



BITING POLICY

At Berkhampstead Day Nurseries, we understand that there are times when children may bite, especially when a larger group of children are being looked after together. This is a behaviour that can be extremely upsetting for parents, but many children do bite at a young age.

We aim to educate parents that biting is a normal behaviour or a phase for some young children. Babies will often bite for the following reasons:

- Teething
- Tiredness
- Jealousy
- Frustration
- Lack of communication

Babies and young children may bite just to see the reaction, because they are experimenting and exploring their world. Biting can also relieve teething discomfort. Biting in young babies is not a concern, but we will aim to redirect this behaviour early on.

Between the ages of 13 and 30 months, the biting does tend to increase but should stop at around 3 years old. Many toddlers bite because they are frustrated, and they cannot express themselves verbally. It can also be an aspect of assertive behaviour.

The situation regarding biting can be compounded when parents become involved. One of the most difficult things about having a child who bites is the reaction of other parents. Unless a parent has a child, who bites or has bitten, it may be difficult for them to understand that biting is a normal developmental behaviour.

If a child has bitten another child, we would always inform the parent of the child who has bitten on the day. We will support parents in helping their child to stop biting using the strategies marked out below:

- By teaching the child to understand that biting is not an acceptable behaviour. We will do this by looking the child in the eye and saying firmly “no biting” or “stop biting, it hurts”.
- Staff will not laugh or let the child think that biting is a game.

- The children will be separated, and a member of staff will comfort the child who has been bitten and the appropriate treatment given i.e. cool pack applied.
- Staff will look at ways to teach the child who is biting more appropriate ways of communicating. We will acknowledge that the strong feelings that can be associated with being part of a group can cause stress in very young children.
- Staff may use a positive plan (following our Behaviour Policy) to record all biting episodes to see if there is a pattern or reason behind why they are biting.

Any child who is bitten will have the incident recorded on an incident form on Famly, and parents will be informed on collection, or as soon as possible if the bite has broken the skin.

- At no time will we inform parents of which child did the biting.
- Staff will give praise and encouragement and be good role models.
- The Day Nursery will seek professional help if the above measures do not improve the situation.

NHS Advice

Animal and Human bites

Most animal bites are not serious, but you may need to get medical help if the bite is severe or there are signs of infection.

This section is about human bites and bites from animals, such as cats and dogs, that have broken the skin.

What to do after animal or human bites

There are some things you can do after being bitten by an animal or a person.

Do

- clean the skin around the wound with soap and warm water – you can also use antiseptic, but try not to get it in the wound
- try to remove any objects like teeth, hair or dirt from the wound using running water
- gently squeeze the wound so it bleeds slightly (unless it's already bleeding) – this can help reduce the risk of infection
- press a dry dressing or clean cloth firmly onto the wound to stop the bleeding if it's bleeding heavily
- after cleaning the wound, gently pat it dry and cover it with a clean dressing
- take [paracetamol](#) or [ibuprofen](#) to help ease any pain and swelling – children under 16 should not take aspirin

Urgent advice : Get help from NHS 111 if :

You've been bitten and:

- you think there may still be objects like teeth, hair or dirt in the wound

- the bite is hot or swollen (it may also be painful, red or darker than the surrounding skin)
- you have a high temperature
- fluid is leaking from the bite
- the bite smells unpleasant
- you were bitten on your hands or feet
- you were bitten by a person

You can call 111 or [get help from 111 online](#).

You could also go to [your nearest urgent treatment centre](#).

Immediate action required:

Go to A&E if:

You've been bitten by an animal or person and:

- the wound is large or deep
- you were bitten on your face or head
- you cannot stop the bleeding

Call 999 for an ambulance if you're unable to go to A&E.

If a body part, such as part of a finger or ear has been torn off, wrap it in clean tissue and put it in a plastic bag with ice so it can be taken to hospital.

Find your nearest A&E

Treatments for animal and human bites

If you've been bitten by an animal or person, a doctor or nurse will check the wound.

They may:

- clean the bite thoroughly – if the wound is very dirty, some of the affected area may need to be removed to reduce the risk of infection
- close the wound with stitches, sticky strips or special glue, or leave it open to heal
- give you antibiotics to stop the wound becoming infected
- check your risk of getting [tetanus](#) and [rabies](#) – you'll be given treatment to prevent these serious infections if needed

If you've been bitten by a person, you may also be offered a blood test to check for [hepatitis B](#), [hepatitis C](#) and [HIV](#).