



Faith Preschool Biting Policy and Procedures

Biting is a very common behavior among children birth to three years of age. It is a behavior that is taken very seriously. We understand that a child biting other children is one of the most common and most difficult behaviors to deal with at preschools. It can occur without warning, can be difficult to defend against, and provokes strong emotional responses in the biter, the victim, the families, and the teachers involved.

When a child bites, the preschool's policy is:

- **1st offense** – Child is redirected, parents are notified, and an incident report is completed.
- **2nd offense** – The child's parents will be asked to pick up their child from school for the day.
- **3rd offense** – The child will need to spend 2 days home from school.
- **4th offense** – The child will need to remain home for 1 week.
- **If biting continues**- A conference will be held with the parents about removing the child from the program for an extended period of time.

Biting

Biting is a form of communication and is almost always a response to coping with a challenge or stressor. We recognize that at times some children, for a variety of reasons, attempt to bite other children. They may bite for a variety of reasons: teething, frustration, boredom, inadequate language skills, stress or change in the environment, feeling threatened, or to feel a sense of power.

Repeated biting becomes a pattern of learned behavior that is often hard to extinguish because it does achieve results: the desired toy, excitement, attention. Knowing that the effect of their biting will hurt another person is not yet a part of a child of this age's mindset, so the "cause-effect" relationship is not internalized. Our teachers plan activities and supervise carefully in order for biting not to happen. We believe by understanding the developmental stages of the children in our care and their individual needs, we can proactively prevent many biting behaviors by the environment, which we create for the children. Our teachers use age appropriate behavior strategies for children who are biting. These include quality relationships, environmental factors, and social-emotional supports.

Response to Biting

Before biting occurs: Provide an environment that meets the developmental needs of the children. Monitor and supervise all children while working and/or playing. Redirect in situations where a potential biting incident may occur. Maintain an environment that elicits calm, thoughtful behavior.

When a child is bitten:

For the biter:

1. The biter is immediately removed with no emotion, using words such as "biting is not okay – it hurts." We will avoid any immediate response that reinforces the biting or calls attention to the biter. Caring attention will be focused on the child who was bitten.
2. The biter will be removed from the situation and will be talked to on a level, which they can understand.
3. The child will be redirected to another area to play.
4. The teacher will notify the family of the biter.
5. The classroom teacher will confer with the director to review the context of the biting incident.

For the victim:

1. We will separate the child who was bitten from the biter.
2. Special attention will be given to comfort the child.
3. We will administer appropriate first aid as needed.
4. The teacher will then complete an Incident Report to notify family of the victim that the child has been bitten.
5. The classroom teacher will confer with the director to review the context of the biting incident.

When biting continues:

1. Classroom teachers will meet with the administrator on a routine basis for support and strategy planning.
2. Teachers will chart each occurrence, including attempted bites, and indicate location, time, participants, behaviors, staff present, and circumstances.
3. Teachers will work together as partners with the parents of both biting children and frequent victims to keep all informed and develop a joint strategy for change.
4. If deemed in the best interest of the child, school, and other children, the director will prepare the parents of the biting child for the possibility that the child may have to be removed from the school and help them to make contingency plans.

Policies

We want to ensure that every child is safe while in our care. Our program provides an environment that encourages and promotes cooperative interaction, respect for others, and non-aggressive problem solving between the children. We look at the context of each biting incident for pattern, in an effort to prevent further biting behavior. We work with each biting child on resolving conflict or frustration in an appropriate manner. We try to adapt the environment and work with parents to reduce any child stress and make special efforts to protect potential victims. We try to make every effort to extinguish the behavior quickly and to balance our commitment to the family of the biting child to that of other families. Only after we feel we have made every effort to make the program work for the biting child do we consider asking a family to withdraw the child.

We will let all parents know that there is a problem and the procedures that will be followed. It can include “shadowing” children who indicate a tendency to bite or be bitten and heading off biting situations before they occur. We teach non biting responses to situations and reinforce appropriate behavior and teach responses to potential biting situations.

*Staff and teachers will maintain complete confidentiality of all children involved when notifying parents that their child has been bitten or bit another child.

We ask for your support in the event of a child biting or being bitten and hope that you will understand the need for our Biting Policy and Procedures which are to safeguard the interests of all those concerned.

Thank you,

Allison Lee
School Director
Faith Preschool and Kindergarten