



Ladybird Forest Pre-School

77. TOOTHBRUSHING POLICY



The purpose of implementing a toothbrushing programme

Brushing teeth with fluoride toothpaste last thing at night and one other time in the day is highly effective in preventing tooth decay (Delivering Better Oral Health PHE 2014).

It is important that children establish good tooth brushing habits at an early age; they should also be supervised by an adult until they are at least 7 years old.

Research has shown that children lack basic toothbrushing skills (Oral Health Foundation, 2016) and having a brushing programme may help to improve this as well as building in a routine. Successful toothbrushing programmes have noted behaviour changes in children and more of a willingness to brush at home. Also as a direct result of toothbrushing, more families were reported to be attending the dentist. (PHE, 2016)

Low educational attainment and poor oral health are closely linked (Newcastle University, 2014). Poor concentration at school due to pain; missing school days due to toothache and dental visits during school hours can affect attainment.

Children with good oral health will result in a reduction of general anaesthetics for dental extractions which is currently the main reason for hospital admittance for children (PHE, 2014).

Ladybird Forest Pre-School setting will have a designated lead person who is responsible for the toothbrushing programme.

All staff involved in delivering toothbrushing programmes must follow these standards.

The Oral Health Promotion Team (CDS) will support the implementation of new toothbrushing programmes.

Informed consent for each participating child is essential. Appropriate records of participating children will be kept in the child's learning journal within the locked cabinet in the office.

All employees should use the **stock checklist** to ensure that the appropriate equipment is used.

This toothbrushing programme is available to all early year's settings and primary schools.

Children attending a participating setting are eligible to take part as long as there is informed consent from their parent/carer. Consent is only required once for the



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toothbrushing programme and remains as long as the child is in the setting.

Ladybird Forest Pre-School practitioners have received training from the OHP team so that they are confident to implement a toothbrushing programme. Training included cross-infection procedures.

Working with parents/legal guardians is important to enable regular daily toothbrushing to continue at home.

It is essential to gain consent from parents before starting the toothbrushing programme. Consent can be withdrawn by the parent/legal guardian at any time.

Parents will be advised about the programme via a letter which will be distributed via the setting.

Consent forms will be received, recorded and maintained by the setting. Electronic consent may be appropriate for your setting.

Standards

Use toothpaste containing **no less than** 1000 ppm (parts per million) fluoride for children under 3 years old. Avoid sensitive and whitening toothpastes.

Use toothpaste containing **more than** 1000 ppm (parts per million) fluoride for children over 3 years old. Avoid sensitive and whitening toothpastes.

Use a smear of toothpaste (0-3 years old). Do not reapply if paste is swallowed.

Use a pea sized amount of toothpaste (3-6 years - if child can spit out). Do not reapply if paste is swallowed.

An adult dispenses the toothpaste.

When a toothpaste tube is shared, toothpaste is dispensed directly onto a clean surface such as a paper towel or paper plate.

Ensure there is sufficient space between the quantities of dispensed toothpaste to allow collection without cross contamination.

Children must not eat or lick toothpaste from the tube.

Rinsing with lots of water should be discouraged as it washes away the fluoride toothpaste. **Spit, don't rinse!**



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Ensure toothbrushes and brushing techniques are appropriate to the age and ability of the child i.e. a small headed toothbrush with soft to medium bristles.

Toothbrushes must not be shared.

Each child must use their own identified toothbrush.

Each child brushes once a day in the setting.

Toothbrushing takes place at a time which is most suitable for each establishment. Avoid toothbrushing immediately after eating/drinking.

Children are encouraged to spit not rinse.

Toothbrushing takes place either in groups or individually either at a dry area, or at a sink using one of two methods outlined on pages 11 and 12.

Toothbrushes are rinsed individually and thoroughly with water and replaced in the storage system to dry.

Toothbrushes are replaced at least every 3 months; or sooner if required.

Motivational tools will be tooth-friendly e.g. toothbrushing songs, stickers.

Toothbrushing in a dry area

The supervising adult must wash their hands with antibacterial soap before and after toothbrushing. Supervisors should cover any cuts, abrasions or breaks in their skin with a waterproof dressing.

Child or supervisor is responsible for collecting the toothbrush from the storage system.

The toothpaste is dispensed following the appropriate methods as outlined on page 2.

Children may be seated or standing whilst toothbrushing takes place.

After toothbrushing is completed, children can spit excess toothpaste into either a disposable tissue or disposable paper towel.

Tissues/paper towels must be disposed of immediately after use in a refuse bag.



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Toothbrushes can be:

returned to the rack by the child and taken to an identified sink area by the supervisor who is responsible for rinsing each toothbrush individually under cold running water, or

rinsed at a designated sink area where each child is responsible for rinsing their own toothbrush under running water. The supervisor or the child can be responsible for the control of the running tap.

After rinsing, the child or supervisor is responsible for shaking off excess water in the sink.

Toothbrushes are returned to the storage system by the supervisor or child and allowed to air dry.

Disposable paper towels should be used to mop up any drips visible on the storage system.

Standards

Toothbrushes are stored in appropriate storage systems or individual holders.

Storage systems enable brushes to stand upright when positioned and placed back to back.

Storage systems allow sufficient distance between toothbrushes to avoid cross contamination.

Storage systems display symbols corresponding with those on the toothbrushes to allow individual identification.

Storage systems which do not have covers are stored within a designated trolley or in a clean dry cupboard or cabinet.

