

BITING POLICY

Biting is fairly common amongst young children and its one of the injuries that causes most concern and upset for parents/carers. Biting can often be painful and frightening for both children.

HETTY want to assure parents/carers that when they leave their child with us we do everything we can to ensure that their child is kept safe, staff plan activities and supervise the children however there are times when we may not be in arms reach to prevent biting from happening as it is usually unpredictable.

Why do children bite?

For babies biting is a form of exploration, babies put their hands, toys and food into their mouth as it is one of the easiest sense to use. Babies may also use biting as a form of communication. Children at this age will babble but this may not be enough of they want to communicate their needs. Babies are not at an age where they connect biting to pain.

Toddlers

Some toddlers can use biting as a form of communication. Toddlers seldom plan ahead but they do act on what they are experiencing at that moment in time. Toddlers don't always have the language to control what is happening in a situation therefore they may resort to biting as a quick way to grab attention.

Many toddlers don't understand sharing or that touch can hurt and they need to learn through modelling from adults other ways of communicating besides biting. They also like to imitate others so if they see someone biting they may want to give it a go themselves. At this age the child still don't think about the victim and that biting will hurt they are usually focused on getting something that they want whether it be attention or a toy.

Preschool

Children in pre-school are aged 3-5 which is a big age gap in terms of development we must remember this is when considering what normal behaviour for an older should be according to their own development may differ.

Pre-School children may bite for many reasons;

- Exert control over a situation
- Gain attention of someone
- Protect themselves use this as self defence
- They may just have extreme frustration and anger
- They like the sensation
- Attention

Isolated incidents are likely to occur with children of this age but if a child frequently bites this could indicate other behavioural problems.

Methods we use to stop biting from occurring

We use intervention –we look at how intense, frequent the biting is and what the possible triggers could be by using an ABC observation. We try to teach them that biting is wrong and it hurts, we use the expression we are all kind in HETTY. We will remove them from the situation, we will often get the victim to tell the biting child that that hurt.

Dealing with a child who has bitten:

- Remove them from the situation
- Tell the child we don't bite it hurts (depending on age)
- Child will go to a quiet place to reflect for a minute per year age (depending on age) as some two year olds wouldn't understand
- Staff member remains near them but does not engage with them
- Children are encouraged to show they are sorry in their own way (dependant on age)
- We would inform the child's parents/career

Treating a child who has been bitten

We following guidance from the health protection agency

- Comfort the child and move away from the situation
- Use a cold compress
- If the skin is broken clean with warm water or medical wipe , then cover with a dressing
- Complete accident form
- Inform parents

**This policy was adopted at a meeting of HETTY preschool
Staff & Trustees**