

<b>POLICY/PROCEDURE NAME &amp; REVIEW PROCESS</b>	<b>BITING MANAGEMENT POLICY</b> This policy and procedure has been created to provide all stakeholders with clear guidelines and transparency to our practices and procedures. We welcome feedback and input from all stakeholders at any time and this policy is subject to review based on feedback or due date of annual review.
<b>NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD</b>	<b>QUALITY AREA 2- CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY</b> <b>2.2 Safety</b> 2.2.1 – Supervision 2.2.2 – Incident and Emergency Management 2.2.3 – Child protection
<b>NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS</b>	84- Awareness of child protection 170-Policies and procedures to be followed 171-Policies and procedures to be kept available 172- Notification of change to policies or procedures
<b>RELATED POLICIES and RECORDS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Biting record</li> <li>▪ Biting review record</li> <li>▪ Biting review plan record</li> <li>▪ Biting meeting record</li> <li>▪ Biting procedure</li> <li>▪ Biting management book</li> <li>▪ Incident injury trauma and illness record</li> </ul>
<b>SCOPE OF POLICY</b>	This policy applies to all children, educators, staff, families, management, students, volunteers and visitors at our service.
<b>AIM OF POLICY</b>	To ensure that our service has strong guidelines, procedures, and practices in place regarding supporting children and families of children who bite. To ensure that children who attend our service are protected and supported. To ensure that the child who is biting is also supported along the way. Our aim is to provide a clear policy, implement the policy, support practices relating to the policy, train staff regarding the policy and maintain and update the compliance of the policy for all our stakeholders.
<b>SERVICE IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>Implementation</b> Children's biting behaviour can be one of the most stressful and divisive issues in early childhood settings. It impacts on everyone in the early childhood community, educators, management, parents, and children. It provokes strong, negative emotions because it is seen as an invasive and personal attack. Unfortunately, there is no magic cure. Biting is a temporary problem, occurring during the toddler stage, and rarely continues past the age of three. It can't be eradicated instantly and requires the skill, understanding and ongoing attention of educators and parents. It is important to understand that punishment won't eliminate biting episodes, and that any punishment is detrimental to the child's development and wellbeing. Toddlers can and will, over time, respond to firm, verbal guidance without anger or withdrawal of affection. Toddlers may bite to express frustration when they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cannot do something or have something they want.</li> <li>▪ Are being required to share or take turns.</li> <li>▪ Deal with interference from other children.</li> <li>▪ Relieve pain from teething.</li> <li>▪ Explore cause and effect ("what happens when I bite?").</li> <li>▪ Experience the sensation of biting.</li> <li>▪ Satisfy a need for oral-motor stimulation.</li> <li>▪ Feel strong and in control.</li> <li>▪ Seek attention.</li> <li>▪ Act in self-defence.</li> <li>▪ Communicate needs and desires, such as hunger or fatigue.</li> <li>▪ Communicate or express difficult feelings, such as frustration, anger, confusion, or fear ("there are too many people here and I feel cramped")</li> <li>▪ Haven't developed their language skills to a communicative level yet.</li> </ul>

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Childcare professionals can use a range of effective strategies to manage biting incidents and to support children and families during this challenging phase of development as per below:

#### Staff will

- Have reasonable expectations.
- Share knowledge of individual children.
- Intentionally teach turn taking in small groups (over two's) and considerate behaviour.
- Give toddlers concrete information e.g., "Biting hurts."
- Be aware of children's favourite toys and materials and duplicate these where possible.
- Create quiet spaces where children can develop their sense of belonging.
- Reflect on the environment. Is it too busy? Is it too crowded? Can you set it up in a different way?
- Maintain awareness of each child's reactions when tired, hungry or excited.
- Maintain a consistent routine that minimises surprises for young children.
- Adjust routines as necessary to meet children's needs so that they eat and nap when they are beginning to get hungry or tired.
- Keep staffing as consistent as possible.
- Provide close supervision.
- Pay attention to the situations when biting is most likely to occur and be sure educators are close to the biter.
- Watch carefully for problems and intervene quickly.
- It may help to have a specific educator assigned to shadow the biting child closely.
- Build their understanding of children's development.
- If a biting child is most likely to bite a specific child, separate those children to reduce the chances of an incident.
- Make time to interact with all children on a one-to-one basis.
- Complete the **biting record** as soon as a biting incident occurs.
- Report the incident to your nominated supervisor.

