



## Dummy and Bottle Policy

### Playhouse Pre-school

Playhouse Pre-School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff to share this commitment.

The aim of this policy is to foster an environment where all children, whatever their needs, are welcomed and have the same choices and opportunities, that enable them to reach their full potential with Playhouse.

It is understood that children who attend Pre-School may still use a dummy or bottle. In 2008, the Department for Children, Schools and Families issued a document called Supporting children with speech, language and communication needs: Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage from which the following quotation can be found:

‘Dummies and bottles can contribute to delayed communication development. Babies and young children spend lots of time making sounds and exploring their own mouths and voices before they begin to use words. In doing so they are not only practising and developing the skills needed for speech, but they are also encouraging other people in the world to notice them and communicate with them.’

If toddlers are allowed to continue to suck a dummy and talk with it in their mouths, there is also a risk that the child will learn distorted patterns of speech because the teat prevents normal movements at the front of their mouth. These patterns may be difficult to change later.

Considering the overwhelming evidence against the prolonged use of dummies and bottles Playhouse Pre-school has made the difficult decision to disallow them in the setting. Exceptions can be made following advice from other professionals.

Although a dummy or bottle can be a source of comfort when a child is upset, and may form part of a child’s sleep routine, we recommend parents should phase out dummies and bottles before a child starts at Pre-school. These can be substituted for other comforters such as a small blanket or teddy. These can be happily brought into Pre-school.

This policy was agreed by the staff of Playhouse Pre-school Broadwater.

Adopted on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 and will be reviewed annually.

Reviewed on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2025 by Z. Munford