

Biting Policy

AIM

Knowle Nursery staff are aware that biting is a normal development behaviour or phase for most younger children. It is a concern for both staff and parents and can be upsetting for parents of both the child who bit as well as the child who was bitten. In this policy we hope to outline some of the reasons why children bite and with proper intervention how Knowle staff deal with this situation to support children and parents through this phase.

Biting happens for different reasons with different children and under different circumstances.

Exploration

Tasting or mouthing objects is one of the first things all children do. Young children do not understand the difference between gnawing on a toy and biting a person.

Teething

Between the ages of four to seven months children begin teething. Children of this age do not understand the difference between chewing on a person or toy.

Cause and effect

Around the age of 12 months, babies become interested in finding out what happens when they do something. When they bang a spoon on the table, they discover that it makes a loud sound. They may discover when they bite someone, they get a reaction.

Attention

When children are in a situation where they feel that they are not receiving attention they often find a way to make others take notice. Biting is a quick way to become the centre of attention, even if it is negative attention.

Imitation

Watching others and trying to do what they do is a great way to learn things. Some children see others bite and decide to try it themselves.

Independence

Toddlers learning to be independent will make choices and needing control over a situation, will often bite as this is a powerful way to control others. If they want a toy or someone to move out their way, it is a quick way to get what you want.

Frustration

Young children experience a lot of frustration growing up. Toddlers may not have good control over their bodies and cannot always express themselves. They have not learned how to interact with others. At times when they are unable to find the words to express their feelings, they resort to hitting, pushing or biting.

Stress

A lack of interesting things to do or not enough interaction with adults is a stressful situation for children. Children who experience traumatic events in their lives, such as bereavement, moving to a new home or even starting a new nursery may resort to biting to relieve tension or express feelings.

We deal with a biting incident by-

- Identifying who was involved
- Using two members of staff one to deal with each child
- Try and establish what triggered the biting incident if not witnessed
- Remove the child who has been bitten from the room and comfort them
- Administer first aid if needed
- Complete an accident and incident report
- For the child who did the biting will be told calmly but firmly that biting hurts and makes children and adults very sad. Children in the Badger room will be shown the picture rules and talk about why they did it
- Both children will be redirected to play separately
- An incident report will be completed
- Both parents will be spoken to separately and will be asked to sign accident and incident reports at the end of the session
- When talking to parents emphasis will be on strategies of preventing biting incidents
as biting can often be painful and frightening for the child who has been bitten and can also be frightening for the child who bites as adults are cross. Staff will also be aware that parents will experience a range of emotions when told about the incident

If biting continues

- Staff will meet to discuss a strategy which will include shadowing the child to see if there is a pattern so enabling the prevention of the biting.
- Discussion with the parent to establish if the child bites in home environment and to discuss if there is a change in routine or the child may be tired or stressed.
- If the child has special needs we will seek advice and support from outside agencies.