



# Oral Health Awards

## for early years

BECOME A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR  
ORAL HEALTH PROMOTION



### **Step 1: Register.**

Email: [catherine.wheatley@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:catherine.wheatley@n-somerset.gov.uk) to register your setting for the scheme. Then flick through this handbook for ideas and all the proformas you'll need to gain your award.

### **Step 2: Plan.**

Go through the accreditation standards and choose the goals you want to achieve. Discuss this with the wider staff team and children/families where possible. Talk it through with Better Health North Somerset (BHNS) to get input and support. Submit your plan to BHNS for approval.

### **Step 3: Act.**

Work through your plan, capturing stories, photos and evidence along the way.

### **Step 4: Share.**

Tell us and others what you've done using the proforma in the Accreditation Handbook or in a more creative way if you'd rather, just make sure you answer all the questions.



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### Accreditation Handbook

To gain accreditation for integrating oral health promotion within your service provision, you must demonstrate meeting goals within each of the following standards:

Bronze Award	<b>One</b> goal in each standard
Silver Award	<b>Two</b> goals in each standard
Gold Award	<b>Three</b> goals in each standard
Platinum Award	<b>Three</b> goals in each standard as decided up and driven by families

Health is created when people have control over the decisions that affect them and are equal partners in the schemes designed to support them. Therefore, for the top award family participation should be at its very best. However, any attempts to engage children or their parents/carers with any level of this accreditation will be commended by Better Health North Somerset.

Early Years					
Standard 1		Standard 2		Standard 3	
Educating		Integrating		Reinforcing	
	Oral health activities		Staff training		Supervised Toothbrushing
	Oral health visitor		Water and Milk only policy		Bottle/Dummy Scheme
	Family Engagement		Food Policy		Oral Health policy
	Display boards		Whole setting change		Encourage dental care
	Social media / leaflets		Opportunistic OH advice		Supply toothbrush packs

You may achieve this by whichever means you feel is appropriate for your setting however, for some suggestions of what this might look like please refer to the descriptions below. For any of the criteria listed below, Better Health North Somerset will be on hand to support and help you make it happen. Please contact our Oral Public Health Specialist for any guidance or information: Catherine.Wheatley@n-somerset.gov.uk



## Educating

### Oral Health Activities

Make toothbrushing fun. Produce activities where children can play and use their senses to explore the theme of taking care of teeth. You could run sessions specifically focussing on oral health or you could explore it whilst learning about other topics. Include toothbrushing songs or verses in rhyme time, books about visiting the dentist or taking care of teeth during story time, dental clinic themed toys and accessories in the home corner or toothpaste, toothbrushes and laminated mouths in messy play. Some ideas are available on the Better Health North Somerset website in the Early Years pages for professionals.

### Oral Health visitor

Invite a dentist, dental nurse or Better Health North Somerset's Oral Public Health Specialist, Catherine Wheatley to come in and deliver some learning for you. You could even invite someone to come dressed as the Tooth Fairy to host a Tooth Fairy's Tea Party in which only food that are healthy for teeth are served.

### Family Engagement

Invite parents and carers in for a Health Promotion Event at the setting in which tips for taking care of teeth can be shared. This doesn't need to be restricted to oral health – why not cover physical activity, food and nutrition and mental health too? You could show off art work (such as colouring) made by the children which give oral health messages, invite professionals in to give the health messages, or create a "Health Fayre" in which fun and interactive games are used to teach top tips for healthy teeth.

### Display boards

Noticeboards packed full of bites of information can grab attention and give visitors, parents and staff little take aways that will stay with them. Make an attention-grabbing display that people simply can't walk past without learning or remembering an important tip for taking care of their teeth. Display board ideas and print outs are available on the Oral Health Awards section of the Better Health North Somerset Website.

### Social Media / Leaflets

Getting those messages home can be one of the hardest things to achieve but get it right and it'll make all the difference. Think about how you can get key information about oral health into the hands, minds and hearts of grown ups at home, to provide a supportive environment for children trying their best to implement their learning. Various leaflets and social media posts are available for download and to order by post from the Department of Health and Social Care's (DHSC) Campaign Resource Centre. A Social Media toolkit is available on the Oral Health Awards section of the Better Health North Somerset Website.



## Integrating Staff Training

Better Health North Somerset provide training for the children and young people's workforce to improve oral health promotion. This covers the basics of oral health and diseases, ideas for practice and behaviour change. This can be delivered for a whole staff team during a normal staff meeting or training session, or a few select staff at a convenient time. It will be adapted for your specifications to include for example considerations for those with additional needs or incorporating supervised toothbrushing. For options available for face-to-face, webinar and online training please see the Oral Health Awards section of the Better Health North Somerset Website.

## Water and Milk Only Policy

Sipping throughout the day on drinks that contain free sugars, including fruit-based drinks, delivers too many "sugar-hits" to the mouth feeding harmful bacteria throughout the day. Introduce a policy whereby children are to only have water in bottles (though may be offered milk at some other point in the day), to greatly reduce their risk of developing dental erosion or decay. Some may find this transition difficult, so it is up to you how to manage this. You could: invest in bottles that stay with you, perhaps ones that keep water chilled for the day as some find this more palatable; phase in the policy to allow parents time to dilute squash increasingly over a period of time, until children are able to tolerate water.; or allow fruit-based drinks at lunch, so children can enjoy the drink of their preference once a day, with a meal.

