



Bolton School Nursery

Procedure To Enable The Understanding and Management of Biting by Children

This procedure is part of the Behaviour Management Strategies in operation at Bolton School Nursery, which are outlined in the general Behaviour Management Policy. It has been devised because of the particular distress caused to parents when their child bites another or is bitten by another.

Action To Be Taken In the Events of a Child Biting or Attempting to Bite Others

An incident when your child bites another, or attempts to do so, is bound to cause you some distress and anxiety. This policy has been written in order to help you and your child through a developmental stage which is typical for many children and to reassure you about the Nursery's response to any such actions. The Nursery Nurses have identified four particular causes which may prompt a child to bite, as well as possible ways of preventing and correcting this behaviour.

These causes and the way in which the Nursery deals with them are:

BOREDOM

In the playrooms, to combat boredom (which can lead to inappropriate behaviour, including biting), we offer the young child numerous play opportunities and toys which are age and stage appropriate. Your child's key worker is constantly observing and assessing your child's interaction with planned activities and resources in order to maintain his or her interest whilst encouraging progression to the next developmental stage.

FRUSTATION

As the young child is developing an understanding of his or her environment as well as developing his or her language and beginning to understand the concept of sharing, there can be times when he or she attempts to communicate with staff and peers and is frustrated with the response. This can lead to inappropriate behaviour, including biting.

Offering ample play activities which are age and stage appropriate and reinforcing the concept of sharing can serve to support the frustrated child. Activities which allow the child to express his or her frustration prevent him/ her from biting others or assist the child when correcting this stage in his/her development. These activities may include: banging, tearing, destroying something legitimately, pinching or splashing.

ATTENTION SEEKING

In a group setting, a young child may feel the need to seek attention from others, especially if Nursery is new to him/her and s/he is familiar with one to one attention from adults.

If your child bites another as an act of attention seeking, his or her key worker will give him/her a clear indication that biting is inappropriate. The key worker will do this by gaining and maintaining eye contact and saying "No" firmly, once your child has been removed from the person s/he has bitten or attempted to bite.

If biting is indeed the result of a need to seek adult attention, the fact of showering the *bitten* child with attention can correct the biter's behaviour. Obviously, when a child is behaving appropriately, this good behaviour is rewarded by ample praise and affection given by our Nursery Nurses, including the child's key worker.

ANXIETY OR FEAR

Often inappropriate behaviour, such as biting, may be caused by anxiety or fear. It may be that there have been minor changes in your child's routine, such as the arrival of a new baby, a move of house, an absence of a parent/ carer or any alteration to his/her routine, including the disruption of his/her sleep patterns. These changes may be relatively insignificant for you and you may not even think to mention them to Nursery staff. Nonetheless, they may lead your child to respond by biting. In order to help the Nursery staff understand and monitor your child's behaviour, please ensure that you tell your key worker about any modifications to your child's routine. This will allow the key worker to pay particular attention to your child's interactions with others and to ensure that s/he treats those around him appropriately.

The parents of the child who has bitten will be advised of the incident. After any such display of inappropriate behaviour, staff in the Nursery will work to assist the child in controlling his/her behaviour by taking time to understand what has caused it and by putting in place appropriate preventative strategies.

If the Nursery Nurses in the playroom feel that these strategies are failing to prevent the child from biting again they would discuss the matter with parents in order to gain their consent to contact the child's health visitor and discuss the child's development with him/her.

Action to be Taken in the Event of a Child Being Bitten

If your child is bitten by another child in the Nursery, a member of staff will apply a cold compress to his/her wound for 10-20 minutes, if your child will allow this to happen. The incident will be entered into the accident book and you will be advised when you collect your child from nursery. Please be assured that we will inform the parents of the child who has bitten your son/ daughter about what has happened. On the other hand, the nursery has

a duty of care to all its families and so the biting child's identity will be protected at all times. We do not consider exclusion of the young child to be an appropriate course of action without involving and consulting with all agencies currently working with the child and their family.

Please feel free to contact the Nursery Manager or Senior Team Leaders if you wish to discuss our understanding and management of children who are going through this stage in their development.