#### Parent strategies

- Have age-appropriate expectations for your child's behaviour based on his or her current skills and abilities.
- Make sure your child's schedule, routines, and transitions are predictable and consistent. At meal and bedtimes, try to do things in the same way and at the same times. Young children thrive when they know what will happen next.
- Offer activities and materials that allow your child to relax and release tension. Some children like yoga or deep breathing. Offer playdough, foam balls, bubbles, soft music, and other stress-reducing items.
- Use positive guidance strategies to help your child develop self-control. For example, offer gentle reminders, phrased in a way that tells them what behaviours are expected. "Be sure to hang up your coat on the hook." "You can each have a bucket to use in the sandbox." "Put a small dot of toothpaste on your brush. You won't need much to get your teeth clean."
- Provide items to bite, such as teething rings or clean, wet, cold washcloths stored in the refrigerator. This helps children learn what they can bite safely, without hurting anyone else.

#### Procedure

- Staff will work with each parent/guardian to try and understand why a child is biting. Even if this is a one-off incident staff will always document a bite on a **biting record** or commence recording in the **biting management book**. By documenting and examining occurrences we may be able to identify triggers for the biting incident, we will then be able to make changes to reduce or remove the cause.
- For example, staff may encourage a biting child to take part in activities which help release frustration such as outdoor play or other physical activities.
- If you see the biting incident, move quickly to the scene and get down to child's level. Respond to the child who did the biting. In a serious, firm tone make a strong statement: "No biting. Biting hurts. Turn attention to the child who has been bitten."
- Respond to the child who was hurt by offering comfort through words and actions: "I'm sorry you are hurting. Let's get some ice." Perform first aid if necessary. Help the child who was hurt find something to do.

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- Finally, return to the child who did the biting. Maintain eye contact and speak in simple words using a calm, firm tone of voice. Restate the rule, “No Biting. Biting Hurts” Model the use of words that describe feelings: “Your poor friend is sad because you bit her.”
- Complete an **incident injury trauma and illness record** for the child who was bitten and complete an **incident injury trauma and illness record** for the child who bit so that parents of both parties are fully aware at all times, and you have a record of incidents.
- Complete **biting record** even if it is a one off as it could occur again. Continue to complete the biting record and at the same time keep nominated supervisor informed.
- Once there have been **2 incidents** of biting from the same child staff will commence a **biting review record** and continue recording biting incidents on the **biting record**.
- If a child bites for the **3<sup>rd</sup> time** continue filling in the **biting record** and ensure that you are issuing **Incident injury trauma and Illness record** to both parents’ child who bit and child who was bitten and also commence a **biting review plan record**.
- If there are up to 5 bites staff in conjunction with nominated supervisor should have a meeting with family to ensure all strategies and information is passed on to family and family are supplying staff with information. All previous documentation should be brought to the meeting, and the meeting will be recorded on **biting meeting record**.
- Privacy and confidentiality must be adhered to at all times. It is never acceptable to inform another family of the identity of the child who is biting.
- Staff will continue to record bites on the **biting record** and once there are **10 bites** a follow up meeting should occur again.
- Staff and nominated supervisor will complete **part three of biting meeting record** and conduct meeting in conjunction with previous meeting notes- **part one and part two biting meeting record**.
- Families may need to seek medical intervention if there are no results from strategies put in place or child’s behaviour and biting is escalating. Nominated supervisor will advise family of their options and will do their best to support parent/guardian.
- Parent/guardian must assist staff to implement strategies and co-operate with suggestions put forward to them.
- Sometimes the environment that the child is in is not suitable for the child they may find it overwhelming and as a result the biting or behaviour associated with the child may be exasperated. The nominated supervisor will advise the best course of action in the best interests of the child.
- In the event that a child who is above toddler age and has commenced biting, staff will follow the process as outlined in this policy. If all attempts at implementing strategies have been exhausted, it is advised that staff move onto a **behaviour management plan** in conjunction with a **behaviour observation record**. Once all strategies are exhausted, no change is occurring, and aggressive behaviours are evident. Nominated supervisor must communicate with approved provider to discuss the ongoing safety of staff and children and the viability of continuing the current enrolment. Termination of enrolment may be the outcome.

