visiting the dentist. We also teach the children about healthy and unhealthy foods, providing opportunities to taste healthy options. Practitioners read books on oral health, providing children with an understanding of oral hygiene and routines and information about teeth, this hopefully reassuring the children about going to the dentist. We also explain and show children how much toothpaste needs to be on their brush and use a 2 minute timer when role playing or brushing teeth. We explain what a toothbrush is and how to use it, same as the toothpaste. We sing songs with the children and provide opportunities for mark making.
- All staff have received oral health training with Skills 4 Bradford.

- The nursery works closely with parents to overcome barriers surrounding oral health.

Celebrations:-

Birthdays and celebrations are important to us all and we ensure these are celebrated in a healthy way. At The Life Nursery we do this by:-

- Singing 'Happy Birthday' to a child whilst they are wearing the nursery 'birthday hat'
- Allowing the child whose birthday it is to choose a song/story
- Provide fresh fruit that the child may not normally have eg strawberries, blueberries or kiwi fruit
- Staff to inform parents that if unhealthy treats are brought into nursery, that these will be sent home with the child for the parent/carer to decide if they wish their child to have it
- Whilst celebrating eg Diwali, Eid, Shrove Tuesday, staff will ensure that foods provided are healthy and tooth friendly

More Information:-

- This can be found by looking at the 'Healthy Snack' policy
- Bradford toothbrushing programme can be found on the below link:-

<https://www.bdct.nhs.uk/services/toothbrushing-programme/>

- Where to find your local dentist, click on the link below:-

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/dentists/how-to-find-an-nhs-dentist/>

Reviewed Louise Gray, Nursery Manager and Kirsty Beck, Deputy Manager – September 2024

Policy read and agreed by:

Name	Date