

Hitting



It is very difficult for young children to accept that another child may have different needs to them! They can become very frustrated and, unfortunately, hitting often helps them achieve their goal.

What are the common difficulties?

- Children hurting other children or staff by hitting them

Why do hitting difficulties occur?

- Children are frustrated and do not know how to deal with their emotions
- Children have learnt that they get what they want if they hit
- Children receive mixed responses at home when they hit
- Children are encouraged to "play fight" at home
- Children have delayed speech and cannot express their needs
- Children find it difficult to share
- Children play regularly with older siblings/relatives who accept being hit

How can we help?

- Set up "room rules" where you clearly state (with photos/pictures) that children are expected to have kind hands
- Give all children specific praise when they are being kind
- Carry out observations to find out when the incidents of hitting occur and if there is a trigger
- Speak sensitively to parents about your concerns and ask for their advice
- Make sure that staff give the child the words they need. Eg. "You need to say - my turn please"
- Speak sensitively to parents and ask what they do at home if their child hits others
- Agree a strategy with parents, write a Play Plan if necessary
- Provide opportunities for the child to hit cushions or boxes
- Provide a quiet space within the room that children can access

