Grass Roots Newsletter

Hello September!

Welcome to our September newsletter and a very warm welcome to all our new and returning families! September is always a month filled with fresh energy, new friendships, and exciting milestones. Whether your child is settling into nursery for the very first time, adjusting to moving up into a new room, or adapting to their older friends moving on to primary school, our focus this month is on creating a deep sense of belonging, safety, and comfort for every child.

This month, we are combining our health ethos with our Emotion Coaching strategies and our local WellComm project tools to help your children feel emotionally secure, physically active, and ready to communicate as they settle into their new nursery routines.

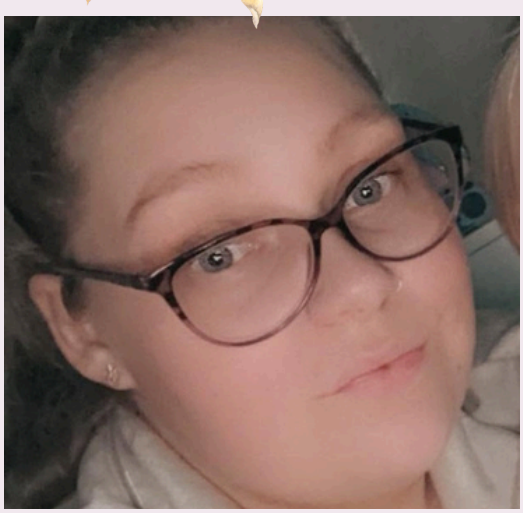
Monthly Theme: Safeguarding in Action & Building Trust

You may have seen in the news that statutory guidance for early years settings (such as Keeping Children Safe in Education and updated EYFS framework requirements) is refreshed every September. At our nursery, safeguarding isn't a passive folder on a shelf, it is an active, daily commitment to keeping your children physically and emotionally safe.

Key Safeguarding Procedures Every Parent Needs to Know:

- Reporting Absences: If your child is unwell or taking a day off, please notify us before 9:00 AM. If a child does not arrive and we have not heard from you, our safeguarding welfare procedure requires us to contact you to ensure your child is safe at home.
- Up-to-Date Contact Details: Please check your parent app profile today to confirm we have at least two working emergency contact numbers listed.
- Safe Collection Rules: We will only release your child to adults named on your approved collection list who know your family password. If someone new is picking up, please notify us in advance.
- Safer Sleep Protocols: As part of our physical well-being checks, we enforce strict safer sleep guidelines across all rooms, ensuring sleep spaces are continuously monitored, kept at safe temperatures, and fitted with appropriate bedding.

Practitioner Spotlight:



Keeley has worked at Grass Roots since 2022!

She has spent most of her time in the baby room, but she is moving to New Road to work alongside Charlotte Howse in the Orchard (toddler room).

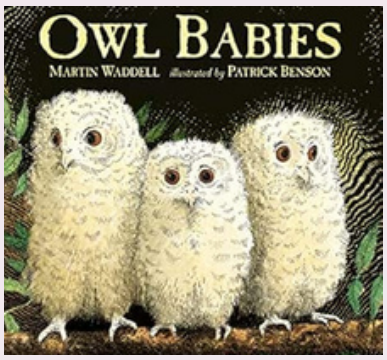
Keeley enjoys spending quality time with her little boy, family, and friends, and taking walks with her dog.

Event Calendar:

- All term time only children return to nursery the week commencing 7th September.
- We will soon be releasing an annual events calendar!

Community News:

- Check out Grass Roots Family CIC facebook page for community events https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100086769567112
- 50 things to do before you are 5 has events on their website https://calderdale.50thingstodo.org/app/os#!/welcome
- Calderdale Family Hubs https://calderdalefamilyhubs.org.uk/



Book Review:

The Owl Babies by Martin Waddell



A comforting classic that helps children explore feelings of separation while reinforcing emotional safety and security.

- Why we love it: Three baby owls, Sarah, Percy, and Bill, wake up to find their mother gone. They sit on their branch and wonder where she is, until she returns softly and silently through the trees.
- Safeguarding & Emotional Link: It addresses separation anxiety directly, reassuring children that trusted adults always return. It provides a safe space to talk about feelings of being lost or unsure.
- WellComm & Speech Link: The story uses simple, repetitive language that children love to join in with ("I want my mummy!"). Use the book at home to talk about who picks your child up from nursery, reinforcing the predictable, safe routine of your day.

✏️ Curriculum Focus: Teaching Children Personal Safety & Boundaries

Safeguarding in the early years means giving children the tools, language, and confidence to express themselves and understand their own personal boundaries.

- WellComm Communication & Expressing Needs: Using simple WellComm activities, we teach children how to express essential safety and personal needs clearly ("stop," "no," "help," "toilet," "water"). Giving children a functional voice is one of the most powerful safeguarding tools we have.
- Body Autonomy & Personal Boundaries: Through everyday routines, we teach children that their bodies belong to them. We encourage them to respect their own boundaries and those of their friends, learning phrases like "I don't like that" or "My turn now."
- Physical Heavy Work for Emotional Safety: To help release the anxiety that can come with new routines, we offer lots of outdoor "heavy work", pushing wheelbarrows, carrying soft blocks, and climbing low frames. Physical movement helps ground a child's nervous system, making them feel physically secure in their new environment.



❓ Q&A: Handling "Settling-In Wobbles" & Welfare Checks

Q: My child has started crying at drop-off during their third week. Does this mean they don't feel safe at nursery, and how do staff handle it?

A: A delayed "wobble" in week three is completely normal and rarely means a child feels unsafe. During the first two weeks, everything is new and novel. By week three, the child realises this is their regular routine, and they may seek extra reassurance from their primary secure base, you!

