



Waltham Pre-School

Biting

Policy Statement

Biting is part of a normal developmental stage for young children who are teething and are still developing their language skills. It is usually a temporary condition which is most common between 13 and 24 months of age. However, because of the danger of this behaviour represents to other children, repeated biting in a group childcare setting cannot be tolerated and requires positive intervention on the part of both the staff and the parents.

Aim

The staff will maintain a close and constant supervision of children at all times but due to speed and randomness with which biting incidents often occur, it is not always possible to prevent these from happening. Our biting policy addresses the actions the staff will take if a biting incident occurs.

Actions

When a biting incident happens it is very scary, frustrating, and stressful for children, parents and staff. It is also not something to blame on children, parents or staff, and there are no quick and easy solutions to it. Children bite for a variety of reasons:

- simple sensory exploration,
- panic, crowding,
- seeking to be noticed,
- intense desire for a toy.

Repeated biting becomes a pattern of learnt behaviour that is often hard to stop because it does achieve results: the desired toy, excitement attention, etc

Handling a Biting Incident:

- The biter is immediately removed from the group with a firm "No.....we don't bite people"
- The bitten child will be comforted immediately, and the bitten area washed with soap and water.
- Appropriate First Aid action will be taken where deemed necessary.
- The bitten area should continue to be observed by parents and staff for signs of infection.
- The biter will be spoken to in a manner which they can understand and will be redirected to other play.
- A report of the incident will be made in our accident book and parents of both children will be notified of the incident
- Confidentiality of all children involved to be maintained.
- We look at the context of each biting incident to see if a pattern can be identified, in an effort to prevent further biting behaviour.
- We work with each biting child on resolving conflict or frustration in an appropriate manner.
- We try to adapt the environment and work with parents to reduce any child stress.
- If a child bites more than once, a member of staff will shadow them for as long as is felt appropriate both to protect potential victims and to try and understand why the biting is happening.
- An Information Booklet will be shared with parents of the "biter" and bitten child.

