REPTON
AL BARSHA

No Biting & Scratching Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL			
Document title	No Biting & Scratching Policy	**Reference**	RAB-PAS-004
Owner	Deputy Head Pastoral	**Approved by**	Principal, on behalf of SLT
Date reviewed	August 2026	**Next review**	August 2027
Status	School policy — Early Years	**Applies to**	Pupils in FS1 and FS2, and all staff working in Early Years
Related documents	Behaviour for Learning; Safeguarding Policy; First Aid & Medical; Health & Safety; SEND & Inclusion		
Regulatory framework	KHDA Early Years requirements; UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 (Wadeema); Cognita Safeguarding Standards; EYFS Statutory Framework (as guiding good practice)		

Introduction

At Repton Al Barsha, we understand that biting and scratching is unfortunately not an unexpected behaviour for young children. Biting and scratching can happen for many different reasons and under different circumstances. It is therefore important to carefully consider why a child would bite. Though this is a concern for our staff and parents, we also recognise and understand that biting can be harmful for other children and staff. It is important that we have a clear and consistent response when an incident of biting occurs.

Parents must ensure that their child's/children's nails are of appropriate length and will be observed by staff members on a daily basis.

There are many reasons why a child may bite. These can include:

Exploration – young children learn through touch, smell, listening and tasting objects. Some children can therefore bite when they are exploring something new
Sensory needs – some children may be seeking sensory input, or they may be over stimulated, or excited, and they may bite another person to release the pressure building up
Cause and effect – from around twelve 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 or 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 from either adults or children
Imitation – children often enjoy imitating their peers, and if they see them bite, they may decide to give it a try
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

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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

What will happen in the event of a bite (interventions)

If a child is bitten:
Our staff strongly disapprove of any form of biting and maintain the priority of keeping all children safe at Repton Al Barsha. If a child bites another child in school, the closest staff member should separate the children and call upon another member of staff to help if required.

1. A staff member is to comfort them, reassure them and then ask them what happened
2. The staff member is to determine if the bite broke the skin and / or caused bleeding. Most bites do not break the skin
3. Even if the bite has not broken the skin, the child will be immediately taken to the School Nurse/Doctor for an examination of the area
4. In some cases, to reduce the risk of infection, treatment may be needed for the biter and the recipient, such as antibiotics, tetanus etc.
5. The staff member who dealt with the situation will complete an accident report form
6. The Head of Year will be informed
7. Parents of both children involved will be informed before the end of the day

For the child who has bitten:

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

1. Staff will check the child has not injured him / her self
2. A staff member will calm and reassure the child
3. The staff member will explain age appropriately to the child who has bitten, that biting is unacceptable
4. The staff member will take time to explain to the child how their peer is feeling
5. The Staff member will then follow the school's behavior policy and procedures. For example, it may be appropriate to ask the child to apologise or redirect their play or attention. The staff member may also find it appropriate to follow up with the class or address it during circle time, using a social story discussing biting
6. The staff member who dealt with the situation will complete an accident report and log incident on iSAMS
7. The Head of Year will be informed
8. Parents of the children involved will be informed
9. Further action will be decided by a behaviour committee, if needed

Caring for a bite or scratch

Initial Wound Care:

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In all cases where a child's bite or scratch has broken the skin, the management of the wound should include administering emergency first aid. In this case, the steps below will be followed by the School Nurse/Doctor or an appropriate first aid trained staff member:

1. Apply hand gel
2. Apply disposable gloves
3. Rinse the bite wound under tap water for 1-2 minutes to remove any saliva, blood or debris.
4. Apply sterile gauze and pressure to stem any bleeding.
5. Irrigate the open wound with normal saline 9% to avoid contamination or further injury or pain to the wound.
6. Apply Fucidin antibiotic cream (with parents' consent)
7. Cover with a mepore dressing.
8. Check the file for the student's tetanus status and advise the parent to discuss with their doctor.

Support and Guidance

If a child bites or scratches others on more than one occasion, after the relevant interventions above have been applied, an additional meeting will be held with the child's parents, and the a member of the Senior Leadership Team, to discuss a risk assessment and next steps from the list below.

Should a severe incident of biting or scratching occur or two instances in the same hour, the SLT will assess the incident and the child will be required to be picked up from school for the remainder of the day.

The strategies that will then be implemented as a result of continued biting or scratching may include:

- Additional 1:1 adult support which will be reviewed on a regular basis
- Individual or group work with the child to find strategies to use instead of biting
- Use of visual symbols, feelings chart or emotion symbols
- Behaviour plan in which parents and school agree to specific targets and strategies
- The child is asked to stay at home for a period of 3 days

Confidentiality

Staff at Repton Al Barsha 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 upon the extent of any disclosure within the school is careful considered and minimised.