Portobello Primary School



Oral Health Policy

2024

**Portobello Primary School Oral Health Policy**

Scope of the policy: This policy advises staff and parents/carers on the basic standards that should be followed to maintain good oral health in school.

Introduction: 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 year’s providers must promote good oral health of children who attend their setting. For further information please visit:

<https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/safeguarding-and-welfare/oral-health>

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.

Purpose: 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 several ways parents/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 Mrs Lockhart

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. The Oral Health Promoter can also offer parent/carer sessions in school should there be enough interest for a session to be booked, please contact the school office should you like to be offered advice/guidance via the Oral Health Promoter in school.

**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 can pay for milk. No juice/cordial is given at snack times and is not allowed in water bottles unless we are aware that a child will not drink and thereby compromise their health in other ways. 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 after school holiday periods.

**School Meals**

Gateshead Catering Service provide our school meals.

**Packed Lunches**

Children are allowed to bring a packed lunch. Children are not allowed to bring fizzy drinks as part of their packed lunch. If a child is seen with a fizzy drink, they will be asked to take it home and instead, they will be given the same drinks as the children having school lunch i.e., water or milk.

Children are not allowed to bring sweets as part of their packed lunch but are encouraged to bring a healthy, well-balanced meal.  If we feel a child is not eating a nutritious packed lunch this will be discussed with parents/carers.

**Healthy Break time snacks**

Children are not allowed to bring sweets or confectionary into school for break times.

Children in Early Years and in Key stage 1 have free fruit/vegetables to eat at morning break, this is free of charge and is offered through the Schools Fruit and Vegetable Scheme (SFVS).

Children in Key Stage 2 are allowed to bring in a healthy morning snack to eat at break, this should ideally be a whole piece of fruit or a healthy cereal bar 'not containing nuts or any nut product'.

**Dental Visits**

It is very important that children have regular dental examinations starting as young an age as possible.  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. Please aim to make dental appointments out of school hours or during half term/summer holidays where possible.

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.

**Birthdays & Celebrations**

Birthdays and celebrations are an important part of a child’s life. We would prefer parents/carers to send in a healthy celebratory snack for your child’s class to enjoy, or a small toy or gift although we do allow a birthday cake to be shared after lunch. (Sweeter snacks can be allowed at school parties, celebrations to mark religious or cultural occasions, or at fund raising events)

**Rewards**

Sweets should never be offered to children as a reward at home. Praise, use of stickers or stars etc. should be given to children for good behaviour or achievement. Portobello Primary School has a points/rewards system in place, this is via \*\*Marvellous Me\*\*.

**Dental emergencies**

Should your child have a dental emergency in school we will contact the 1st named designated contact we have on record for your child to raise awareness of any dental pain your child may be experiencing. It will then be up to you as a parent/carer to seek advice or visit your local dental practice for a check-up or treatment.

**Date: January 2024 Review Date: January 2026**