



Vernus International School

BITING POLICY

AY: 2023 - 2024

Date of Policy	September 2022
Date of last review	October 2023
Date of next review	August 2024
Lead Member of Staff	Principal & Head of Wellbeing

VIS Biting Policy (2023-2024)

At VIS, we understand that biting among children can occur. Though this is a concern for our staff and parents, we also understand that biting can be frightening for the child who has been bitten. It can also be frightening for the child who bites because it upsets the other child and they may be worried about the reaction of adults.

Biting can happen for many different reasons and under different circumstances. It is therefore important to carefully consider why a child bites.

Children may bite for the following reasons:

Cause and effect – from around 12 months old, children begin to understand cause and effect. For example, if they drop an object on the floor it will make a loud noise, and if they bite someone, they will get a response. All children are unique and develop at different rates

Attention – children may bite to gain attention. Biting can be a quick way to get attention, even if it is negative

Imitation – children often enjoy imitating their peers, and if they see them bite, they may decide to give it a try

Exploration – Young children learn through touch, smell, listening, and tasting objects. Some children may therefore bite when they are exploring something new

Sensory needs – some children may be seeking sensory input, or they may be overstimulated, or excited, and they may bite another person

Independence – children can sometimes bite to gain control. For example, if they want a toy, or for someone to move, they might bite to get their desired result

Frustration – children may bite when they are frustrated. For example, if they are unable to express their feelings or thoughts through words, they might bite in response to something that has just happened

Stress – a child may bite when they feel stressed and are unable to express how they feel. This could happen for example, if the child has moved either their house or school recently. Predicting stressful situations and acting to support children accordingly can decrease the incidence of biting

If a child is bitten

If a child bites another child in school, the closest teacher should separate the children, and call upon another member of staff to help if required.

For the child who was bitten

- The teacher comforts them and asks them what happened.
- The teacher to determine if the bite broke the skin and/or caused bleeding.
Most bites do not break the skin
- Even if the bite has not broken the skin, the area should be washed thoroughly with water and soap. If necessary, the concerned teacher may seek medical advice by sending the child to the School Clinic. In some cases, to reduce the risk of infection, treatment may be needed for the biter and the recipient, such as antibiotics, tetanus, etc.
- A teacher who dealt with the situation will complete an accident report.
- Head of KG/Elementary Coordinator/Head of Curriculum /Head of Wellbeing will be informed.
- Parents of the children involved will be informed

For the child who has bitten

The teacher to check the child has not injured him/herself.

- The teacher will explain age appropriately to the child who has bitten, that biting is unacceptable.
- The teacher will take time to explain to the child how their peer is feeling.
- The teacher will then follow the school's behavior policy and procedures. For example, it may be appropriate to ask the child to apologize or redirect their play or attention. The teacher may also find it appropriate to follow up with the class or address it during circle time.
- A teacher who dealt with the situation will complete an accident report and log the incident.
- Head of KG/Elementary Coordinator/Head of Curriculum /Head of Wellbeing will be informed.
- Parents of the children involved will be informed

Initial Wound Care

In all cases where a child's bite has broken the skin, the management of the wound should include administering first aid. In this case, the steps below will be followed by the School Nurse:

- Wash and dry hands
- Wear disposable gloves
- Encourage the wound to bleed, unless it is bleeding freely
- Wash the wound thoroughly with soap and warm, running water for 1-2 minutes
- Dry and cover the wound with a dressing
- If the bite is on the hand, elevate the arm
- If the biter has blood in the mouth, they will be asked to swill it out with tap water
- If required, the School Nurse may advise parents to seek further medical advice

If a child continually bites, a meeting will be held with the child's parents and the relevant school staff to discuss strategies and explain how behavior is dealt with at the school.

Strategies may include:

- Additional adult support will be reviewed regularly
- Individual or group work with the child to find strategies to use instead of biting
- Use of visual symbols, feelings chart, or emotion symbols

Confidentiality

Staff at VIS are aware that medical information about individual children is private.

Parents at the school are aware that there may be circumstances where their child's personal sensitive information will be shared between the school and health care professionals. In each case, the decision on the extent of any disclosure within the school is carefully considered and minimized.