Let's talk about dummies

Frequent dummy use can stop your child speaking or saying words correctly. A dummy stops the tongue and lips from moving quickly and accurately.

Tongue and lip movement is vital for:-

- Chewing
- Eating
- Laughing
- Talking

- Licking
- Smiling
- Singing
- Blowing bubbles

There may be times when children are upset and tired and only their dummy will comfort them. But sucking frequently on a dummy can change the shape of your child's mouth, preventing the teeth from meeting together. When this happens children can have difficulty speaking clearly.

- If your child has a dummy think about how often and when they use it. Only give your child a dummy when they need it.

- Children don't need a dummy when they are happy or playing. If your child asks for a dummy try and distract them first.

- Never dip a dummy in sugary food or drink; this will lead to tooth decay.

- If your child is using a dummy make sure that it is always clean. Avoid sucking the dummy before giving it to your child.

Tips and Ideas:

- If your child does not use a dummy frequently they will find it easier to give up

- Only allow your child to have one dummy at a time

- Keep the dummy out of sight, if they see it they will ask for it

- Don't wait until your child has to give up their dummy, it is easier and kinder to help cut down gradually.

It's time to give up

Many parents struggle to get their child to give up the dummy. Here are some suggestions from parents who have done it.

My son gave his dummy to Father Christmas

I gave the dummy at night times only; I found it easier to get rid of it then

I gave a small reward every morning for each night my son went without his dummy.
It worked within the week

I started to take the dummy away when I knew she didn't really need it, when she was playing or doing something else, in the end she forgot about it

I put the dummy in a cupboard so he couldn't see it

We talked about it and set a day for throwing it away; once it's gone it's gone.
Don't go back!

Once it's gone, it's gone – don't go back