



## Biting Policy

### Aim of the Policy

*Green Roots Biting Incidents Policy is in place to ensure parent/guardians are aware of the strategies that may be employed within Green Roots to manage the common issue of biting.*

Many children go through developmental stages of investigation and exploration of the environment that others can find unacceptable or distressing. Biting is an example of this and is particularly prevalent in children whose language skills are only just emerging and can often be an expression of frustration because they have not yet acquired the skills to express what they are feeling. It is important that team members and parent/guardians work together to establish common strategies for addressing this behaviour both at home and within the Centre.

Responses applied in cases of biting will take into account the age and developmental stage of the individual child.

Green Roots will follow these procedures in the event of a child being bitten:

- We will immediately comfort the bitten child and administer appropriate first aid on the bite.
- Practitioners know it is important to acknowledge that it is the behaviour that is unacceptable and not the child.
- Distraction methods will be used to manage and pre-empt where possible potentially unacceptable behaviour.
- Verbal labelling of children with such terms as *naughty* will not be used and children's behaviour will not be a topic of discussion within the room.
- If age and developmentally appropriate the child who bit will be asked to apologise to the child/adult who has been hurt and perhaps suggest a way to make amends.
- We will always inform the parent/guardian of the child that has bitten and explore with them their strategy for dealing with such incidents if they occur at home or elsewhere and also ask them to sign an incident form, in order to agree a consistent response.
- We will always inform the parent/guardian of the child that has been bitten and ask them to sign an Accident Form.

- Team members will not disclose the identity of the child that has bitten as it is vital to maintain the confidentiality of the children concerned. Green Roots will follow the additional steps in the event of persistent incidents of biting:

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- We will discuss with team members the incidents concerned and evaluate and monitor the situation for the future.
- The child's parent/guardians will be asked to meet with the Inclusion Coordinator to discuss strategies for home.
- The biter will be 'shadowed' and observed by a team member for periods of the day to try and prevent incidents before they occur and to try and establish 'patterns' in the behaviour that can then be avoided.
- The Inclusion Coordinator will be informed and details of biting will be recorded in the child's file, details of which will be shared with the child's parent/guardian.
- If age appropriate, we may accelerate a room move for the child so they are mixing with older children that they may be less likely to bite.
- In cases where biting is persistent and a cause of serious concern, we will enlist the help of other professionals eg. health visitor, area Special Educational Needs Coordinator or Early Years Consultant to look closely at any other contributory factors.
- The Inclusion Coordinator who can support colleagues to implement our strategies for persistent biters. Where it is deemed necessary, this support will be called upon.