

# Biting Policy



## Grass Roots Nursery Group

### 1. Purpose

Biting can be a normal part of early development, particularly for babies and toddlers who are still learning to communicate, regulate emotions, and manage impulses. Our aim is to respond to biting calmly, consistently, and supportively, ensuring the wellbeing of **both** the child who has been bitten and the child who has bitten.

This policy outlines how we keep children safe, how we work in partnership with families, and how we use developmentally informed practice to reduce biting incidents over time.

### 2. Statutory Responsibilities (EYFS)

In line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), we must:

- **Safeguard children's welfare** by responding promptly to injuries and ensuring appropriate supervision.
- **Promote positive behaviour** through modelling, guidance, and supportive strategies.
- **Record accidents and incidents** accurately and share them with parents.
- **Work in partnership with parents** to support children's development and wellbeing.
- **Use the key person system** to provide secure relationships and consistent support.
- **Consider SEND needs** and seek additional support where appropriate.

This policy ensures we meet these statutory duties while maintaining a nurturing, relational approach.

### 3. Our Approach

We recognise that:

- Biting is a common developmental stage and often linked to communication, frustration, sensory needs, or emotional overwhelm.
- Children who bite are not "naughty"; they need support, connection, and guidance.
- Children who are bitten need comfort, reassurance, and sensitive care.
- Families need clear, consistent communication and reassurance that incidents are handled professionally and confidentially.

Our practice is grounded in:

- **Emotional safety** — responding without shame, blame, or punitive language.
- **Individualised support** — understanding each child's triggers, needs, and developmental stage.
- **Consistency** — ensuring all staff follow the same procedures.
- **Confidentiality** — never naming other children involved in an incident.
- **Positive reinforcement** — modelling and celebrating gentle hands, kind interactions, and communication skills.
- **Reflective practice** — reviewing patterns, environments, and routines to reduce triggers.

### 4. Procedures

#### A. When a Bite Occurs

1. **Support the child who has been bitten**
  - Comfort and support the child who has been bitten
  - Administer first aid if needed.
  - Offer reassurance and help them feel safe.
2. **Respond to the child who has bitten**
  - Remove them from the situation calmly.
  - Use simple, age-appropriate language:

*“Biting hurts. I can’t let you bite. Let’s find another way.”*

- Avoid shaming or punitive responses.
  - Support them to regulate (deep breaths, sensory tools, comfort from key person).
3. **Record the incident**
- Complete an incident form for both children.
  - Use factual, neutral language.
  - Do not name the other child.
4. **Inform parents**
- Parents of the bitten child are informed **on the same day**.
  - Parents of the child who bit are also informed **on the same day**.
  - Share what happened factually, without blame or judgement.
  - Reassure both families that biting is common and being managed sensitively.

## **B. Identifying Causes and Preventative Measures**

We observe each child closely to understand what may be contributing to biting behaviour. This includes:

- Reviewing the environment for possible triggers such as crowding, busy transitions, or overstimulation.
- Considering developmental factors including teething, communication frustration, sensory needs, or emotional overwhelm.
- Monitoring patterns such as time of day, specific peers, or particular activities.
- Adjusting routines, staffing, or the physical environment where needed.
- Providing sensory alternatives such as chewelry, cold teethingers, or crunchy snacks.
- Increasing adult presence and connection during high-risk moments.

These preventative measures help reduce the likelihood of biting and support children to express themselves in safer, more regulated ways.

## **C. Ongoing Support**

When biting becomes frequent or persistent, we provide additional, individualised support. This includes:

- Creating a simple, tailored support plan with the child’s key person and room leader.
- Reviewing strategies weekly and adapting them based on observations and progress.
- Involving the SENCo if patterns continue or if developmental needs are identified.
- Seeking external advice where appropriate, such as from health visitors or early years specialists.
- Working closely with parents to ensure consistent approaches between home and nursery.

This ongoing support ensures that children receive the right help at the right time, and that families feel informed, reassured, and included.

## **5. Roles & Responsibilities**

### **Key Person**

- Builds secure relationships with both children involved.
- Monitors patterns and supports emotional regulation.
- Communicates with parents sensitively and consistently.

### **Room Leader**

- Ensures procedures are followed.
- Supports staff to implement strategies.
- Reviews patterns and environmental factors.

## Manager

- Oversees incident reporting and communication.
- Leads escalation if biting becomes persistent.
- Ensures staff training and consistency.

## Parents/Carers

- Share relevant information (teething, sleep, changes at home).
- Work with staff on agreed strategies.
- Support consistent messaging at home.

## 6. Links to Other Policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Accident & Incident Reporting Policy
- SEND Policy
- Partnership with Parents Policy
- Supervision Policy

## 7. Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed **annually**, or sooner if required due to changes in legislation, guidance, or practice.