

## Locations and advice sessions

Speech and language therapy is available at the following locations.

- **Ferryview Health Centre**  
Woolwich SE18 6PZ  
020 8319 5430
- **Gallions Reach Health Centre**  
Thamesmead SE28 8BE  
020 8320 5735
- **Kidbrooke Clinic**  
Kidbrooke SE3 9FA  
020 8856 2970
- **Plumstead Health Centre**  
Plumstead SE18 1BH  
020 8317 6300 x5
- **Vanbrugh Hill Health Centre**  
Greenwich SE10 9HQ  
020 8312 8932
- **The Wallace Health Centre**  
Deptford SE8 3BX  
020 8469 1145
- **4 Wensley Close**  
Eltham SE9 5AB  
020 8294 3139

## Advice sessions

We run advice sessions in locations across the borough. Call your local clinic for more information.

## How to access the service

We have an open referral system which means anyone can refer to our service

with parental consent. Please contact our administration team (below) for more information about how to refer your child.

**Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy**  
Memorial Hospital  
Shooters Hill  
London SE18 3RG  
Telephone: 020 8836 8617  
Fax: 020 8319 3336

## Your opinion matters

We are committed to providing the highest standards of care, so welcome your views on the services we provide. If you would like to comment, make a suggestion or make a complaint, please speak to the person you normally see or ask to speak to the team manager. You may also like to speak to our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) by ringing the freephone number on 0800 917 7159.

## Confidentiality

All our staff are required to abide by a strict code of conduct on confidentiality. We will only share information with those who need to know in order to provide good quality care. Occasionally there may be exceptions to this, for example to support a clinical audit or to monitor the quality of care provided. We will usually discuss this with you beforehand.

[www.oxleas.nhs.uk](http://www.oxleas.nhs.uk)

Children and Young People's Services

Speech and Language Therapy

# Dummies and their effect



Information  
for parents and  
carers

March 2013

improving lives

Oxleas **NHS**  
NHS Foundation Trust

## Are dummies useful?

For babies with feeding difficulties, and for very unsettled babies, dummies can be very helpful in soothing the child, teaching them to suck and reducing sensitivity in the mouth.

## Can dummies be harmful?

If your child regularly uses a dummy, you should be aware of the following.

- A dummy may affect your child's speech and language development.
- A dummy may affect your child's teeth and cause tooth decay if dipped in sweet substances.
- If your child falls with a dummy in his/her mouth, it may cause damage.
- Dummies must always be clean and replaced if worn or damaged.

## What if a child uses a dummy for too long?

- A dummy may result in teeth being distorted - this may mean dental treatment in the future.
- A dummy prevents the tongue from moving around - tongue movements are vital for speech sounds.

## When should a child stop using their dummy?

Try to wean your child off the dummy when he/she is about one year old, or as you wean him/her off the bottle.

You can do it gradually, or at a significant point, such as a birthday.

Children who have a dummy after the age of 18 months to two years no longer need it as a comforter. It may have become a habit.

**The longer you leave it the harder it will be.**

## How should dummies be used?

- Always remove the dummy if your child tries to talk.
- Have only one dummy in use.
- Only use it for a few minutes to settle the child.
- Sterilise the dummy before use - don't put it in your mouth.
- Wait until your child asks for the dummy instead of automatically giving it to him/her.

### Other useful information

[www.talkingpoint.org.uk](http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk) offers plenty of useful information about speech, language and communication development.