**Biting Policy**

On researching this subject in depth, it is found that children sometimes bite other children. Although not all toddlers and young children bite, biting is considered a normal stage in a child’s development. Children may bite for a variety of reasons, rarely with the intent to hurt another child.

It has been suggested that toddlers may bite for any of the following reasons:

* Teething: Toddlers are often cutting teeth and it hurts. Chewing on something relieves the ache and stops the pain momentarily.
* Sensory Exploration: Toddlers are very good at using all their senses to learn about the world. The ‘oral mode’ an important style of learning for infants, continues into toddler hood.
* Cause and Effect: Toddlers are eager explorers. They are constantly studying cause and effect. Biting produces a predictable response. Often, the response is dramatic, i.e., adult responses and attention are immediate.
* Self-Assertion*:* This is probably the most common reason toddler’s bite. It is a way to express frustration when they do not yet have the skills to do so.

We take biting and hurtful behaviour in children over 3 very seriously. Most children under the age of five will at some stage hurt or say something hurtful to another child. For this age group the hurtful behaviour is normally momentary, spontaneous, and often without awareness of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt. We help children over 3 years of age develop pro-social behaviour such as resolving
conflict without behaving in hurtful ways. We do this by offering support, calming the child who is angry and help them recognise their feelings by naming them. We help young children empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and their actions impact on others. When biting becomes problematic, we work with parents to identify the cause and find a solution together.

The main reasons for excessive biting in an over 3-year-old child are that:

* They do not feel securely attached to someone who can interpret and meet their needs – this may be in the home, and it may also be in the nursery
* The child may have insufficient language, or mastery of English to express him or herself and may feel frustrated
* The child has previously been exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour
* The child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.
(Where this does not work, we use the Code of Practise to support the child and family, making appropriate referrals to Behaviour Support team (Inclusion team) where
necessary).

Within the setting staff are consistent in providing a stimulating environment and daily programme to help reduce the number of biting incidents that can occur especially within the toddler rooms. We provide access to teething toys; provide numerous sensory exploration activities, opportunities to explore cause and effect and offering toddlers options and alternatives to reduce frustrations.

**Action**

The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs at the nursery:

* The biting will be interrupted with a firm ‘Stop... we do not bite people!’
* The bitten child will be comforted immediately
* Staff will remove the child who has bitten from the situation and will be mindful of dealing with the situation with an age-appropriate manner.

Consistent with our Confidentiality policy, parents/carers are not told the name of the child who bit their child. Parents/carers of the biter are informed of the incident and strategies are agreed between the practitioner and parent/carer on ways forward to prevent further incidences of biting. Separate incident documentation is required for each child in the event of biting. We will not contact parents after a biting incident unless the child has sustained a serious bite (i.e. drew blood).

We recognise how upset parents/carers may be when they learn their child has been bitten; however, we also recognize that biting is a normal component of child’s development. We do recognise that even with the best strategies in place and all efforts made to prevent this happening they are bound to occur. Baby Bears Day Care will not exclude any child because of biting.