

Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy

Statement

Evidence suggests up to a quarter of all children will bite others at some stage, at Warbstow Pre-school we acknowledge that this can be a challenging time for parents/carers, children and staff.

This policy states -

- How staff can identify triggers which lead to a child biting,
- How a bite wound should be treated,
- How staff can design and implement consistent strategies to reduce/eliminate biting incidents,
- How the pre-school works in partnership with parents/carers of a child who bites or has been bitten,
- Effective management systems to support individual children with long term or complex medical needs,
- The procedure for responding to medical emergencies, cases of notifiable diseases, communicable diseases, and outlines any applicable exclusion periods.

Useful Information

This policy refers to:-

To Health Protection Agency Guidance on Infection Control in Schools and other Child Care Settings –

England & Wales this can be found by using the link below

http://www.hpa.org.uk/web/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1203496946639

Roles & Responsibilities within this policy

The staff in pre-school will work in collaboration with the child, parents/carer. The child's key person will complete the ABCC Monitoring Behaviour Form and devise and implement a Behaviour Management Strategy.

The Manager must ensure that the staff team

- Are implementing the behaviour management strategy consistently and effectively
- Are aware of the biting triggers and are actively working to reduce these
- Are supporting the children and parent/carer involved in any biting incidents which may take place

Notifying Parents/Carers following a biting incident

Should a biting incident take place where the bite breaks the child's skin, a senior member of staff **MUST** contact the parent/carer of the child immediately. This phone call should be sensitive and give reassurance to the parent/carer and offer an explanation of the procedure which has been followed. You will need to advise the parents/carers to contact the child's GP, or the parent/carer may wish to take the child to Accident and Emergency immediately.

For any incidence of biting taking place at least one parent/carer will be contacted by a member of senior staff in the same manner as above and not discussed openly in front of other parents/carers and children. Parents/carers may ask you the name of the child who has bitten or been bit. You must explain that you cannot disclose this information as confidentiality must be maintained.

Staff may refer parents to this policy to provide further information for the parents.

Recording a biting incident

Following a biting incident you **MUST** complete an Incident Report Form for the person who has been bitten **and** the biter as well as an ABCC for the biter.

Key messages

- Staff should acknowledge that biting incidents can cause parents a great deal of distress and worry, and staff need to be sensitive and supportive at all times,
- Working in partnership with parents/carers is a key factor of any successful Behaviour Management Strategy. Staff should involve parents/carers every step of the way and explain that this should be implemented in the home as well as in the nursery,
- Staff should be aware that there is a range of triggers which can cause children to bite and should work as a team to identify these and reduce them.

Potential triggers for biting

- Exploration** – babies and young children explore the world around them using their senses, young children do not always know the difference between gnawing on a toy and biting someone,
- Teething** – swelling gums can be painful and cause discomfort; this can be relieved by biting or chewing on something,
- Cause and effect** – at around one year old, children become interested in what happens when they do something. For example they may bang a spoon on a table and discover it makes a noise. This behaviour may be repeated again and again to support their learning and development. This could be the case with biting as the child explores the reaction to biting someone,
- Attention** – when children are in a situation where they feel they are not receiving enough attention biting is a quick way of becoming the centre of attention,
- Independence** – toddlers are trying very hard to be independent using phrases such as “me do it” and “mine”. If a child wants a toy, or wants another child to do something this could lead to a biting incident,
- Frustration** – children can be frustrated by a number of things, such as long waiting times before or after transition times. Wanting to do something independently, but not quite being able to manage the task. Also not having the vocabulary to express themselves clearly. This can lead to biting as a way of dealing with this frustration,
- Environment** – an environment that does not provide challenge, or allows children to become uninterested can lead to displays of negative behaviour such as biting,
- Not having their needs met** – children who are tired, hungry, or uncomfortable may bite others as a way of expressing their emotions. All these triggers should be considered when completing an ABCC Monitoring Behaviour Form; it could be one of these factors or a combination of them.

Potential strategies to support the management of biting incidents

- Staff may need to increase the supervision of a child who is biting; this does not necessarily need to be one to one. It could be during particular times of the day, or by simply reducing the number of large group activities provided,
- Staff should make sure a child who is biting receives significant encouragement when displaying positive behaviour, and avoid excessive attention following an incident,
- Staff should evaluate the routine, and judge whether it is meeting the needs of the child. A good quality routine should provide experiences and activities both indoors and outdoors that have no waiting times. Whilst group activities should be for the benefit of the children and not as a holding exercise,

- Staff should plan activities which help release frustration such as physical outdoor play, and malleable experiences like play dough, gloop etc.
- Staff should provide cosy areas for children to relax in and activities which release tension such as splashing in water, digging in sand, and using sensory equipment.

Procedures to be followed;

In the event of a biting incident,

- The child who has been bitten should be the priority and should be comforted and given reassurance
- Once the child is calm the bite mark should then be washed with warm soapy water and wiped with an antiseptic wipe. You should explain to the child what is happening and support the child as this process may be painful
- If the wound is bleeding it should be allowed to bleed, as covering the wound can increase the risk of infection
- Staff should wear protective clothing when dealing with bodily fluids, (as advised by the Health Protection agency)
- The parents/carers of the child who has been bitten **MUST** be informed (see roles and responsibilities)
- If the bite has broken the skin then you will need to advise the parent to contact the child's GP or to take the child to Accident and Emergency immediately. If you wish to seek further advice the staff member or the parent may wish to contact the local Health Protection Agency (HPA)
- Wherever possible the child who has bitten should have their behaviour managed by their key person and the consequence of this behaviour should be explained in a way which is appropriate to the child's age and stage of development.
- The staff member who witnessed the incident should complete an Incident Report Form for all persons involved.
- Following recurring biting incidents, an ABCC Monitoring Behaviour Form **MUST** be completed and staff should discuss support and strategies needed.

This policy was adopted by Warbstow Pre-school on:

Reviewed on

To be reviewed

Signed on behalf of the pre-school

Mrs Katie Wilcox - Manager