



## Bentilee Nursery school Dummies policy

Written Sept 2014 last update Sept 2024

**next update Sept 2025**

At Bentilee Nursery school we recognize that a dummy can be a source of comfort for a child who is upset and that it may often form part of a sleep routine.

However:-

Babies and young children spend lots of time making sounds and exploring their own mouths and voices before they begin to use 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. Although dummies can be used as a source of comfort for lots of young children, some research has shown that 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. When a child has a dummy in their mouth they are less likely to experiment or copy making sounds. A dummy also hampers interaction with other children and could be a cause of speech delay.

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 their mouth. These patterns may be difficult to change later on.

In light of this information, Bentilee Nursery school would strongly recommend that children who use a dummy or bottle refrain from bringing it 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 appropriate strategy agreed between school and parents/carers to encourage the phasing out of the dummy and / or bottle.

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
- Explain to the child they can have their dummy when they go home or at sleep time

I, the undersigned parent / carer of \_\_\_\_\_(child's name)

Do hereby state that I have read and received a copy of the nursery dummy policy and agree to participate in it.

Child's date of admission \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/ carer name \_\_\_\_\_ signature \_\_\_\_\_