



St Mary's CE Primary School



Dummy Policy

2026-2027

'... there is something *extraordinary* and *wondrous* in everybody as *unique creations of God*. We *value* all our children as *children of God* and *celebrate difference* and *diversity* within a *safe, encouraging* Christian school environment in which all *flourish*.

Therefore, all will aspire with God's strength to reach for the stars.

*"I can do all things through him who **strengthens** me."*

Philippians 4:13

At St Mary's Primary School, we recognise that a dummy can be a source of comfort and be part of a child's sleep routine. However, at the beginning of child's development babies and young children spend lots of time making new sounds and exploring mouth movement before they begin to use words. In doing so, they are not only developing the skills for speech, but also encouraging other people in the world to notice them and communicate with them.

Many children use dummies as source of comfort, although, some research has shown that children who suck dummies throughout the day make few sounds, gain less experience of using their voice and hear less language from adults around them. A dummy also can affect a child's interaction with other children and could be a cause of speech delay. 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 on in life and may result in the child needing further support with their speech and language.

Furthermore, St Mary's are committed to ensuring that all children receive the best support and guidance. This is why we would recommend that your child refrains from bringing a dummy to the setting. However, if the removal of the dummy causes discomfort or considerable upset, which consequently results in the child not being able to settle, strategies will be put in place to support the child. In addition, parents/carers will be given further advice on how to phase out the dummy.

In the setting staff will ensure to share with the child:

- Where the dummy is stored
- Comfort the child, and, if age/stage appropriate, explain in a sensitive way why the dummy is not needed.
- Offer distraction techniques such as toys, teddy.
- Explain to the child that they can have their dummy at home time.

Next review: September 2027

Signed: C Morton Headteacher

Signed: Father J Stather Chair of Trustees

Policy Date: September 2026