



BITING

Information for parents

Evidence suggests that up to a quarter of all children will bite others at some stage.

Stepping Stones Nursery understands that this is a difficult situation for parents whether it is your child that has been bitten or your child biting others. The situation is also distressing for the child and staff.

This document will give you more information about why biting may occur, how biting incidents are managed and what steps we take to protect your child's health and safety while in the nursery.

Why do some children bite?

- **Teething** – swelling gums can be painful and cause discomfort; this can be relieved by biting or chewing on something
- **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
- **Attention** – when children are in situations where they feel they are not receiving enough attention biting is a quick way of becoming the centre of attention
- **Frustration** – children can be frustrated by a number of things, such as; wanting to be independent and do things for themselves and not having the vocabulary to express themselves clearly. This can lead to biting as a way of dealing with this frustration

What does Stepping Stones do about biting?

- Our senior staff in the nursery will work with you, the child and the staff team to discover why your child is biting. This may have been an isolated incident, but we will always record when a child bites.
- If we can identify a possible trigger for the biting incident we will then make changes to reduce or remove the cause. For example – we may buy duplicates of favourite toys to stop disputes. We may increase the supervision of a child that is biting so that we can support them to find different ways to express themselves.
- We may encourage your child to take part in activities which help release frustration such as play dough or other physical activities.

What can you do about biting?

We appreciate that if your child has been bitten or has bitten someone, this can be distressing but please speak to staff about any concerns you may have in a calm manner.

Please remember that staff cannot give you any information about any other children in the nursery, and will not disclose who has bitten your child or who your child has bitten.

The key to putting a stop to any challenging behaviour is a partnership approach. Work with the nursery team and support any behaviour management techniques and use them at home as well as at nursery.

If a child's reoccurring behaviour is having a negative impact on your children's experience at nursery, we will work closely with all involved to reduce and eliminate these issues.

If all procedures are exhausted then we may have no choice but to re-evaluate if the nursery is able to meet this child's needs.

What happens if my child is bitten?

- Your child will be comforted and reassured
- We will apply a cold compress to the wound.
- If the bite has broken or bruised the skin, you will then be contacted by telephone so that you are aware that your child has been bitten
- If the bite has broken the child's skin, under the Health Protection Agency guidelines you will need to seek medical attention. This could be through your GP or an Accident and Emergency department
- When you collect your child there will be an accident form completed with all the information about the biting incident and any treatment given