

40- Policy and Procedure for Incidents of Biting.

Biting causes more upset feelings than any other behaviour in childcare programmes. Because it seems so primitive, we tend to react differently to biting than we do to hitting, grabbing or other aggressive acts. It is upsetting and potentially dangerous; it is important for carers and parents to address the behaviour when it occurs. Though it is "normal" for infants and toddlers to mouth people and toys from another child.

Biting is natural behaviour for very young children. They often do not yet have the social awareness when it is directed against others. A young child is still limited in their ability to express themselves through language. They are socially unsophisticated and not attuned to feelings of peers and the finer points of social interaction.

Furthermore, in the very young child, teething may be occurring and like the baby who "gums" objects, the child may omit new add be trying to relieve the discomfort in one way or another.

Here at The Cornerstone Under 5s we strive to set up an environment that will serve to decrease incidents of biting, (adult/child ratios etc.). However, despite these best efforts, whenever young children are grouped together it is inevitable that biting will occasionally occur.

Most biting occurs between the ages of 13 and 30 months and should stop around the age of three. At age three, if the biting continues to happen, it may be a more serious situation that may require professional help since after the age of three, biting often accompanies other behaviours such as hitting.

If biting occurs staff will:

- Respond calmly
- Comfort the child who has been bitten
- Talk to the child who has bitten, making it clear that the behaviour is unacceptable in an age appropriate way.
- Comfort the child who has bitten, the child may be shocked at his/her actions and the response from the child who was bitten.
- Reconcile the children
- Fill out an incident report detailing date and time of the incident, circumstances of the incident, nature of the injury and treatment given

This Policy was agreed at an Under 5s AGM meeting held on:..14.5.2019.....(Date)

Signed on behalf of the Pre-School:(Chair)