



Dummy Use Policy

Babies and young children learn about the world by mouthing a variety of objects. They also learn to communicate by copying and responding to other people's facial expressions, noises and eventually 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 communicate back to them.

Children who regularly use dummies through the day may make fewer sounds since they are holding a dummy in their mouths. When they do begin to make sounds, it could be harder for them because the teat prevents the normal movements of their mouths.

Dummies are very useful in settling children and helping them to sleep. They are a source of comfort, and some children rely on this. At Moorwell Miracles we aim to teach our children that they can come to us for comfort and support. Practitioners will offer cuddles and reassurance when children are upset. We want to teach our children that trusted adults can be a source of comfort whenever they needed it. When offering cuddles we will talk about how the child is feeling "I can see you are upset, you've had a bump. You are safe now and I am here for you." The child can co-regulate alongside a calm, supportive the adult. Having a dummy to soothe a child without this support is a missed opportunity for learning.

In talking about our feelings and emotions children will learn that they are a normal part of life and that they are our bodies way of releasing worries and stress. It is hoped that in talking about emotions children will build resilience and will bounce back after difficulties.

Dummies will be kept in the child's bag or drawer until sleep time. If a child is already reliant on their dummy, we will try to sensitively phase out the usage at nursery through conversations about when we might need to use them (sleep times) and praising children that choose to put them in their bags. Dummies will never be taken from children without their consent as this may cause unnecessary distress.

It would be beneficial if parents could talk to their child and encourage them to only use it at sleep times also so there is consistency at home and nursery.