Allow toothbrushes to air dry naturally.

Manufacturers guidelines are followed when cleaning and maintaining storage systems.

Dedicated household gloves are worn when cleaning storage systems and sinks, and all cuts, abrasions, and breaks in the skin are covered with a waterproof dressing before cleaning is carried out.

Staff should be bare below the elbow when carrying out cleaning storage systems.

Storage systems, trolleys and storage areas are cleaned, rinsed and dried at least once a week using warm water and general purpose neutral detergent.

Care is taken to ensure that toothbrushes do not touch when being removed or replaced in storage systems.

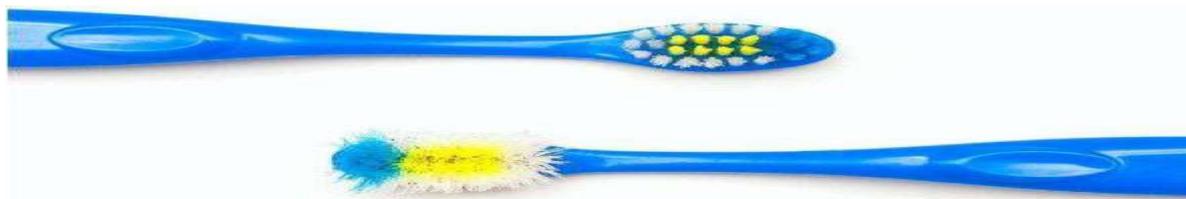
Storage systems are not positioned adjacent to the sink area or next to the children whilst toothbrushing is taking place in order to prevent contamination via aerosol spread.

Storage systems are replaced if cracks, scratches or rough surfaces develop.

Any toothbrushes dropped on the floor are discarded.

Toothbrushes must not be soaked; put into a dishwasher or cleaned with a sterilising fluid i.e. Milton.

Toothbrushes wear out at different rates for different children and it is the supervising adult's responsibility to monitor this and replace the toothbrush as necessary



The supervising adult should replace all toothbrushes at least once a term. However, if during normal daily toothbrushing it is noticed that a toothbrush is wearing then this should be replaced immediately. Once the bristles are bent or splayed the toothbrush must be replaced. Please see appendix 1 & 2

This policy was reviewed on	30 th November 2018
This policy was adopted by	Amanda Sanders
This policy was reviewed by	Amanda Sanders
Managers signature	
Date for review	30 th November 2019



Appendix 1

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How do we clean the toothbrushes?

Rinse under the cold running tap, ensuring all the toothpaste is removed. At no time should brushes be stored or cleaned together. Do not put them in a sink together.

2. Is rinsing the toothbrushes enough?

Yes rinsing is enough as each brush is only used by that one child so there are no cross infection issues.

3. What do we do if toothpaste has hardened on bristles?

Rinse brush under warm water to loosen toothpaste and then rinse in cold water.

4. How do we clean the trolleys?

Clean the trolleys at least once a week or when required with soapy water.

5. Should brushes be drained or wiped before going back in the trolley?

When the brushes are rinsed, place them on a paper towel ensuring they don't touch each other (top and tail toothbrushes with a gap of at least 2 inches between them) to ensure there is no cross contamination. By placing the toothbrushes onto the paper towel this will soak up excess water on the brushes.

6. What if a child has bleeding gums?

Follow the same policy that you would use to discard any bloody tissues following nose bleeds.

7. What if a child has an ulcer or cold sore?

Child can continue brushing if they have an ulcer but should pause brushing whilst they have a cold sore.

8. How can I prevent the names rubbing off brushes?

Do not immerse brushes into water.

Names should be written on brushes with a permanent/CD pen and apply tape over the name.

9. Is there a risk of increased illness of Pre-School staff and children?

Providing staff are following the standards of the tooth brushing programme there should be no cross infection issues.



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Appendix 2

1. A toothpaste that is free from animal products should be suitable for all children (See list of toothpastes DBOH, 2014 or contact toothpaste manufacturers or contact OHP team).
2. It is recommended that children do not rinse their mouths after toothbrushing. Rinsing after brushing significantly reduces the benefits of fluoride. Children should be encouraged to spit excess toothpaste away (DBOH, 2014).
3. Disinfectant wipes are not suitable for cleaning storage systems. Hot soapy water is recommended since it kills the vast majority of relevant micro-organisms.
4. Rough surfaces on storage or dispensing systems can encourage the growth of harmful micro-organisms. Damaged equipment therefore needs replacing.
5. Individual toothbrush holders can be used for storing brushes, although most settings use a rack system. If individual holders are used, ensure excess water is removed from the brushes before returning them to the holder. The standards apply equally to individual holders as the rack systems.
6. Ideally settings should have sinks available that are designated for toothbrushing and personal hygiene.
7. For any other programme specific question, refer to (Appendix 9).
8. All participating children will receive a certificate to acknowledge participation within the toothbrushing programme (Appendix 7).
9. We always try to provide the best possible service. If you do not think we have achieved this and you wish to make a comment, you can contact us in any of the following ways:
 - Speak to your CDS Oral Health Promotion contact
 - Contact the Assistant Director for Public Health 01234 310353
 - Corporate Services Manager
Community dental Services CIC
Bedford Heights
Manton
Lane
Bedford
MK41 7PH
Telephone: 01234 310223
Email: info@cds-cic.nhs.uk
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