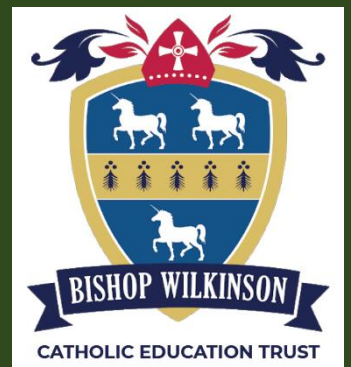




**St. Joseph's Catholic
Infant & Junior Schools
Birtley**

Oral Health Policy

March 2026





St. Joseph's Catholic Infant and Junior Schools, Birtley Oral Health Policy sets out the schools' commitment to providing a high standard of oral health promotion, linking this to education and life skills to promote optimum health in all our students.

OUR MISSION

Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone, to heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they've known.

Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the love of Christ shall end divisions:

All are welcome in this place.

OUR VISION

Lord, in our daily lives, may we:

Love and serve like St. Joseph, care and protect like St. Joseph, work and teach like St. Joseph, show compassion and loyalty like St. Joseph, have trust and faith like St. Joseph.

We follow St. Joseph's virtues and remember our significance in God's world. Amen.

This policy advises staff and parents 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 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 **Miss Self**.

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.

Toothbrushing

A daily supervised tooth brushing programme is a local initiative to help improve the oral health of children within the area. Tooth brushing resources are provided by South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust and consist of storage racks, toothbrushes and toothpaste. We encourage students in Reception to brush their teeth at home and in the education setting.

St Joseph's Catholic Infant and Junior Schools is committed to

- Delivering the tooth brushing scheme in line with the guidance provided by South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust
- Encouraging all students to participate in the scheme at school and at home
- Maintaining a high standard of staff knowledge base in Oral Health Promotion.

Guidance on Tooth Brushing in school

- The school will have a nominated oral health lead person responsible for liaising with the Oral Health team at South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust and ensuring the effective delivery of the scheme in school.
- Staff involved in the tooth brushing scheme will be suitably trained, which will be monitored.
- All parents will be made aware of the scheme via consent letter.
- Tooth brushing will take place in a suitable environment in line with cross infection control.
- All children are supervised whilst brushing.
- Storage racks will be maintained and cleaned on a regular basis in line with infection control.
- Every child will have their own identifiable toothbrush.
- A fluoride toothpaste will be used which contains the current recommended level of fluoride.
- Every child will use toothpaste which has been dispensed in accordance with cross infection control guidance.
- A pea sized amount of fluoride toothpaste will be dispensed for all children over the age of 3yrs.
- Toothbrushes will be replaced every three months or sooner if required, when bristles become splayed, are dropped on the floor or used by a pupil with a contagious infection.
- Staff will wash hands before and after each brushing session.
- Toothbrushes will be stored in an upright position, out of reach of children, away from toileting facilities and left to air dry when not in use.
- Storage equipment will be washed weekly, and replaced if cracked, scratched or rough surfaces appear.

Healthy Eating

School Meals

Food served in schools and academies in England must meet the school food standards so that children have healthy, balanced diets. These standards are intended to help children develop healthy eating habits and ensure that they get the energy and nutrition they need across the school day. A child's healthy, balanced diet should consist of

- Plenty of fruit and vegetables.
- Plenty of unrefined starchy foods.
- Some meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein.
- Some milk and dairy foods.
- A small amount of food and drink high in fat, sugar and / or salt.

Gateshead Council provide our school meals.

St Joseph's Catholic Infant and Junior Schools is committed to

- Providing and encouraging the use of fresh drinking water – no juice/cordial is given at snack times and is not allowed in water bottles. We do not allow fizzy drinks and energy drinks in school.
- Milk is available to purchase through the COOL milk scheme.
- Providing fresh fruit as a snack as part of fruit in schools scheme (on occasion dried fruit may be provided by the free fruit scheme after school holiday periods).

Packed Lunches

Children are allowed to bring a packed lunch. Children are not allowed to bring fizzy drinks as part of their packed lunch. Instead, they will be given the same drinks as the children having school lunch i.e. water and 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.

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. 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.

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. However, we do not allow birthday cakes, biscuits or sweets as part of our oral health policy. Parents are made aware of this through the school policy on the website and when they start school in nursery or reception. (This does not apply at school parties, celebrations to mark religious or cultural occasions, or at fund raising events)