

## BITING POLICY

### POLICY STATEMENT OF INTENT

At Wishing Well Family Centre we understand that there will be occasions when children may bite. Children bite for a variety of reasons, maybe because they are teething, frustrated, exploring using their mouth, asserting their independence, wanting to gain control maybe of a toy or they could be stressed. It may also be because they want to gain attention.

Biting is fairly common amongst young children and it is one of the things that worries adults most. Biting is often very painful and frightening for the child who is bitten. It can also be frightening for the child who bites because it upsets the other child.

### AIMS OF THE POLICY

We at Wishing Well Family Centre will make every effort to prevent children from biting each other in the first instance.

If one of the children in nursery bites another child or a member of staff we will:

- Stay calm and respond promptly and firmly
- React appropriately
- Record on an accident/incident form
- Take measures in order to prevent further incidents
- Recognise the reasons for biting

We will talk to the parent of the child who has bitten and also to the parent of the child who has been bitten. This will be recorded.

If the biting is persistent then arrangements will be made for the parent to meet and discuss ways of dealing with this situation depending on the age and stage of development of the child.

Plans may include -

- Planning ahead, if possible to avoid situations where a child might bite
- Following the child's movements to identify when they are most likely to bite;
- Observations on the child to establish what the child gets out of biting.
- Exchanging information with parents and staff e.g. useful information such as teething

If a child bites another child, the child who has been bitten will be comforted. If bite breaks skin the nursery advises parents to seek medical advice.

The child who bit will be removed from the situation and explained that biting is unacceptable behaviour. Staff will assess and treat the injury immediately and record the incident. Parents would also be informed by telephone immediately after the incident.

We are aware that children bite for a variety of reasons and if and when it happens, each incident will be treated as an individual case.

Staff will investigate the circumstances around the incident and act accordingly taking into account the ages and stages of development of the child.

We will try to understand the reason why the child is biting.

Is it happening because of:

- Tiredness
- Frustration
- Over stimulation from too much noise, too much going on
- Teething, causing a need to bite down on something
- Boredom
- Excessive excitement, the child being out of control
- The child experimenting with various ways of getting what he/she wants, and not knowing this is a hurtful and inappropriate way

While there are no perfect solutions, once we have an idea of what might be causing the biting, efforts will be made to reduce and hopefully eliminate it. Although if it is felt that a child may become a danger to the other children or staff he/she may be excluded.

These are some guidelines to help us achieve this:

- Ensuring that there is sufficient space so that children can spread out and have opportunities to play safely alone or with one other child.
- Providing a variety of appropriate materials and equipment for children to choose from.
- Being observant when there is a child in the group who is biting.
- Offer choices and try to avoid forcing all children to do the same thing at the same time.
- Being consistent in showing strong disapproval of biting.
- Ensuring that we have teething toys for babies and toddlers. Remembering that the child who is biting needs our support as much as the child who has been bitten.
- Working in a supportive way with parents to minimise biting.

We at Wishing Well Family Centre reserve the right to exclude a child for a period of time if the biting persists or we feel the other children are in danger. Parents will be given ample warning before we would enforce this measure.