

ST ANTHONY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



BITING POLICY

Responsible person: Mrs J Barnes, Headteacher

SENDCO – Mrs V Berry

SEND Governor – Mrs R Cowell.

Biting Policy

In school, we always follow a positive behaviour policy. However, we understand that children may use certain behaviours such as biting as part of their development. Biting is a behaviour that some young children go through and can be triggered when they don't yet have the words to communicate their anger, frustration or need. This can be particularly true in the case of SEND children, who struggle to communicate and have other sensory needs.

Reasons why children might bite.

Biting happens for different reasons with different children under different circumstances. The first step in learning to control it is to look at why it may be happening. Not all children bite out of anger or to hurt another child, children may bite for several reasons including:

Curiosity – children may bite to see what their friends' arm may taste like or to see the reaction. It is impulsive and they don't mean to hurt.

Emotions – This can be frustration, stress, feelings of lack of power or as a way of showing love.

Defending - Young children learn to bite as a defence, especially if they can't talk and will bite other children whenever they feel anxious or threatened. Sometimes changes or upsets at home can bring on this type of biting.

Seeking attention or control - Some children know biting is a way of getting others to do what they want or to gain attention. They don't always do this consciously; biting is a good way of getting others to take notice, even if the attention gained is negative.

Copying – children who see another child or adult biting may think that this is a good idea.

When a child bites.

We show disapproval and very firmly and calmly say something such as "No we do not bite! It hurts and it's not nice!" We use gesture and facial expression to reinforce the message. We may use non-verbal communication signs, such as the red card. We will remain calm and firmly remove the child who bites away from the person (whether child or adult) whom he/she is biting.

If the child who has bitten is not calm, we will remove them to the peace pod until they have started to calm down, ensuring that they do not try to bite the victim again.

We make it clear that it is the biting behaviour that we disapprove of - not the child and to reinforce this, positive behaviour will be encouraged and praised.

If a child persists with biting the setting will plan to monitor and support the child. Through monitoring and recording incidents we may identify triggers for the behaviour. Understanding why a child bites is key to solving the problem and this information will inform possible intervention strategies. Within this plan, we will regularly meet with the parent/carers of the biter to discuss underlying reasons and common strategies to ensure consistency between the home and school.

If a child is a victim of biting.

Staff are trained to deal with this situation and staff will follow first aid procedures to relieve pain and injury. Biting is always taken seriously, and staff do their best to ensure that it is stopped as soon as possible.

The parents/carers of the victim will be informed of the incident. For confidentiality reasons the name of the child who has caused the bite will not be disclosed to the other parents/carers.

Biting incidents will be recorded on CPOMs.

The safety of our children at St Anthony's is paramount, therefore if biting incidents become too frequent, we will seek advice from outside agencies and professionals. In extreme cases, exclusion from school or certain activities may be put in place to keep *all* children safe and happy.