



Maeda Gakuen

Managing Children's Behaviour: Biting

Policy Statement

Many young children use biting as a means of attention seeking, responding to a trigger from another child or even experimenting with how it feels. Although this behaviour is unwanted and unacceptable it is, nonetheless, a normal stage of child development. Children often bite when their language skills are not developed enough to vocalise their feelings and is a way of expressing themselves. Whilst some children bite, others may smack, push, pull hair, scratch or have temper tantrums where they scream for attention. As children develop other ways to communicate their feelings, these unwanted behaviours usually diminish or disappear.

Procedures

Maeda Gakuen Yochien follows the following procedures in the event of a child being bitten:

- Comfort the child who has been bitten
- Remove the child who has bitten from the scene.
- Explain firmly to the child who has bitten that they have hurt and upset the other child and keep the children apart for several minutes.
- If the child demonstrates repeated bouts of biting or other unwanted behaviour they might be prevented from taking part in an activity but will be sat in company of the key worker who shall help them see how their behaviour has impacted them and others.
- We do not exclude children as we believe they are too young to understand the consequence of their action.
- We complete an accident form and inform both sets of parents what has occurred
- We do not tell parents the names of the children involved, although as children get older they will sometimes tell parents themselves.
- We discuss strategies for dealing with such incidents if they occur at home or elsewhere.

Parents are understandably upset when their child returns home with bite marks and it is often worse for the parent than for the child – who will often have forgotten about the incident. Some children do bruise more easily and the mark may last for several days, whereas in other children the mark may disappear within 24 hours. Staff are extremely vigilant, but there are occasions that biting may take place without a member of staff being alerted. This may happen if a child does not make a fuss or if a child is bitten through clothing and it has not been seen. Biting may be unprovoked and it is difficult to stop as staff cannot usually predict that a child is about to bite. We do take biting and other unwanted behaviours very seriously and will always work together with parents to try to prevent this happening.

This policy was revised in August 2017 by Nikita Phadnavis (Manager) of Maeda Gakuen Yochien.