

Brush Bus Procedure Supervised Daily Toothbrushing (STB)

This document is intended to guide staff to deliver a safe effective supervised toothbrushing programme (STB). It is intended that EYFS staff deliver the scheme as laid out here rather than implementing their own systems.

Background

Oral Health inequalities links to health inequalities – both are linked to deprivation. Children’s oral health has deteriorated during the Covid-19 pandemic and continued during the recovery period. This is thought to be due to children spending more time at home and reduced access to an NHS dentist across the country.

Tooth decay is still the most common reason for hospital admission in children aged 6-10 years.

- From **2021-2022** there were **42,180** episodes of tooth extractions in NHS hospitals in the 0–19-year-old age group
- **26,741** were because of tooth decay
- **83%** increase compared to the previous year
- Cost – **£81.0** million to the NHS
- **35%** of children are embarrassed about their teeth
- **6%** of children have had time off school because of toothache
- **4%** of parents have had time off work to look after their children suffering with toothache

The prevalence of tooth decay in the borough of Bury is higher than Northwest statistics

Rationale for implementing daily supervised toothbrushing in EYFS

Bury has wide in-borough oral health inequalities, those living in more deprived areas are;

- Less likely to brush their teeth twice daily
- Almost twice as likely to have decay and more likely to experience toothache

Tooth decay is a disease which is almost entirely preventable. Before the Covid-19 pandemic only 40% of children saw an NHS dentist. As a result of the pandemic children must wait in pain for 18 months due to the pressures on the system. It is anticipated that some children’s oral health will have deteriorated since the onset of COVID, the loss of routines and spending more time at home has not been helpful.

As EYFS Practitioners you can make a real difference, daily supervised toothbrushing in Nursery and Reception helps develop good habits from the start and often encourages toothbrushing at home. **Children’s good oral health lasts for life.**

The 2020 oral health survey of 3-year-old children reported

- **12.4%** had already experienced decay in Bury
However, the tooth decay rate was likely to be **much higher** as only **6%** of **3-year-old children** in the borough were examined due to the COVID pandemic

The 5-year-old oral health surveys reported the following

5 -year-old survey 2022

- **34.6%** of Bury children had experienced and been affected by tooth decay
This was higher than the Northwest and England average

In 2019

- **35.2%** of Bury children had already suffered tooth decay

In 2017

- **35.2%** of Bury children had been affected by tooth decay

In 2015

- **26.7%** of Bury children had been affected by tooth decay

Fluoride toothpaste is an effective method of reducing caries (dental decay) and its benefits can be maximized if brushing with toothpaste is started early in a child's life rather than trying to change habits later. Children need help with toothbrushing up to the age of seven or eight years, as they often miss their back teeth. Children should be encouraged to brush their own teeth, but parents should finish by brushing themselves.

Supervised toothbrushing (STB) in EYFS will help reduce inequalities and will also encourage children to brush their teeth from a young age. It also supports home brushing; many parents struggle to brush young children's teeth at home. Parents with children in EYFS where brushing programmes have been implemented, regularly report that their children are much more enthusiastic about having their teeth brushed at home and that it is now less of a struggle.

Service Specification

Aim

Set up and maintain the Brush Bus tooth brushing scheme to pre-school and nursery childcare settings to increase exposure to fluoride amongst the 2–5-year-old children in Bury. This will be done by Oral Health Improvement (OHPT) facilitating daily tooth brushing with family fluoride toothpaste at targeted establishments via staff training (via e-learning), guidance and support, advice to parents and the provision of equipment.

It is a requirement that all EYFS complete the easy free e-learning training package.

Please encourage all EYFS staff involved with STB to watch the key training materials to ensure you are able to deliver a safe effective programme: [Supervised Toothbrushing Programme – Under review – Greater Manchester Training Hub](#)

A certificate is provided on completion of the training - EYFS practitioners should add their name and date of completion. Please forward at least one copy of a certificate to alison.tabois@nhs.net . This will be uploaded to Dental Public Health Records for the supervised toothbrushing scheme.

Useful additional resource

Oral Health Training for Early years Practitioners – evidence-based learning designed to support and enable Early Years Practitioners

[Oral Health Training for Early Years Practitioners – Under review – Greater Manchester Training Hub](#)

Oral Health Improvement responsibilities:

- Provide details where e-learning training for all EYFS staff members can be obtained. This is intended to guide EYFS practitioners to enable them to deliver a safe effective STB programme
- Provision of guidelines and protocols for STB
- Provision of equipment to support the programme
- Toothpaste storage racks comply with the best practice in prevention of cross-infection
- Provide cleaning instructions for 'S' toothbrush storage racks
- Provide an information leaflet/positive consent form for Parents/carers to enable them to make an informed choice. This will be available for EYFS to download for distribution to parents. Parental consent must be obtained before toothbrushing commences
- Monitoring of the toothbrushing programme will take place at timely intervals. This may involve a telephone call or email to obtain feedback
- All the above recorded by Oral Health Improvement for each EYFS
- The Brush Bus policy folder can be accessed here [The Brush Bus Scheme in Bury Pre-school and Nursery and school EYFS Settings | The Bury Directory](#)

Childcare staff responsibilities:

- All staff who will be involved with daily toothbrushing must complete the e-learning training package [Supervised Toothbrushing Programme – Under review – Greater Manchester Training Hub](#)
- Have identified a Lead for STB (supervised toothbrushing) often the EYFS Lead
- Commitment to the programme, implementing supervised daily toothbrushing following current guidelines
- Have a consenting procedure in place; all signed consent forms should be retained in the setting
- Cross infection procedures are followed including social distancing
- Follow COVID-19 guidance for STB
- **Suspend** the programme temporarily if there is an outbreak of any infectious illnesses until it is resolved
- Ensure children use individual brushes
- To check equipment on a weekly basis and ensure the right equipment is being used. Use the toothpaste provided or a toothpaste with a fluoride concentration of 1450ppm (family fluoride toothpaste)
- All equipment should be cleaned following the current guidance
- To ensure 'S' toothbrush storage racks are stored carefully and looked after for continued use
- To contact Oral Health Improvement for any queries alison.tabois@nhs.net

It is important to highlight the following:

Toothbrush storage racks are **on loan only** to settings whilst they are committed to delivering daily toothbrushing. These remain the property of Oral Health Improvement NHS Bury. **The toothbrush storage racks and covers/lids are very expensive to replace and have been funded from the NHS budget - EYFS will be required to cover the cost to replace the toothbrush racks should they be discarded or thrown away or in the event they cannot be found within the setting.**

Opting out of the STB programme

If at any time the decision is made to opt out of the Brush Bus programme (STB), or in the very sad event of a setting ceasing business; please contact alison.tabois@nhs.net

Arrangements will be made to collect any surplus stock and the toothbrushing storage racks. These racks will then be cleaned hygienically ready for re-distribution to EYFS in the borough.

Contact details:

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