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Oral Health Policy

During the Early Years’ Foundation Stage, a child’s first experiences with oral health can impact on the rest of their life. That’s why it’s so important to teach them about their mouth and introduce them to good habits as soon as possible. It is equally vital to continue to ‘normalise’ dental visits and put them at ease with the role of a dentist as a person they can trust.

The new Early Years Foundation Stage Welfare requirements now requires settings to promote the “good oral health of children”. This has been introduced following research by Public Health England that suggests that 1 in 5 children aged 5, have experienced tooth decay. The aim of the new requirement is to reduce tooth decay in children and associated hospital admissions, since it is the most common reason for children aged 6 to 10 to be admitted to hospital to have teeth removed.

The aim of our policy is to help young children and parents to become knowledgeable about dental and oral health, to have a routine in place regarding tooth brushing, to be confident in choosing the correct food and drink to support good oral health and to be aware of the need to seek dental advice/check-ups from a dentist at an early age.

There is no requirement for practitioners to assess oral health, although, that said, a child who presents with very poor oral health might be cause for concern and may prompt a conversation with parents or the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) if it continues.

The framework clarifies that the changes relate to:

* Teaching children about healthy eating habits, and
* Dental hygiene

**Practical ways to promote good oral hygiene**

Promoting good oral health includes:

* Talking to children about the effects of eating too many sweet things
* Promoting regular toothbrushing – twice a day for 2 minutes using a fluoride toothpaste
* Encouraging children to visit the dentist regularly (twice a year is recommended)
* Encouraging parents to promote good oral health at home
* Supervised toothbrushing (There is no requirement in the revised EYFS to introduce supervised toothbrushing and at Frimley Green Pre-school we will not be adopting this initiative at the moment) However, parents must supervise their child’s teeth brushing at home

At Frimley Green Pre-school we will involve parents with promoting good oral health at home and promote a partnership regarding the children’s health and welfare generally.

How will we promote good oral health at Pre-school:

* Teach children about the Dentist and their role in good oral health using books/discussion/role play/songs
* Provide children with information about healthy eating for healthy teeth
* Fresh drinking water is available at all times and easily accessible.
* Children drink from an open free-flowing cup.
* Only water and milk are served with snack.
* Provide children with snacks and drinks that promote good oral health
* Provide parents/carers with up-to-date research-based information regarding how to care for their child’s teeth – via leaflets/discussion/website/Facebook page/Newsletters and Weekly updates.
* Use this alongside our Healthy Eating and Lunchbox Policies
* Give parents/carers and children specific advise on which foods to avoid for healthy teeth.
* Parents are advised to stop using pacifiers/dummies
* Provide children with opportunity to cook at Pre-school so this can be used as an introduction to healthy eating/teeth
* Arrange visit from a Dentist/Dental Nurse if possible.

**Further guidance**

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

This policy was reviewed on ……………………………………….

Signed on behalf of the pre-school ………………………………………………………….

Review Date................................................Signed.....................................

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