



Oral Health Improvement Team  
The Comely Bank Centre  
13 Crewe Road South  
Edinburgh  
EH4 2LD

Academic Year 2022/2023

Dear Parent or Guardian

### **Childsmile Toothbrushing Programme**

Childsmile is a national programme designed to improve the oral health of children in Scotland. Research tells us that brushing at least twice a day with fluoride toothpaste can help prevent tooth decay. To support this, Childsmile has developed a national daily supervised toothbrushing programme to take place in the nursery or school setting, **in addition** to brushing at home.

The Toothbrushing Standards have been reviewed by Public Health Scotland, the Care Inspectorate and the Chief Dental Officer.

### **What does the toothbrushing programme involve?**

- Children are given their own toothbrush showing a symbol which matches a corresponding symbol on a storage system and wall chart.
- Every day they will be supervised brushing their teeth with their own toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste supplied by the programme.
- All nurseries and schools participating in the toothbrushing programme will follow the National Standards for Toothbrushing.
- We monitor the toothbrushing programme to ensure we provide a good level of service.

### **Supervised toothbrushing**

Children are supervised in the programme because young children need help with toothbrushing on a daily basis. At home, children should be encouraged to toothbrush themselves, but they will still need help and should be supervised with daily toothbrushing. This will help to ensure that they brush well and do not swallow toothpaste. Children who swallow too much toothpaste over a long period of time can develop white spots on their teeth. This is not tooth decay. The risk of developing white spots as a result of the toothbrushing programme is very small.

### **What do I need to do next?**

Your child will be enrolled in the toothbrushing programme automatically at their nursery or school. You do not need to do anything. However, **if you do not want your child to take part** in the Childsmile toothbrushing programme please write to your child's nursery or school **within two weeks** of receiving this letter. You can of course change your mind at any time. Should you have any questions please contact me.

Yours sincerely

Sheona McMahon (OHI Coordinator Childsmile Core, School and Nursery)  
sheona.mcmahon@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk