

Biting Policy

This policy has been written following the guidance from Surrey Early Years Educational Effectiveness team.

Bus Stop Pre-School understands that biting among children is common and can be a concern for staff and parents/carers. Bus Stop Pre-School also understands that biting can be frightening for the child who has been bitten and that biting can happen for many different reasons and under different circumstances.

On joining Bus Stop parents/carers are talked through key points of the settings Behavioural Management policy and procedures. All policies are available in the policy booklet and on our website: www.busstoppreschool.co.uk

Children may bite for the following reasons:

Exploration - Babies and toddlers may bite when they are exploring something new and may not understand the difference of chewing a toy to chewing a person. Babies and toddlers learn through touching, smelling, listening and tasting objects.

Teething - Babies and toddlers who are teething may bite as they may be suffering from sore gums and may only relieve the discomfort by chewing on an object or person.

Cause and Effect - Babies and toddlers from 12 months olds begin to understand cause and effect for example, if they drop an object on the floor it will make a loud noise and if they bite someone, they get a response.

Attention - Children may bite to gain attention. Biting can be a quick way to get attention, although it is negative attention.

Imitation - Children often enjoy imitating their peers and if they see them bite, they may decide to try it out too.

Independence - Children can sometimes bite to gain control for example, if they want a toy or for someone to move, they may bite to get their desired result.

Frustration - Children may bite when they are frustrated for example, if they are unable to express their feelings or thoughts through words.

Stress or Overwhelmed - A child may bite when they feel stressed or overwhelmed and are unable to express how they feel, for example, if they have moved house, if they are starting Pre-School for the first time and are not used to being around a larger group of children.

If a child bites another child in the setting staff will separate the children and comfort the child who has been bitten and call another member of staff if first aid treatment is required. The staff member will explain age appropriately to the child who has bitten, that biting is unacceptable for example "we do not bite, biting hurts" and explain how their peer may be feeling for example "sad" and "sore". The child will be asked to say sorry (if age appropriate) and their play redirected. The staff member who dealt with the situation will complete an Accident/Incident report and will speak separately to the parent/carers of both children involved in the incident at the end of the day. The parents/carers are spoken to separately to aid confidentiality for the children and parents/carers.

If a child continually bites, a meeting will be held with the staff team to discuss appropriate and consistent behavioural techniques to be put in place. The child's parents/carers will also be invited in to the setting to discuss the possible reasons for why the child is biting and to work together to put in place strategies to be used at home and Pre-School to support the child. The staff team and parents/carers will meet regularly to discuss if/how the strategies are working.

If appropriate, parents/carers of a child who has been bitten, will be invited in to the setting to reassure them of the techniques being used and the support being given to the child who has been biting others. The child's identity will remain confidential.

Example strategy: Providing babies and toddlers with teething rings may prevent biting if they have appropriate toys to explore.

Example Strategy: A small change in the daily routine may prevent a child from biting if they usually bite when they are hungry or tired.

This policy was adopted in September 2012, to be reviewed annually.

This policy was reviewed in September 2024, to be reviewed in September 2025.

Owner: _____ Manager: _____