**What not to do for parents and educators:**

- Avoid labelling a child as a “biter.” Negative labels can affect how your child is viewed and how you view your child and even affect the child’s feelings about him or herself.
- Never bite a child back to punish or show him how it feels to be bitten. Biting a child sends the message that using violence is an acceptable behaviour that can be used to solve problems.
- Avoid getting angry, yelling, or shaming a child.
- Avoid giving too much attention to a child who bites after an incident. While this is usually negative attention, it can still reinforce the behaviour and cause a child to repeat it.
- Remain calm and patient.
- Do not force a child who bit and the child who was hurt to play together.
- Do not punish children who bite.
- Punishment does not help children to learn discipline and self-control. Instead, it makes children angry, upset, defiant, and embarrassed. It also undermines the relationship between you and your child.

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Each member of the team plays an important role in the implementation of each policies guidelines, and they are outlined as below but not limited to the following:

**The Approved Provider**

- Will ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met.
- Will ensure they take reasonable steps to ensure that the nominated supervisor, educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures.
- Will ensure they provide the nominated supervisor, educators, staff and volunteers the documentation to perform their role, follow policy, procedure, and document according to regulatory and service requirements.
- Will ensure that adequate induction process is provided to all staff to ensure they have time to read and understand policies and procedures and seek further information if unsure.
- Will ensure that the nominated supervisor and staff are equipped with ongoing professional development and training they require to comply with this policy.
- Will encourage feedback from stakeholders regarding the policy's effectiveness, particularly in relation to identifying and responding to child safety concerns.
- Will ensure the policy is kept up to date with current legislation, research and best practice.

**The Nominated Supervisor**

- Will adhere to and implement the obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations.
- Will ensure they take reasonable steps to ensure that the educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures.
- Will ensure they provide the educators, staff and volunteers the documentation to perform their role, follow policy and procedure and ensure they are checking the documentation according to regulatory and service requirements.
- Will ensure that a rigorous recruitment process is completed, and a thorough induction process is provided to all staff to ensure they have time to read and understand policies and procedures and seek further information if unsure.
- Will ensure that the staff are supported with ongoing professional development and training they require to comply with this policy.
- Will encourage feedback from stakeholders and staff regarding the policy's effectiveness, particularly in relation to identifying and responding to child safety concerns.
- Will ensure the policy is kept up to date with current legislation, research and best practice.
- Will conduct regular staff meetings to address policy compliance with legislation, policy implementation, changes to policy and or collect feedback for annual review of policy.

**Educators**

- Will adhere to and implement the obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations.
- Will ensure they take reasonable steps to follow the service policy and procedures and seek advice or further support if unsure.
- Will ensure they complete and document any related records regarding the implementation of this policy and practice requirements of the service.
- Will attend any ongoing professional development, staff meetings and training they require to comply with this policy and practice requirements of the service.
- Will provide feedback to the nominated supervisor or approved provider regarding the policy's effectiveness, particularly in relation to identifying and responding to child safety concerns.
- Will provide feedback regarding policy review when required.

**Families**

- Will co-operate with staff strategies to support the child who is biting.
- Will attend meetings if requested by staff and nominated supervisor.
- Will be aware that if they don't co-operate or support strategies and requests from the nominated supervisor and staff and there is no improvement after all strategies have been put in place, the approved provider may and can exercise his right to terminate the child's enrolment. Management has a duty of care for all staff and children who attend the service and although this is not an outcome we seek, the health and safety of all who attend the service will be a consideration when making such a decision.

