



Biting incidents policy

We do recognise that occasionally children will attempt to bite others, children will attempt to bite for a variety of reasons, and while this is not seen as 'abnormal' behaviour and is usually a temporary situation and is not a concern in itself, the child's success in doing so is a worry to all involved.

Biting can be seen as part of a normal developmental stage commonly found in children aged 13- 24 months, although it is not a pleasant situation for staff parents or the children to find themselves in.

Biting can be a very quick and random act which means unfortunately it is not always possible to prevent it from happening, and may not always be clearly witnessed.

A bite that succeeds in breaking the skin may present a risk of possible infection, therefore we request that children's immunisations are up to date and the medical information we keep on file is up to date.

Although biting is not 'abnormal' in young children, it can not be tolerated within the nursery and requires positive intervention from both staff and parents. Our biting policy addresses the action taken by staff and parents if a biting incident occurs

The first step in being able to deal with it is trying to find out why and when it is happening. If a child is biting on a regular basis it is important to record within the behaviour log. Information recorded will include: time of incident, where it occurred in the room e.g. home corner .It is the responsibility of the key person and the Manager to analyse this information.

Some of the reasons children bite are:

Teething – Swelling of the gums and teething can cause a lot of discomfort, babies will find chewing on something will ease this discomfort, and at this age unfortunately they do not truly understand the difference between another child's finger/ arm and a toy.

If we feel this is the main reason behind a biting incident 'teething rings' will be encouraged.

Exploration- children learn by using all their senses, mainly exploring textures and taste, therefore lots of things end up in the mouth and again children can not always distinguish between what should and should not be explored with their mouth. This is when biting can occur as part of play.

Independence – Children at toddler age are learning to be independent, and making choices. Biting is a way of controlling others, if they want someone to move out of the way, or to give you something biting is a quick way to achieve this.

Frustration – Toddlers experience a lot of frustration, they can find it hard to express themselves and may experience difficulty in asking for things and requesting help, and do not have good control of their tempers this can result in pushing, hitting or biting.

Attention and imitation- When children feel they are being ignored and not receiving enough attention they will find a way for people to take notice of them, biting is a quick way to get attention even if it is negative. Children learn through others and unfortunately this covers good and bad actions, and if they see others doing it may decide to try it for themselves.

If a child bites in nursery and the staff are aware that it has happened the following steps will be taken:

Staff will remain calm and not over react,

If caught in the act staff will try to intervene by distraction or moving the child away to lessen the impact of injury, it will be addressed in the same manner as if a biting incident had occurred,

- The child will be reminded with a firm 'No we do not bite people'
- The bitten child will be comforted
- Staff will remove the biter from the situation this will be dealt with age appropriately which may involve distraction or time out.
- Any mark on the bitten child will be treated and written up in the accident book. Details of the biter and reasons (if known) for the incident will be written in the behaviour file so the situation can be monitored.
- Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained by staff - unfortunately children are not so careful.
- If it has left a highly visible mark the parents of the bitten child will be phoned to inform them of the incident.

- The parents of the biter will be informed when they collect the child.
- This will work in conjunction with our behaviour policy.
- Biting will be closely monitored and we will work with parents to establish any patterns that may be occurring and hopefully prevent it from becoming a habitual problem.