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8. BITING POLICY

Promoting positive behaviour

Statement

At l'Ecole du Parc, we follow a positive behaviour policy at all times. We understand that children may use certain behaviours, such as biting, to communicate their feelings and needs. Biting is a common type of behaviour that some children use to help them make sense of the world around them, and to manage interactions with others. However, it is often perceived as a concern, both by the parents of the child who has caused the bite and of the child who has been bitten.

Biting can be triggered by a range of reasons such as:

- Not having the words to communicate their anger, frustration or tiredness
- Sensory needs: young children explore the world around them using their senses and do not always know the difference between chewing on a toy and biting someone
- Independence – young children are trying very hard to be independent using phrases such as “me do it” and “mine”. If a child wants a toy, or wants another child to do something, this could lead to a biting incident.
- Sometimes biting can be due to a Special Educational Need and/or Disability

Every child is treated as an individual and we work with families to support all children's individual needs. With this in mind, it will be necessary to implement different strategies depending on the needs of the child carrying out the biting.

Strategies to prevent biting incidents

As part of our wider behaviour management approach, we use many strategies to reinforce positive behaviour. (Please see our Behaviour Management policy).

L'Ecole du Parc uses the following strategies to help prevent biting:

- Activities and stories that help support children to recognise emotions and feelings and empathise with characters and events. The children are encouraged to recognise and express a wide range of emotions and work on taking responsibility for their actions.
- Enabling environment : the environment offers plenty of stimulating opportunities for sensory play, both planned and in free access (sensory toys baskets, malleable and soft toys,...), indoors and outdoors activities which offers plenty of opportunities for physical development, a clear routine and expectations, and a quiet area in each classroom.
- Additional resources for children who have oral stimulation needs, such as, biting rings. Vigilant staff that know the children well and are able to identify where children need more stimulation or quiet times.
- Adequate resources are provided and, where possible, more than one resource or toy is sought to minimise conflicts.
- Individual, one-to- one and small group times so that each child received positive attention

- The teaching team is given enough time for observations and have a strong knowledge of the tools available to identify the triggers and to implement strategies to remove the unwanted behaviour (ABC approach).
- Quiet/cosy areas for children who are feeling overwhelmed to go to

By promoting the development of social skills and by intervening and supporting children who are experiencing difficulty, we can prevent isolated challenging behaviour from becoming a permanent pattern.

Procedure in the event of a biting incident:

Biting is painful and frightening for the child who has been bitten. It is also frightening for the child who has bitten. At l'Ecole du Parc, we aim to act quickly and efficiently when dealing with any case of biting.

1/ Management of the incident by the teaching team

The adult will comfort the bitten child and reassure them that they did not do anything wrong. The staff member will explain to the child what happened and support them with their feelings and emotions.

The child who has bitten will also receive support in an effort to deal with the child's emotions, to help resolve issues and to promote understanding. Wherever possible, the consequence of this behaviour should be explained in a way which is appropriate to the child's age and stage of development ("X is crying and is sad because it hurts"). The child will only be asked to say sorry if their social skills are developed enough. Suitable alternatives could be in the form of giving the child who has been bitten a favourite book or "doudou".

We do not use time-outs.

Staff may need to use physical intervention to pre-empt an imminent incident of biting. This is usually in the form of removing a child swiftly but gently from the biting situation.

2/ First aid

If the skin is not broken, the member of staff will apply an ice pack and parents of both children will be informed at the end of the day or sooner depending on the injury.

If the skin is broken and if the wound is bleeding, a first aider will follow our first aid policy and apply pressure on the wound. The wound will then be cleaned with warm soapy water and covered. A member of the office will contact the parent/carer of the child immediately. This phone call should be sensitive and give reassurance to the parent/carer and offer an explanation of the procedure which has been followed.

In both cases, the staff member who witnessed the incident will complete an accident report for the child who has been bitten.

3/ Communication to parents

Parents will be reassured that biting is common and part of children development. In particular, the parents of the child who bit will be reassured that it is part of a child's development and not made to feel that it is their fault.

Communication must be handled in a sensitive and confidential manner and not discussed openly in front of other parents/carers and children. Parents/carers may ask the name of the child who has bitten / who was bitten. Our procedure is that we do not disclose this information. We provide reassurance to the parents that all parents have been informed and that the incident is being dealt with.

In case of recurring incidents, the parents of the child who has bitten will be invited to a meeting where the member of staff will share their observations (ABC approach). Working in partnership with parents/carers is a key factor of any successful strategy. Staff should involve parents/carers every step of the way and explain that action plans should be implemented in the home as well as in school.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
29/09/2022	<i>Louise de Chateauvieux and Eva Toth</i>	30/09/2023