



ORAL HEALTH

Long Bennington Pre-School
Registered Charity: 1157300

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Health

3.45 The provider must promote the good health, including the oral health, of children attending the setting.

An Overview of Oral Health

Oral hygiene is very important in achieving overall good oral health. This is also becoming a key aspect on which the EYFS is focusing on in 2021. It is beneficial for us all to have a clear understanding of how to support our children with oral health.

It is said that 25% of children under the age of 5 experience tooth decay. This can be a result of one or more of the following reasons:

- Eating a poor diet
- Brushing teeth less than twice a day with fluoride toothpaste
- Coming from a deprived background

It is therefore important for us to support children with oral health, as their first experiences can have a great impact on the rest of their lives. By supporting them, we can teach them about their mouths, introduce them to good habits and normalise dental visits, helping to put them at ease and gain trust.

The setting provides care for children and promotes health through promoting oral health and hygiene, encouraging healthy eating and healthy snacks.

- Fresh drinking water (tap water) is available at all times and easily accessible. Children will each have their own bottle of water from which to drink (children's photo tags will show who's bottle is who's) and 200ml will be put in the bottles at the start of the session. Staff will monitor the amount in the bottles and try and encourage the children as much as possible to drink more water if they have not appeared to have drunk much. Bottles will be refilled when necessary.
- Sugary drinks are not served.
- In partnership with parents, children are introduced to an open free cup for snack times and are discouraged from using a bottle.
- Only tap water and milk are served with morning snack and a drink of milk or tap water is offered after lunch to help 'clean' teeth after eating.
- Children are offered healthy nutritious snacks with no added sugar.
- Parents are discouraged from sending in confectionary as a snack or treat.
- Staff follow the Infant & Toddler Forum's Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers.
- The family's keyperson will discuss oral health at each child's 2 year check meeting as well as before each child leaves Pre-school to attend school.

Pacifiers/dummies

- Parents are *advised* to stop using dummies/pacifiers once their child starts Pre-school.
- Dummies that are damaged are disposed of and parents are told that this has happened

Top Tips for Children's Oral Health

- Eating habits are shaped when children are very young and can last a lifetime
- Eating healthy food that is low in sugar helps to prevent tooth decay and also encourages good general health
- Eating chopped fruit and vegetables does not cause tooth decay. Bread, breadsticks, rice cakes, cheese, natural yoghurt or fromage frais are all tooth friendly snacks
- Dried fruit given as a snack (such as raisins) increases the risk of tooth decay
- Dipping dummies into honey or sugary drinks can cause tooth decay
- Water and milk are the best tooth-friendly drinks
- Freshly prepared fruit juice and smoothies should be given only once a day and with a meal as they contain a high concentration of sugar
- Ask for sugar-free medicines where possible
- Introduce your child to a free-flowing beaker from 6 months of age and aim to discontinue the use of bottles at 12 months
- Children aged under 3 should use just a smear of toothpaste
- Children aged 3 to 6 years of age should use a pea sized amount of toothpaste

Finding a Dentist

If you unsure of your local family dentist, you can use the NHS website to find your closest one:

<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist>

Further guidance

Infant & Toddler Forum: Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers www.infantandtoddlerforum.org/toddlers-to-preschool/healthy-eating/ten-steps-for-healthy-toddlers/

Oral Health Foundation have a team of fully trained experts. You can contact them by visiting their website: <https://www.dentalhealth.org>

Additional resources

Change4life- which includes ideas for lunchboxes [Home | Change4Life \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)