

Biting Policy

At The Orchard Day Nursery Kingston, we are committed to promoting positive behaviour and supporting children's emotional wellbeing through nurturing, respectful and developmentally appropriate practice.

We recognise that biting is a common behaviour in the early years and is usually a form of communication rather than intentional aggression. Young children may bite because they are unable to express their emotions verbally, are overwhelmed, frustrated, excited, anxious, tired, seeking sensory input, teething or learning about cause and effect. Some children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may also use biting as a means of communication.

Whilst we understand that biting is a normal stage of development for some children, we also recognise that it can be upsetting for all those involved. Our priority is to ensure the immediate safety and wellbeing of every child whilst working proactively to understand and reduce the behaviour.

This policy should be read alongside our:

- Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Accident and Incident Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Working in Partnership with Parents Policy.

Preventing Biting

Our practitioners build warm, responsive relationships with children so that they know them well and can recognise changes in behaviour, emotional regulation or communication.

To reduce the likelihood of biting, we will:

- Provide consistent routines and secure attachments through the key person approach
- Support children to recognise and express their emotions using age-appropriate language, stories, visual prompts and play
- Ensure children have sufficient space, resources and opportunities to play without unnecessary conflict
- Provide duplicate popular resources where possible
- Create calm spaces where children can regulate their emotions when feeling overwhelmed
- Closely supervise children during known transition times or high-risk periods

- Provide appropriate sensory resources for children who seek oral stimulation, such as teething aids or other suitable alternatives
- Work in partnership with parents to ensure consistency between home and nursery
- Seek advice from the SENCO or external professionals where appropriate.

Responding to a Biting Incident

If a biting incident occurs, practitioners will remain calm and respond immediately.

The child who has been bitten will always receive immediate attention and reassurance. Staff will administer appropriate paediatric first aid, comfort the child and assess the injury. Where appropriate, the area will be cleaned and monitored for signs of infection.

The child who has bitten will also be supported calmly and respectfully. Staff will explain clearly, using language appropriate to the child's age and stage of development, that biting hurts other people and is not a safe way to communicate.

Practitioners will avoid labelling or shaming the child and instead help them begin to understand alternative ways of expressing their feelings or needs.

Where appropriate, children may be supported to show kindness or empathy towards the other child, such as helping to fetch a favourite toy or offering comfort if this is appropriate and welcomed.

Communication with Parents

Open and honest communication with families is essential.

Following any biting incident:

- The parents or carers of both children will be contacted by telephone as soon as reasonably practicable on the day of the incident, rather than waiting until collection. This ensures families are informed promptly and have an opportunity to ask questions or share relevant information.
- At collection, practitioners will provide a full verbal handover to both families.
- The child who has been bitten will have an Accident Record completed.
- The child who has bitten will have a separate Behaviour/Incident Record completed.

Both records will accurately describe the incident, actions taken and any follow-up support. Records will maintain confidentiality at all times, and the identity of the other child will never be disclosed.

Parents will be asked to sign the relevant documentation.

Recording and Monitoring

Every biting incident will be reviewed by the Room Leader or Nursery Manager.

Where a child bites on more than one occasion, a **Biting Observation and Room Tracker** will be introduced to help identify any emerging patterns or triggers.

The tracker will record:

- The date and time of each incident
- The room or specific area where the incident occurred
- Which members of staff were present
- What happened immediately before the incident
- Environmental factors, such as noise levels, transitions or group size
- Resources involved
- Possible triggers
- The child's emotional presentation
- Actions taken by staff
- Outcomes and effectiveness of interventions.

The purpose of the tracker is not to blame the child but to enable practitioners to identify patterns and make informed adjustments to the environment, staffing or routines.

The Nursery Manager will review this information regularly to evaluate whether additional support or interventions are required.

Supporting Children

Where biting becomes repeated or persistent, the child's Key Person, Room Leader and Nursery Manager will work closely with parents to develop an individual support plan.

This may include:

- Reviewing daily routines
- Increasing emotional support during known trigger times
- Adapting the environment
- Introducing communication strategies
- Providing additional sensory resources
- Increasing adult supervision
- Implementing individual behaviour support strategies
- Involving the nursery SENCO where appropriate.

Parents will be fully involved in planning support and will be reassured that the nursery's approach is supportive, non-judgemental and centred on the child's individual needs.

SEND Considerations

Where biting appears to be linked to a child's communication, sensory or developmental needs, the nursery will work closely with parents, the SENCO and, where appropriate, external professionals to ensure suitable strategies are implemented.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to support the child whilst continuing to ensure the safety and wellbeing of others.

Medical Treatment

Where a bite breaks the skin, practitioners will administer appropriate first aid immediately.

Both the child who has bitten and the child who has been bitten will have the affected area cleaned thoroughly to minimise the risk of infection.

Parents will be informed immediately by telephone.

If the injury is severe, difficult to manage, shows signs of infection or requires further medical attention, parents will be advised to seek medical advice or emergency treatment as appropriate.

Where a member of staff or child sustains a serious human bite resulting in significant skin damage or other complications, medical advice will be sought immediately.

Reviewing Practice

Repeated biting incidents will always prompt a review of:

- Staffing deployment
- Supervision levels
- Room layout
- Routines and transitions
- Children's emotional wellbeing
- Environmental factors
- Availability of resources
- Support strategies already in place.

The nursery believes that understanding *why* a child is biting is far more effective than simply responding to the behaviour itself.

Monitoring

The Nursery Manager will regularly review biting records, room trackers and incident reports to identify any wider patterns across the setting and ensure that preventative strategies remain effective.

This policy will be reviewed annually, following any significant incident, or sooner if changes to legislation, safeguarding guidance or the EYFS occur.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>6th August 2026</i>	F.Joyce	<i>December 2026</i>