When a child is upset, our trained staff use Emotion Coaching to provide immediate comfort:

1. Validate: "I see you're feeling sad to say goodbye to Mummy/Daddy today."
2. Co-regulate: We hold them close, offer comfort items, and take them to a calm space.
3. Reassure: "You are safe here, and Mummy/Daddy will be back after afternoon story time."

Note for parents: If a child remains distressed for an extended period, our welfare policy is to contact you directly. We will always be transparent about how your child is settling.

🍽️ Recipe Corner: Allergy-Safe "After-Nursery" Energy Balls

These no-bake energy balls are free from common major allergens (nut-free and seed-butter options), making them a safe, nutrient-dense treat after a busy day.

- The Recipe: In a bowl, mix 100g of rolled oats, 4 tablespoons of smooth mashed banana or apple purée, 2 tablespoons of melted coconut oil or dairy-free spread, a dash of cinnamon, and a handful of raisins. Roll into small, bite-sized balls and chill in the fridge for 30 minutes.
- Food Safety Note: Always ensure ingredients are chopped appropriately to avoid choking risks for younger toddlers.
- The Routine Link: Having a safe snack ready at pick-up restores blood sugar levels quickly, preventing the 4:00 PM meltdown and keeping the trip home calm and safe.



🛠️ Tips & Tricks: 3 Safeguarding Habits for Home

Here are three simple ways you can help us maintain a safe environment for all children:

- Bag Safety Checks: Please check your child's nursery bag every morning to ensure there are no small loose objects, plastic bags, medication, coins, or hand sanitisers that could pose a choking or poisoning hazard to curious little hands in the cloakrooms.
- Label All Belongings: Clearly write your child's full name on coats, wellies, spare clothes, and water bottles. This prevents accidental mix-ups and ensures items stay hygienic and personal to your child.
- Check Shoes & Strings: To keep your child safe while climbing, running, and exploring outdoors, please send them in supportive, closed-toe footwear (like trainers) with securely fastened straps or laces, and avoid tops with long hood drawstrings that could catch on equipment.
- Hold Hands in the Car Park: Pick-up and drop-off times can get very busy outside. Please keep your child close and hold their hand between the nursery door and your car or footway. Teaching road and driveway safety early builds lifelong protective habits!

🎄 Risky Play: Developing Risk-Awareness & Physical Resilience

In early years education, "risky play" isn't about danger, it's about providing safe, supervised challenges where children learn how to test their limits and keep themselves safe. Learning to manage risk is one of the most effective long-term safeguarding tools we can give a child.

Why Managed Risk Matters:

- Body Awareness: Balancing on logs or climbing frames builds core strength, balance, and spatial awareness—making children far less prone to accidental falls.
- Building Lifelong Instincts: Children who learn to navigate uneven ground or high steps develop an internal "safety radar" that protects them everywhere they go.
- Confidence & Resilience: Overcoming a physical challenge teaches children to trust their own abilities and problem-solve under pressure.

Quick Home Tip: At the park, try waiting a few extra seconds before stepping in to help your child climb. Guiding them with questions rather than lifting them straight up builds their confidence, physical stamina, and physical risk awareness!

🥗 Healthy Choices: Physical Welfare, Safe Sleep & Food Safety

Keeping children safe extends to every aspect of their physical care, from how they sleep and eat to how we keep children hydrated throughout the day.

Our Setting's Safeguarding & Health Procedures

- Safer Sleep Procedures: Rest time is closely monitored. We follow strict safer sleep guidance across all rooms, ensuring sleep spaces are continuously checked, kept at safe temperatures, and that babies and young children are placed in safe sleeping positions on appropriate bedding.

- Safer Eating Procedures: Mealtimes are always actively supervised by staff sitting alongside the children. We strictly follow early years choking-prevention guidelines, preparing foods safely (such as cutting grapes, cherry tomatoes, and sausages lengthwise into quarters) and teaching children to sit down quietly while eating.

- Nursery-Provided Water Bottles: To ensure high standards of hygiene, safety, and equal access, fresh water bottles are provided directly by the nursery for every child. They are cleaned, sanitised, filled with fresh tap water daily, and kept accessible so children stay hydrated, focused, and healthy throughout play.



💻 Online Safety: Digital Safeguarding & Photo Privacy

Digital security is a core component of modern safeguarding. We have strict, robust policies and procedures in place to protect your child's privacy and personal data at all times.

Our Setting's Digital Safeguarding Protocols

- Strict Social Media Policy: We operate a zero-tolerance privacy policy regarding public channels. Photos or videos of children in our care are never posted on public social media accounts. Your child's identity and image remain entirely protected.
- Photo Privacy at Home: Because updates may occasionally feature group learning activities, we remind all families that any photos downloaded from the app featuring other children must never be shared, uploaded, or posted on social media or third-party platforms.

Digital Well-Being Tip for Home:
Developing safe digital habits starts early! You can support online safety at home by keeping tablets and smartphones in shared family spaces and establishing simple screen-free windows before bedtime to encourage restful sleep and open family communication

♻️ Sustainability: Safe, Sustainable Environments

Creating a safe environment means protecting our local surroundings for our children's futures, too.

- Safe Reusables: Using durable, BPA-free reusable water bottles and washable wet-bags for dirty clothes keeps our setting clean, hygienic, and free from single-use plastics.
- Pre-Loved Safety Checks: We welcome pre-loved nursery clothes! Just ensure that any spare clothing brought in is free from long drawstrings or small, loose buttons that could present a safety risk for very young children.

Policy Update - Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Every month we will share one of our updated policies with the newsletter. Please take your time to read this and feedback any comments you may have in relation to this.

You can find all of our policies on the website https://www.grassrootsdaynursery.com/policies-and-procedures

