

Oral Health Guidance Document

This guidance advises staff and parents on the basic standards that should be followed to maintain good oral health in school.

Oral health is an important part of general health and well-being. Good oral health enables individuals to communicate effectively, to eat and enjoy a variety of foods, and is important in overall quality of life, self-esteem and social confidence. Oral diseases are largely preventable. Pain, discomfort, sleepless nights, limitation in eating function leading to poor nutrition, and time off school due to dental problems are all common impacts of oral diseases.

The government framework states that early years providers must promote good oral health of children who attend their setting.

Oral health is important, even with baby teeth. This is because children's teeth:

- help them to bite and chew
- support speech and language development
- help them feel confident when they smile
- baby teeth make space for and help to guide adult teeth

Good oral health also keeps children free from toothache, infection and swollen gums. We promote good oral health by linking it to other key topics, like self-care, healthy eating, and physical development as part of the national curriculum.

There are a number of ways parents and carers can promote good oral health at home this is by brushing twice daily with a fluoride toothpaste, regular visits to the dentist and reducing sugar frequency within the diet.

Our school's Oral Health Champion is Mr Gray.

An Oral Health Promoter from South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust has been allocated to our school to work with the staff to encourage good oral health routines.

We only offer milk and water to drink at snack times

Use of water bottles and drinking fountains are encouraged during the school day and children in nursery are given milk as an option. We do not allow fizzy drinks and energy drinks in school.

We only offer healthy snacks to eat

Children are offered fruit as part of fruit in schools' scheme. No dried fruit should be given routinely as a snack, although on occasion dried fruit may be provided by the free fruit scheme.

School Meals

Gateshead council provide our school meals. Information on our menu is provided at <https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/7430/Primary-school-meals>

Packed Lunches

Children are allowed to bring a packed lunch. We encourage children to bring healthier options within their lunch boxes. Parent/carers can refer to <https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/> for healthy food options.

Dental Visits

It is very important that children have regular dental examinations starting as young an age as possible. As a school, we will ask and record upon admission who is your child's regular Dentist on our admissions form. Visit or phone the practice of your choice and ask if they are happy to see your child under the NHS. You are not obliged to stay at the same dentist and can change practice if you want to, however it is getting increasingly difficult to find an NHS dentist.

To locate an NHS dentist who is accepting new and/or emergency patients please access <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist> or dial 111 for dental emergency and out of hours care.

Dental emergencies

Designated staff have had training in how to manage a dental emergency.

Date: February 2023

Review Date: September 2023