## Food Policy

Evaluate and improve the food and drink options available to children throughout the day and year. This includes not only regular meals like lunch and puddings but also special occasions where treats are shared, such as birthdays or celebrations. You could include packed lunches as part of this policy and provide guidance for parents. Be as radical as you like, this has to work for you and the children. For guidance you could use the Food Policy Planner on the Oral Health Awards section of the Better Health North Somerset Website.

## Whole Setting Change

Little tweaks to the daily routine or environment can have a big impact and sometimes last a lot longer than the big changes we try to introduce. Think about what little changes could be made around the setting to promote healthier choices, toothbrushing, reducing sugar or visiting the dentist.

## Opportunistic Oral Health Advice

This couples with staff training but can also be implemented if staff feel equipped to do so. Staff make the most of opportunities with parents to drop in brief guidance around oral health. This is about making the most of a moment to bring up an otherwise sensitive issue. Picking up on something a parent says to feed in the piece of advice you've been wanting to give. It could be around anything from dummy use to bedtime routine, from language development to toothache. Seize the moment and gently but bravely share the information that might make a difference.



## Reinforcing Supervised Toothbrushing

There are so many reasons that supervised toothbrushing might be so effective in reducing oral health inequalities: teaching children the technique, giving them the opportunity to do it once a day, building a habit, making it fun, providing peer support of friends and encouragement from teachers. These reasons and probably more are identified as reasons that this intervention for just 2 or 3 critical years, keeps children brushing for a lifetime, protecting their teeth for years to come. Doing this with 3–5-year-olds is highly evidenced as being effective and the best thing you can do to protect children's teeth. It does not substitute brushing at home but supplements it – even encourages it. Many settings have reported that since they have begun brushing with children, those who weren't before are now brushing at home.

## Bottle / Dummy Scheme

Helping families to reduce bottle use from 6 months old and stopping it by 1-year-old could make a huge impact on the lives of the children in your care. You could introduce a bottle and/or dummy fairy who will exchange comforters for better choices for little mouths, such as a teddy and an open top cup. The fairy might offer rewards such as stickers for every day the child goes without their comforter, in the lead up to the exchange. The can write letters or keep it simple – the design of the scheme and how much you put into it, is up to you.

## Oral Health Policy

An Oral Health Policy includes ambitions such as the promotion of dental care where appropriate, keeping sugar intake to a minimum, use of open top / Sippy cups from 6 months old, understanding the signs of dental neglect and knowing where to report this, training staff in oral health promotion and integrating oral health promotion throughout the year. An example template is available on the Oral Health Awards section of the Better Health North Somerset Website.

## Encourage Dental Care

Consider what can be done to encourage dental visits. Families may feel unable to swap the days their child attends your setting, or if they've paid for them to be there, resent taking them out for a dental appointment. They may not know that children are entitled to free NHS dental care, or may not be able to find a dentist who will take them on as NHS patients. You could: Foster relationships with local dentists and request to be told when they are taking on new patients, so that information can be passed onto families; Support families to attend by allowing flexibility in the days they attend childcare that week.

## Supply Toothbrush Packs

Wholesale toothbrushes and toothpastes can reduce cost significantly making quality products affordable for those on the smallest budgets. Consider buying wholesale packs or items to hand out or sell at cost price / less to families at your setting. This ensures that children have access to the resources they need to maintain a strong oral hygiene routine. Brush Bus and Sanderson AMS International can provide dental packs upon request and Dental Aesthetics sells toothbrushes in boxes of 32 or 100 in the wholesale section of their website.



# Plan

## Educating

Y/N	We will promote oral health through...
	Oral health activities
	Oral health visitor
	Family Engagement
	Display boards
	Social media / leaflets

## Integrating

Y/N	We will promote oral health through...
	Staff training
	Water and milk only policy
	Food policy
	Whole setting change
	Giving opportunistic oral health advice



## Reinforcing

Y/N	We will promote oral health through...
	Supervised Toothbrushing
	Bottle/Dummy Scheme
	Oral Health policy
	Encourage dental care
	Supply toothbrush packs

## Mobilising

Describe the extent to which students will be involved in the award process

Do you intend to apply for The Platinum Award?	Yes / No
How have you involved children/families in the choosing of these goals and their associated actions?	
How are you involving children/families in the planning of how these actions are implemented?	
How do plan to involve children/families in the implementation of these actions?	
How will children/families be involved in the sharing of the progress and reaching these goals?	



# Share

How did you find the Oral Health Awards process?	
Are you pleased with the goals that you chose and overall, how they panned out?	
What would you change / like to see changed if you were to do it again?	
How are you going to share what you've been doing with the wider community?	
<b>Educating</b>	
1	Goal: e.g. Oral Health Activities
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
	Was this goal met?
2	Goal:
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
	Was this goal met?
3	Goal:
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
	Was this goal met?
Further comments and reflections	





Integrating	
1	Goal: e.g. Staff Training
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
	Was this goal met?
2	Goal:
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
	Was this goal met?
3	Goal:
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
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Further comments and reflections	



## Reinforcing

1	Goal: e.g. Supervised Toothbrushing
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
	Was this goal met?
2	Goal:
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
	Was this goal met?
3	Goal:
	What did you do to work towards this goal?
	Was this goal met?
Further comments and reflections	

## Mobilising

Please explain the ways in which you mobilised the children/families of your setting in carrying out these initiatives: