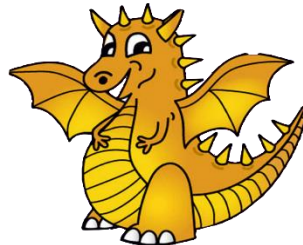




**Wessex**  
Learning Trust  
We Learn Together!

# Early Years: Oral Health Policy



**Date approved by Trust Board: May 2022**  
**Review Date: September 2024**

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**Wessex Learning Trust**  
**Oral Health Policy**

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This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees every three years.

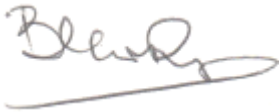
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gavin Ball". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'G'.

Signature:

Name: Mr Gavin Ball

Position: Chief Executive

Date: 09/05/2022

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Kirkup". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'B'.

Signature:

Name: Mr Brian Kirkup

Position: Chair of the Board

Date: 09/05/2022

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 The Wessex Learning Trust recognises the importance of promoting good oral health and hygiene among children in its care through a combination of encouraging healthy eating, healthy snacks, and tooth brushing.

## **2. Promoting Oral Health**

2.1 Early Years settings within the Trust will work to promote good oral health through:

- Providing fresh and easily accessible drinking water at all times.
- Not serving sugary drinks.
- In partnership with parents/carers, encouraging babies to be introduced to an open, free-flowing cup at 6 months; and from 12 months discouraging them from using a bottle.
- Only serving water and milk with morning and afternoon snacks.
- Offering children healthy and nutritious snacks with no added sugar.
- Discouraging parents from sending in confectionary as a snack or treat.
- Making staff aware of the Infant and Toddler Forum's Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers and to use this guidance to support the children. This guidance can be found here:

<https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/toddlers-to-preschool/healthy-eating/ten-steps-for-healthy-toddlers/>

2.2 Settings will decide how to promote oral health based on what works best in their setting. Ideally, settings will link oral health to things that they already do to promote well-being such as self-care, healthy eating and physical development.

2.3 Staff will be mindful whilst playing with children to incorporate concepts relating to oral health – for instance suggesting that a children brush the teeth of dolls or soft toys, or read stories about teeth and smiles.

2.4 Children will be encouraged to talk about healthy food and drinks and taught how they help to grow strong teeth. They will also be told that e.g. sugary foods and drinks do not encourage healthy teeth.

2.5 Children should have the opportunity to explore looking at teeth, whether it is their own or replica ones.

## **3. Cleaning Teeth at the Setting**

3.1 Children are encouraged to brush their teeth as part of their daily routine, and where appropriate they will be able to clean their teeth while attending the setting.

3.2 Children should not be allowed to clean their teeth for at least one hour after a meal as this can cause loss of enamel.

3.3 Where it is appropriate for children to clean their teeth at the setting, each child will have their own toothbrush, which is stored individually to prevent accidental contact and cross contamination, similarly, when children are cleaning their teeth, staff will put a small amount of toothpaste onto a blue paper towel before applying to the brush to prevent cross contamination.

3.4 Toothbrushes will be cleaned at the end of each session and sterilised weekly in Milton or similar disinfecting fluid. Toothbrushes should be changed every three months and provided by parents/carers. Settings will seek to coincide oral hygiene activities in their planning with the three monthly toothbrush change.

3.5 Our settings ensure procedures are reviewed regularly, with additional guidance sought from health professionals, as appropriate.

## **4. Pacifiers/Dummies**

- 4.1 Parents are *advised* to cease using dummies/pacifiers once their child is 12 months old.
- 4.2 Dummies that are damaged will be disposed of and parents will be told that this has happened.

Further information can be found here: <https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/safeguarding-and-welfare/food-safety>