

## Supervised toothbrushing programme information sheet

Your child's school/nursery are taking part in the supervised toothbrushing programme. This is a nationally recognized, evidence-based initiative, designed to improve children's oral health, increase exposure to fluoride and promote behavioural and self-care skills.

Oral health has been added to the EYFS framework because good oral health habits need to be formed from an early age. Nearly a quarter of 5-year-olds in England have tooth decay and tooth extraction is the leading cause for childhood hospital admissions, costing the NHS approximately £50 million per year.

Evidence shows that brushing each day at school over a two-year period is effective for preventing tooth decay and can establish life-long behaviour to promote oral health.

**It is important that school based toothbrushing supports twice daily brushing at home as well and should not replace brushing at home.**

### **Brushing at school/nursery**

Under the supervision of trained staff, children will brush their teeth every day at school or nursery for 2 minutes with fluoride toothpaste. Rinsing with water is discouraged as this can wash away the protective benefits of fluoride. Any remaining toothpaste after brushing can be wiped onto a paper towel and disposed of in the bin. Children will have their own toothbrushes which will be kept in covered storage racks and new toothbrushes will be provided each term.

### **Toothpaste**

A mint flavoured toothpaste is provided by the programme which is free from animal derivatives.

### **Prevention of dental decay**

Brushing alone cannot prevent decay. Regular consumption of sweet foods and drinks can increase the risk of developing tooth decay. While it may not be possible to remove all sweetened foods and drinks from the diet, reducing how often they are consumed may help.

These are our top tips to help reduce dental decay,

- Brush teeth twice a day for two minutes with fluoride toothpaste, at night and one other time of day
- Spit don't rinse after brushing
- Keep sweetened foods and drinks to mealtimes
- Drink milk or water between meals
- Choose teeth safe snacks (fruit, vegetables, cheese, plain yoghurt)
- Beware of hidden sugars in juices, smoothies, cereal bars