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## WHEN CHILDREN BITE POLICY

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Biting is a behaviour that can be upsetting for parents, children, and practitioners. It is important to remember that babies and young children are not born with the ability to self-regulate. They rely on adults to support them through **co-regulation** as they learn to manage their emotions and behaviours.

Biting is a common stage in early childhood, and clear guidelines are in place to manage incidents consistently and calmly.

### Responding to a Biting Incident

- **First priority:** The child who has been bitten will be comforted immediately.
- **Managing the child who has bitten:** Wherever possible, another adult will support the child who has bitten. If only one adult is present, the bitten child will always receive attention first.
- **Calm response:** The child who has bitten will be dealt with calmly. Overreacting may reinforce biting if it is attention-seeking behaviour.

### Understanding the Behaviour

- Young children are sensory learners, and biting may be linked to **sensory-seeking behaviour** or unmet needs.
- Staff will record the **antecedents** (what happened before) and carry out observations to identify possible triggers.
- Information will be shared with parents/carers so that we can work together to plan strategies to support the child.

### Supporting Both Children

- Once the immediate upset has been managed, staff may bring the children together to help the child who has bitten understand the impact of their actions.

- The child may see the hurt they have caused and may naturally express remorse. While we do not insist on apologies, staff may role-model by saying "I'm sorry this happened" to comfort the injured child.
- Where appropriate, the child who has bitten may be encouraged to help care for the other child (e.g., fetching a cold compress).

### **Ongoing Concerns**

- If biting occurs repeatedly, staff will monitor the behaviour to identify any **patterns or triggers**.
- Findings will be discussed confidentially with parents/carers of the child who is biting, and strategies will be put in place to offer consistent support.

### **Recording & Communication**

- All incidents will be recorded.
- The child who has been bitten will be entered into the **accident book**.
- Both sets of parents/carers will be informed confidentially at collection.