



Toothbrushing and Oral Care

Policy

Dunscore Pre-school Centre recognises the vital role it plays in raising the awareness of good oral health for children. These early years for children are when many of the good (and bad) routines are formed and are often carried through to adulthood.

Therefore, our sessions are a very important place to introduce a good oral health routine and we work towards establishing effective brushing techniques for the children at the centre. Regular daily toothbrushing with an appropriate toothbrush has been shown to be highly effective in preventing dental decay. As toothbrush size and shape influences the effectiveness of brushing we will follow the most up to date advice on this.

Procedures

Management of Toothbrushing in Nursery

- Staff follow the toothbrushing guidelines, hygiene and storage procedure set out by the Child Smile Team.
- Parents are provided with information about the scheme and their consent is sought and recorded in the child's Care Plan. These are updated as part of the ongoing Care Plan review.
- The toothpaste is provided by the Child Smile program. It contains 1450ppmf and is free from animal derivatives.
- Children under 3 years use only a smear of toothpaste, whilst those 3 years and over use a pea sized amount.
- Ideally toothbrushing will not follow the consumption of acidic food and beverages, however this will not always be possible.
- All the children are supervised whilst brushing their teeth.

Daily practice

- A member of staff dispenses the toothpaste onto a clean plate or paper towel, allowing enough space to allow collection without cross-contamination.
- Toothpaste is only be dispensed at the time the child is ready to brush.
- Staff ensure that any cuts, abrasions or breaks in their skin are covered with a waterproof plaster when helping with toothbrushing.
- The Child Smile co-ordinator will provide the most appropriate brush and advise on techniques appropriate to the age and ability of each child. Staff will follow these guidelines.
- Toothbrushes are replaced at least once per term, or when they are showing any sign of wear. Any toothbrushes dropped on the floor will be discarded.
- Good techniques are modelled using games, toys and models.
- Care is taken not to allow toothbrushes to touch each other when being removed or replaced in storage systems, to avoid cross-contamination.
- Staff identify if children can be supervised in groups or if individual supervision is necessary.
- The storage system is NOT placed directly beside the children whilst they brush to avoid contamination with spray.
- Children are discouraged from swallowing the toothpaste,
- Children are discouraged from rinsing or drinking after cleaning, as this significantly decreases the benefit of the fluoride.

Cleaning

- Storage systems are cleaned by staff in a dishwasher at least once a week
- Toothbrushes are never soaked in bleach or other cleaners or disinfectant.
- Tubes of toothpaste are cleaned with a damp tissue.
- After toothbrushing the brushes are rinsed individually and thoroughly under cold water and replaced in the storage system to allow them to air dry.

Storage

- Toothbrushes are stored in the system provided by the Child Smile team.
- These ventilated holders enable the brushes to stand in an upright position, allowing a sufficient distance between them to prevent cross-contamination.
- The storage system displays symbols corresponding to each toothbrush to allow even the youngest of our children to identify their own brush.
- The unit is then stored in a clean dry cupboard at adult height.
- If cracks, scratches or rough surfaces develop then the storage system will be replaced.

Toothbrushing At Home

- Parents will be encouraged to continue the regular toothbrushing routine at home.
- Parents can access information and advice about toothbrushing and oral health from staff at the centre.

Children and the curriculum

- Oral health will be included in curriculum work and any learning opportunities where it is appropriate.
- Visits from a dentist, hygienist or someone from the Child Smile team who can talk about oral health should be arranged each year.
- Dental health will feature as a theme at nursery prior to, during or after these visits. e.g. dental corner, stories, songs, poems, art etc.
- National Smile Week will be promoted in the centre with the staff, children and parents.
- Good oral hygiene will be encouraged at all times.