

## Biting Policy



We understand that children may use certain behaviours, such as biting to communicate their feelings and needs. Biting is a common type of behaviour that some children use to help them make sense of the world around them, it can also be used to fulfil an oral stimulation need, such as during periods of teething or developmental exploration.

Our aim is to manage each incident of biting in a sensitive manner. It can be extremely upsetting for the child who has been bitten, the child who bite and for all family members involved. Each case will be unique and we will endeavour to identify the reasons behind the biting and come up with strategies as to how best to support it.

The day care uses the following strategies to help prevent biting:

- Individual, one-to-one and small group times so that each child is receiving positive attention.
- Quiet/cosy areas for children who are feeling overwhelmed to go to.
- Stories, puppets, discussion about emotions and feelings including activities and stories that help support children to recognise feelings and empathise with characters and events.
- Additional resources for children who have oral stimulation needs, such as, biting rings.
- Vigilant staff that know the children well and are able to identify where children need more stimulation or quiet times.

Every child is treated as an individual and we work with families to support all children's individual needs. With this in mind, it will be necessary to implement different strategies depending on the needs of the child carrying out the biting.

In the event of a child being bitten we use the following procedures:

- We will increase supervision of the biting child.
- We will model how to play appropriately and support play with others.
- We might introduce targeted support, such as small group work.
- The child who has been bitten will receive lots of reassurance and cuddles.
- The child who bites will be explained to that the behaviour is not kind.
- We will notify the biting child's family and work with them to develop strategies.
- Complete an incident form to share with the parents at the end of the child's session.
- If skin has been broken a phone call to the child's family to notify them and allow the opportunity to seek medical advice if needed.
- Ask the child what they can do to make the child that has been bitten feel better (this could be fetching them a toy or sharing toys with them, a rub on the back etc.).
- Being mindful that the child that has just been bitten may not want close contact with this child.
- If a child continues to bite, carry out observations to try to distinguish a cause, e.g., tiredness or frustration.
- We will encourage families to speak and work with us to help find solutions together.
- We might seek outside professional support.

For confidentiality purposes and possible conflict, we do not disclose the name of the child who has caused the bite to the parents.