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<b>REGULATION IMPLEMENTATION</b>	The following procedures outline and support all stakeholders to understand and implement the regulatory guidelines of this policy.
<b>In regard to Regulation 84 – Awareness of child protection law</b>	<p><b>Approved Provider will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that nominated supervisor and all staff at the service are aware of the current child protection law in the provider’s jurisdiction and understand their obligations under that law.</li> <li>Ensure that nominated supervisor and all staff are aware that it is an offence under the National Law to subject a child being educated and cared for by an approved service to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable in the circumstances.</li> <li>Be committed to ensuring that nominated supervisor and staff follow all state and territory government procedures to protect children within the service.</li> <li>Ensure that nominated supervisor and staff are aware of their commitment to child protection, their mandatory obligation and ensure there are clear procedures in place for reporting suspected child abuse as per the <b>child protection policy</b>.</li> <li>Ensure nominated supervisor and staff keep up to date and comply with any relevant changes in legislation and practices in relation to child protection.</li> <li>Ensure that the Nominated supervisor updates child protection annually.</li> <li>Ensure that no volunteers/students, parents/guardians and other visitors to the service are left alone individual children or groups of children.</li> <li>Ensure nominated supervisor, staff, volunteers and students undertake appropriate training and education on child protection, including recognising the signs and symptoms of child abuse know how to respond, and understand processes for reporting and managing concerns/incidents.</li> <li>Ensure the nominated supervisor understands their obligation of reporting any suspected harm or abuse of a child to the regulatory authority.</li> <li>Ensure all educators and staff have undertaken current child protection legislation training, including mandatory reporting requirements and obligations in their state/territory. If not, develop a plan to ensure training is undertaken in a suitable timeframe and updated annually.</li> </ul>
<b>In regard to regulation 170- Policies and procedures to be followed.</b>	<p><b>Approved Provider will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that all staff and volunteers are made aware of Regulatory policies and procedures by ensuring that this forms a part of the induction process.</li> <li>Ensure probationary reviews will be conducted once new staff are appointed at the 3- month and 6-month mark to ensure that they are following policy and procedure and to review and revise regulatory policies.</li> <li>Ensure staff meetings will be conducted on a regular basis to allow for review of policy and procedure and further training and revision of procedural practices in relation to policy and procedure.</li> <li>Ensure annual review and revision of policies and procedures will be conducted, and all educators will be given the opportunity for input.</li> </ul>
<b>In regard to Regulation 171- Policies and procedures to be kept available.</b>	<p><b>Approved Provider will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that policies and procedures are available to all staff and the location and availability will form a part of the induction process.</li> <li>Ensure policies will be available on request for all staff members to have access when required.</li> <li>Ensure policies will be available when required for staff members to download copies and/or print out if required in order to complete assignments or to form part of their research and/ or update their knowledge.</li> <li>Ensure policies will be available for all stakeholders when requested and when updating.</li> </ul>
<b>In regard to Regulation 172- Notification of change to policies or procedures</b>	<p><b>Approved Provider will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure staff meetings will be conducted on a regular basis to allow for review of policy and procedure, provide further training and allow for input if required in relation to policy and procedure.</li> <li>Ensure stakeholders will be invited to provide feedback for policies and procedures at any time, not just on annual review but will also be invited to add feedback at review time or after an event that may require change to policy or procedure.</li> <li>Ensure policies and procedures will be emailed or put on display in the foyer for stakeholders to have the ability to provide feedback.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure feedback will be considered from stakeholders and educators and may result in a change in policy.</li> <li>▪ Ensure policy and procedure may be changed at any time if there has been an incident in the service that has required a change to be implemented for the safety and health of children and or educators.</li> <li>▪ Ensure in the event of a change to a policy after feedback or a situation that occurs, we will provide 14 days' notice to all stakeholders before the change takes effect.</li> </ul>
<b>CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT</b>	<p>We are dedicated to the ongoing improvement of our practices and procedures through the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conducting regular reviews and updates of this policy with all stakeholders.</li> <li>▪ Actively seeking feedback from children, families, and staff members.</li> <li>▪ Providing targeted skill development and training for staff when areas for improvement are identified or when gaps in policy and procedure implementation are observed.</li> </ul>
<b>KEY TERMS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Stakeholder</b> - a person or group of people who have an interest in a business, a person such as an employee or customer. They have a sense of responsibility toward it and an interest in its success.</li> </ul>
<b>WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE FOLLOWING SOURCES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Australian Children's Education &amp; Care Quality Authority. ACECQA</li> <li>▪ Code of Ethics</li> <li>▪ Child Australia <a href="http://www.childaustralia.org.au">www.childaustralia.org.au</a></li> <li>▪ Education and Care Services National Regulations.</li> <li>▪ Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010.</li> <li>▪ Early Childhood Australia – <a href="http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au">www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au</a></li> <li>▪ Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations.</li> <li>▪ Guide to the National Quality Framework.</li> <li>▪ National Quality Standard.</li> <li>▪ United Convention on the Rights of the Child</li> <li>▪ Zero to Three <a href="http://www.zerotothree.org">www.zerotothree.org</a></li> </ul>

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