



Hart Hill Nursery School

# School Biting Policy

Updated Spring Term 2023

Ratified by SLT on 2/3/23.

Signed *Stendall*

To be updated Spring Term 2026



### **Rationale**

Hart Hill Nursery School believes that ensuring the safety and wellbeing of its pupils and staff is an essential part of its duty of care. With this in mind, this policy has been created to ensure there is an effective process in place when a pupil bites another person.

For younger children, biting is a part of their developmental process, which the majority of children do not continue once they grow older; however, a small number continue this behaviour. There are a number of reasons that this behaviour occurs, such as anxiety, stress, a sensory need or a feeling of being overwhelmed.

Most children do not repeat this behaviour if they are supported properly; therefore, it is important to handle these incidents in the correct manner. Matters are also complicated if the pupil in question or the bitten person has an infectious disease.

### **Aims**

At Hart Hill Nursery School, we aim to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils, including children who are biting, by:

- Having clear procedures for staff to support the recording and reporting of biting incidents in the school
- Having an up to date behaviour management policy, which is understood by all members of staff
- Ensuring that parents of children who have bitten and children who have been bitten are fully informed in all cases and families requiring support are signposted to the school family worker
- Ensuring that staff and families understand that this may related to a sensory need, an attention need, a behavioural need or a developmental need and that no child will be judged for the biting
- Updating or creating Individual Plans and logs accordingly after an incident of biting has taken place to another child, staff member or themselves (self-harm)

### **Supporting children who have been bitten**

When a pupil has been bitten, a staff member is to immediately check for a visible injury. If the pupil's skin has not been broken, the bitten area is cleaned with warm water. If the pupil's skin is broken, the wound will be left to bleed slightly, before being cleaned with warm water and a mild antiseptic wipe (in line with first aid procedures). After cleaning the area, the wound is appropriately dressed. The member of staff must remember to wear gloves whilst supporting the child and to wash their hands with soap and warm water once finished cleaning the area.

When a pupil bites another pupil, the parents of the bitten pupil will be contacted, regardless of the severity of the incident. The staff member must also record the incident on CPOMS and alert DSL. The member of staff will not disclose the name of the child who

completed the bite to parents but this will be recorded on CPOMS following the appropriate procedure.

### **Supporting a child who bites**

When a member of staff witnesses a biting incident, the children involved are separated immediately, in line with the school behaviour policy and the positive handling policy, if handling is required. The child is taken to one side, away from other children, where possible, and told that biting is not allowed.

The member of staff who is dealing with the incident remains calm and does not raise their voice, although they may change their tone so that children can understand that biting is not acceptable, particularly if this is a repeated action. Where the child is of an age or stage of development where they understand what they have done, the member of staff will discuss what they have done and why we do not bite. Where a child is of an age or stage of development where they do not understand, a simple two worded 'no biting' system is used, along with Makaton signing to fully secure some understanding (symbols may be used if the child is used to them and understands them).

Following the incident the child remains under the observation of an agreed member of staff for the rest of the school day. If the behaviour is repeated, an age/stage appropriate sanction is applied, in line with the Behaviour Policy and in discussion with the class teacher, senior leader or Headteacher (depending on the severity of the incidents and the number of incidents in the school day). At the end of the school day the parent is informed in a sensitive and non-judgemental way of the incident/s that have occur and the plan going forward.

If it appears, following the initial incident, that the child repeatedly bites others, the school will instigate or update an Individual Plan, in partnership with the parents, and incidents will be recorded on CPOMS. This will be reviewed at least every six weeks, or sooner should further incidents take place.

### **Supporting Staff who have been bitten**

Members of staff who have been bitten should wash the affected area with warm water and soap. If the skin has been broken, the affected area should be cleaned with warm water and an antiseptic wipe; a waterproof plaster should then be applied.

The member of staff will be required to make a record of the incident on CPOMS. If the bite has broken the skin, an assessment form for health and safety will be filled in online with the HR manager. The head teacher and parents/carers of the child need to be informed.

### **Monitoring and Implementation**

The Headteacher will monitor the number of biting incidents and the triggers linked to these on a regular basis, alongside the SENDCO and the school Family Worker. These figures are reported to the Governing Body at least once a term, as part of the Behaviour Audit.

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The SENDCO will ensure that where repeated incidents occur the staff and families are supported to complete an Individual Plan. The SENDCO will ensure that these are reviewed at least half termly (six weekly).

The Governing Body will ensure that the school follows these policies and procedures. They will be informed of incidents by the Headteacher and through safeguarding, health and safety and first aid visits to the school. The Governing Body, alongside the Headteacher is responsible for reviewing this policy, as part of a three year cycle, alongside the behaviour policy and the positive handling policy.