



## **1.2 BITING POLICY**

Brockham Green Nursery is very aware that biting can be fairly common among children and this is a concern for staff.

Biting can be painful and frightening for the child who has been bitten. It can also be frightening for the child who bites, because it upsets the child and can make adults cross. Biting happens for different reasons with different children and under different circumstances.

### **Some of the reasons why children bite:**

- **Exploration** –children learn by touching, smelling, hearing and tasting. Tasting or mouthing objects is something that all children do. Young children do not always understand the difference between gnawing on a toy and biting a person.
- **Attention** – Older children may sometimes bite to get attention. When children are in situations where they feel that they are not receiving enough attention they often find a way to make others take notice. Being ignored is not fun and biting is a quick way to become the centre of attention, even if it is negative attention.
- **Imitation** – Older children love to imitate others. Watching others and trying to do what they do is a great way to learn things. Some children see others bite and decide to try it out themselves.
- **Independence** - Children are trying so hard to be independent, 'mine' and 'me do it' are favourite words. Learning to do things independently, making choices and needing control over a situation are part of growing up and biting is a powerful way to control others. If children want a toy or want someone to leave them alone or move out of their way, biting is a quick way to get what you want.
- **Frustration** – Young children experience a lot of frustration and growing up is a struggle. Children do not always have good control of their bodies and cannot always express themselves. At times when they are unable to find the words to express their feelings, they resort to hitting, pushing or biting.
- **Stress** – A child's world can be stressful. A lack of interesting things to do or not enough interaction with adults is a stressful situation for children. Children also experience traumatic events in their lives, such as bereavement, moving

to a new home or even starting a new nursery. Biting is one way to express feelings and relieve tension. Young children are not always able to fully understand what they are feeling so they act up.

### **When a child is bitten**

- Staff would remove the child who had done the biting and explain that they do not bite other children; it hurts and is not what we do at nursery. The child would be asked to say they are sorry.
- The child would be allowed to go and play in a different area.
- Staff would write up the incident in the child's section of the accident/incident file and speak to the parent at the end of the session. The parent would be asked to sign the incident form.
- Another member of staff would see to the child that has been bitten, comfort the child and administer first aid if necessary.
- Staff would write the incident in the accident and incident file in the child's individual section, their parent would be spoken to when they collect their child and asked to sign the form.
- Staff would look at what happened, why it happened and do what they can to prevent it happening again.
- Staff would discuss the children involved and if there is an issue between the children, the parents will be spoken to.
- Staff will be vigilante and keep an eye on the children and step in and prevent anything happening.
- Staff will talk to the children about appropriate behaviour in the nursery and give the children different ways of dealing with situations which is not biting.
- Staff will try and prevent biting in the nursery by look at why biting is happening, is the child tired, hungry or stressed. We would look at ways to help the child.

Staff talk to parents about any behavioural problems when their child starts the nursery.