



BITING

WAYS TO HELP

Adults can also model appropriate behaviours like saying to the child that has been bitten ‘I am sorry that this has happened to you, it is ok to be upset’ or to the child that has bitten ‘It is ok, I know you didn’t mean to hurt... but we don’t bite’.

Teach them words to use- *Help your child learn simple words or signs to show their feelings, like “I’m angry” or “I need help”. Practising these can help them use words instead of biting.*

Offer sensory options- *If your child bites because they need sensory input, give them safe things to chew on, like chewy toys or foods with different textures.*

We know it can be worrying and upsetting when a child bites another child. As parents, you might wonder why this happened and what it means for your child. It is important to know that biting is common in young children and is usually not meant to be mean or aggressive. Biting is often a sign that children are learning how to express their feelings and manage their emotions.

WHY CHILDREN BITE?

Children bite for many reasons, often without knowing the effect it has on others. They might bite because they are feeling something they cannot say, like frustration, fear, or excitement. Sometimes, biting happens because a child feels overwhelmed or needs sensory input, like the feeling of biting something.

A survey found that 38% of parents said their child had bitten another child at least once. This shows biting is a normal part of growing up.

WHY JUST SAYING “STOP” OR GETTING ANGRY DOESN’T HELP?

When a child bites, it is usually because of their feelings, not because they planned to hurt someone. Just saying “Stop” or getting angry does not help the child understand why they bit or what they could do differently next time. It is better to stay calm and help them learn how to manage their emotions. Research shows that young children often do not understand the results of their actions at this stage of development.



Keep a routine- Make sure your child has a routine that includes active play, rest and quiet time.

A regular routine can help lower stress and stop biting.

Show empathy and understanding- Help your child understand feelings by saying things like, "It's okay to feel upset, but we don't bite to show our feelings".



Briary Pre-School
Greenhill Road West,
CT6 7RS
Tel: 01227 742050



WHY MAKING A CHILD APOLOGISE ISN'T HELPFUL?

Forcing a young child to apologise often doesn't work because they may not understand why they are saying sorry. Also, the child who was bitten may not want the child who bit them to come close straight away. Instead of forcing an apology, we suggest finding other ways to help the child who was bitten feel better, like a kind gesture- but only if the child who was bitten wants it.

HOW WE SUPPORT ALL CHILDREN

In our early years setting, we want every child to feel understood and supported. When a child bites, we try to find out why and respond with kindness. We work to prevent biting by providing quiet spaces, using helpful language, and offering activities that help children feel calm.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOUR CHILD BITES?

Stay calm, if your child bites, try to stay calm. Think about why they might have done it, were they tired, hungry, upset, or overwhelmed? Understanding why they bite can help you prevent it in the future.

HOW WE TALK TO PARENT'S ABOUT BITING INCIDENTS

We know it can be hard when biting happens, both for parents of the child who was bitten. We have these conversations privately and with care. Our goal is to explain what happened, share the steps we have taken, and work with you to support both children. We do not expect consequences at home; we focus on helping children learn and grow.

Moving forward together

We are here to help all our families through these stages of development. If you have any worries or need advice, please reach out to us. Together, we can help our children learn to handle their feelings, build good relationships and find positive ways to communicate.