



Greatstone Primary School

Biting Policy

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To be read in conjunction with	Behaviour Policy Complaints Policy Accidents and Incident Policy Keeping Children Safe in Education Foundation Stage Policy
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Biting Policy

Introduction

At Greatstone Nursery, we understand that biting is a common behaviour among children and can be a concern for both parents and staff. It can often be painful and frightening for the child who has been bitten and also frightening for the child who bites. Biting happens for different reasons with different children and under different circumstances. This is part of some children's development and can be triggered when they do not yet have the words to communicate their anger, frustration or need. We follow our positive behaviour policy to promote positive behaviour at all times.

Our Aims and Values:

At Greatstone Nursery, we aim to act quickly and efficiently when dealing with any case of biting. As a nursery we use various different strategies to prevent biting such as sensory activities, biting rings, adequate resources and staff who recognise when children need more stimulation or quiet times. We will treat each incident with care and patience, offering comfort to intense emotions, helping children to manage their feelings and talk about them to help resolve issues and promote understanding at an age appropriate level of their development. As a team, we use a consistent approach to incidents of biting:

Neutral reactions – “You bit me/child's name. Biting hurts.”

Setting limits – “It is okay to feel sad/cross/angry but we will not allow biting.”

Follow through – Move child away from the incident or remain in the areas with them whilst they calm.

Redirection – “When you feel like biting, you could...”

Teaching Skills – “When you are upset you can say...” At this point, the Zones of Regulation can be discussed in an age appropriate way.

Biting is a common developmental behaviour in babies and young children, especially under the age of three years old. While it can be upsetting for adults and other children, it's typically not a sign of aggression or poor behaviour, as a setting we understand this can be a form of communication or a response to developmental stages. When concerns do arise in a consistent or severe manner, as a setting we understand that this could signal:

- Speech, sensory, or emotional regulation difficulties
- Unmet needs or underlying stressors
- The need for additional support from a SENCo or child development specialist

In order to address any issues, we aim to:

Understand Individual Needs and Triggers

- Observe children to identify patterns: Is biting happening during transitions, group play, or tiredness?
- Use behaviour logs to track when, where, and why incidents occur.

- Know each child's temperament, communication style, and triggers (e.g., frustration, teething, overcrowding).

Support Emotional Regulation and Communication

- Teach and model emotion words (e.g., sad, angry, excited) with visuals through the Zones of Regulations
- Encourage non-verbal communication tools like picture cards or signs for children with limited speech.
- Acknowledge feelings and help children express them safely:
"I can see you're feeling cross. Let's find a better way to show that."

Offer Teething and Sensory Alternatives

- Provide teething toys for babies and toddlers needing oral sensory input.
- Introduce calming spaces with textured objects, stress balls, or sensory baskets.

Promote Calm and Predictable Routines

- Maintain consistent, calm daily routines to reduce anxiety and overstimulation.
- Use visual timetables and transition cues so children know what's coming next.
- Avoid overcrowded play spaces; create defined zones with clear paths.

Encourage Positive Peer Interactions

- Use small group play to model turn-taking, sharing, and cooperation.
- Provide duplicate toys during free play to reduce conflict over high-demand items.
- Intervene early in escalating situations to prevent frustration turning into biting.

Structure the Environment Thoughtfully

- Set up well-organised, calm areas for play, rest, and exploration.
- Ensure quiet corners or retreat spaces are available for overstimulated children.
- Use low shelves and clear layouts to promote independent choice and reduce frustration.

Role Model and Reinforce Positive Behaviour

- Demonstrate gentle hands, kind words, and problem-solving during interactions.
- Praise positive behaviour: *"You waited your turn – well done!"*
- Use social stories and puppets to rehearse scenarios in a safe way.

Staff Deployment and Supervision

- Position staff so they can observe and anticipate potential flashpoints.
- Offer extra support for children known to bite or be vulnerable to being bitten.

Involve Parents and Share Strategies

At Greatstone School and Nursery, we know that parents and carers know their children the best and therefore, understand that we need to work together when incidents of biting occur.

Any incidents will be dealt with in the same manner:

- Keep open, non-judgemental communication with families.
- Share what strategies are working in the setting.
- Encourage consistent approaches at home and at nursery.

Should an incident occur the following procedure will be followed:

1. The child who has been bitten will be the priority and should be comforted and given reassurance.
 2. Once the child is calm staff should check for any visual injury. If there is a bite mark, this should then be washed with warm soapy water and wiped with an antiseptic wipe. Staff will explain to the child what is happening and support the child as this process may be painful.
 3. If the skin is broken: -
 - If the wound is bleeding it should be allowed to bleed as covering the wound can increase the risk of infection.
 - Staff will wear gloves when dealing with bodily fluids.
 - In cases where the bite has broken the child's skin, a senior member of staff will contact the parent/carer of the child immediately. This phone call should be sensitive and give reassurance to the parent/carer and explain the procedure which has been followed. You will need to advise the parents/carers to contact the child's GP or visit Accident and Emergency. The member of staff who witnessed the incident should complete an Incident Form for all children involved.
- The Designated Safe Guard Team will be informed of all biting incidents.

Arrangements to Support this Policy

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 these are a range of triggers which can cause children to bite and should work as a team to identify these and reduce them.

Record Keeping Requirements for Biting Incidents

Incident Report Form

- Date and time of the incident
- Name of the child who bit (kept confidential from other parents)
- Name of the child who was bitten
- Description of the incident supported by a body map (location, what happened before, during, and after)
- Action taken (first aid, comforting the child, removing from situation)
- Staff members present or involved
- Any witnesses (if applicable)
- Follow-up actions (monitoring, discussions with parents, referral to SENCo if repeated)
- Signatures of staff and manager

Injury Record / Accident Book

- For the child who was bitten
- Record any first aid given, and ensure it matches your setting's accident procedure
- May be a separate entry to protect confidentiality

Behaviour Monitoring Log (if biting is repeated)

- Used to track patterns and triggers
- Includes frequency, context, and any support strategies implemented

Parent Communication Logs on the school system

- Record details of all discussions with parents (date, time, who spoke, summary of conversation)
- Ensure these are objective and professional

Confidentiality Guidelines

- Staff will never disclose the identity of the other child to parents involved.
- Only authorised staff (EYFS Lead, DSL Team and SENCo) will have access to behavioural or incident records.
- If sharing information with external professionals (e.g. health visitors, SEND services), ensure written consent is obtained from parents, unless safeguarding overrides this.
- Follow GDPR and data protection laws: ensure data is stored securely, kept accurate, and retained only as long as necessary.

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