



# The Early Years Centre Nursery

## Biting Policy

2023 - 24

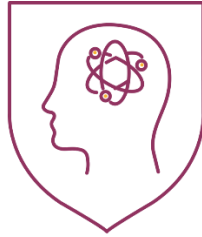
**Date last reviewed** | June 2023

**Review period** | Annually

**Lead Reviewer(s)** | Nursery Manager



*“Empowering students to aspire, create and excel in the world that is, so they can help create the world that will be”*



The Science of Learning



Social Enterprise



Student Agency and Innovation

## 1. Introduction

Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary display of behaviour and commonly occurs between one and two years of age. Evidence suggests that up to a quarter of all children will bite others at some stage. At the GEMS Wellington Academy Nursery we understand that this is a difficult situation for parents whether it is your child that has been bitten or your child biting others.

## 2. Aims and Objectives

These guidelines aim:

- To provide support a better understanding about why biting may occur
- To explain how biting incidents are managed.
- To outline the steps to be taken to protect a child’s health and safety while at the Nursery.
- To ensure that there is a consistent approach from all teaching staff in the Nursery.

## 3. 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 gnawing 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 vocabulary to express themselves clearly. This can lead to biting as a way of dealing with this frustration.

#### **4. What the Nursery expects of parents:**

- We appreciate that it can be distressing for parents if their child has been bitten or has bitten someone. It is important that we encourage parents to speak to staff about any concerns they may have in a calm manner.
- Staff need to explain that we cannot give any information about any other children involved in any incidents, and we will not disclose who has bitten a child or who their child has bitten.
- The key to putting a stop to any challenging behaviour is by using a partnership approach. We encourage parents to work with the education team to support any behaviour management strategies and use these at home as well as at pre-school.
- If a child's reoccurring behaviour is having a negative impact on their child's experience at the Nursery, we will work closely with all involved to reduce and eliminate these issues.
- If all procedures are exhausted then we may have no choice but to re-evaluate if the Nursery is able to meet the child's needs.

#### **5. What the Nursery expects of staff:**

- It is the responsibility of the education team to investigate why a child is biting. This may have been an isolated incident, but we will always use a Monitoring Behaviour Form (Annex 1: Monitoring Behaviour Form) to look at what happened just before the incident.
- If the form identifies a possible trigger for the biting incident we will then make changes to reduce or remove the cause. We may increase the supervision of a child that is biting so that we can support them to find different ways to express themselves.
- We may encourage the child to take part in activities which help release frustration such as engaging in sensorial play activities or other physical activities.



## 6. What happens if a child is bitten?

- If we see a child biting or attempting to bite another child, we will interrupt with a firm “No. We do not bite here.” Staff shall remain calm and will not overreact throughout the incident.
- The bitten child will be comforted and reassured.
- The child who has bitten will be removed from the immediate play space to another environment.
- The bitten child will be taken to the clinic.
- The parents of both children will be notified about each incident. A summary of the communication will be recorded on PULSE each time. If the bite has broken or bruised the skin, parents will be contacted by telephone by the teacher before pick up time so that they are aware that their child has been bitten and the circumstance.
- When parents collect their child, the child’s lead teacher will complete the hand over to the parent with all the information about the biting incident and any treatment given. If this member of staff is not available, this information will be shared with another member of the team who will inform parents.
- If this is a recurring situation, the child who has bitten will be monitored closely to see what the triggers are for biting. Equally, if a child is bitten more than once we will look closely at the child’s behaviour to see if there are any triggers that provoke such behaviour.
- **After 3 biting occurrences** (an occurrence may refer to more than 1 biting incident if the bites took place within a short period of time, triggered by the same situation), a meeting will be arranged with the teacher, to discuss triggers and supporting techniques. After **another 2 occurrences**, the teacher, Nursery Manager and SENCo will arrange a meeting with the parents to discuss a behaviour plan. Parents will be expected to work in partnership to address the unwanted behaviour.
- Should the situation be deemed serious enough, The Academy may decide that they are no longer able to meet the additional needs of the child which could result in a child’s placement being withdrawn.
- **The teacher informs the education team of the Nursery about relevant steps in the process so that all staff members work collaboratively.**



Annex 1

**Monitoring Behaviour Form**

Name of child being monitored: \_\_\_\_\_

DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff name: \_\_\_\_\_

Occurrence* No:	Date:	Time:
Context (please provide details about events leading up to incident including activity type, resources available)		
Group size:		
Possible Triggers		
How did the child who had bitten behave immediately after the incident?		
Action taken by staff		
Was the action effective?      Yes / No		
Incident relayed to the parents of all parties      Yes / No		
Entry on Pulse completed Yes / No		
Signed by staff member:		

\*An occurrence means one or more incidents within a very short period of time. For example, a small group of children all try to get hold of the same toy, one child bites 2 other children. The 2 biting incidents count as 1 occasion as they are triggered by the same situation.