

Evidence suggests that up to a quarter of all children will bite others at some stage. The Howard Nursery School understands that this is a difficult situation for parents whether it is your child that has been bitten or your child biting others.

This policy 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 School.

### **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 chewing 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 communication to express themselves clearly. This can lead to biting as a way of dealing with this frustration.

### **What does The Howard Nursery School do about biting?**

Our Behaviour Management Officer in the Nursery School will work with parents/carers, the child and the staff team to understand why your child is biting. It may be an isolated incident, but we will always use a Behaviour Form (Appendix 1) to investigate contributing factors. An Incident form will also be completed for the individual who has been bitten.

If the Behaviour form identifies a possible trigger for the biting incident we will endeavour to find a way to support the child to not bite again, using 'Reflection' Time. We may begin using an ABCC Behaviour Chart if biting becomes a recurrent behaviour. Refer to Behaviour Management Policy.

### **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.

We endeavour to work in partnership with parents/carers to put a stop to un-wanted behaviour such as biting and therefore will come up with a joint Behaviour Action Plan which is then reviewed after a short period of time.

### **What happens if my child is bitten?**

- Your child will be comforted and reassured.
- The bite wound will then be cleaned with warm water and sterile gauze.
- If the bite has broken or bruised the skin, first aid treatment will be administered.
- 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 Incident form completed with all the information about the biting incident and any treatment given.