A7 Children's Wellbeing & Emotional Development Policy

Grass Roots Nursery Group – Updated October 2026

1. Policy Statement

Grass Roots Nursery Group is committed to promoting children's holistic wellbeing — emotional, physical, social, and cognitive — through warm relationships, attuned interactions, and secure attachments. We recognise that children's emotional development is shaped by their experiences, relationships, and environment, and that wellbeing must be actively nurtured every day.

We also recognise that children may experience bereavement, loss, or significant change. These experiences can profoundly affect their emotions, behaviour, and sense of security. Our approach is compassionate, culturally respectful, and developmentally appropriate, ensuring children feel safe, understood, and supported.

2. Purpose & Scope

This policy ensures:

- children receive consistent emotional support
- staff use Emotion Coaching and co-regulation
- wellbeing concerns are identified early and escalated appropriately
- bereavement is handled with sensitivity and confidentiality
- families are supported with empathy and partnership
- cultural and religious practices are respected
- staff wellbeing is considered during critical incidents

Applies to:

- all staff, apprentices, volunteers, students, and agency workers
- all children and families
- all rooms, outdoor spaces, and outings

3. Statutory Framework & Reference Guidance

This policy complies with:

- EYFS Statutory Framework (DfE, 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- SEND Code of Practice
- Data Protection Act 2018 & UK GDPR
- Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures

4. Emotional Wellbeing & Relational Practice

A. Emotion Coaching (EEF Framework)

Staff use Emotion Coaching to:

- recognise emotional cues
- validate feelings
- label emotions
- set calm, clear limits
- support collaborative problem-solving

This approach prioritises empathy, co-regulation, and emotional literacy.

B. Think Equal Curriculum

We embed Think Equal to teach:

- empathy
- equality
- self-awareness
- emotional expression
- kindness and peer respect

C. Key Person Approach

The Key Person:

- builds secure attachments
- mirrors home routines
- supports transitions
- provides emotional safety
- monitors wellbeing changes

D. CPOMS Safeguarding Integration

Persistent emotional distress, regression, or sudden behavioural changes are logged confidentially on CPOMS for DSL oversight.

5. Physical Wellbeing, Nutrition & Oral Health

A. PANCo Leadership

Our Physical Activity and Nutrition Coordinator (PANCo) oversees:

- physical activity
- nutrition
- oral health
- wellbeing initiatives

B. Healthy Eating & Allergen Safety

Meals follow:

- DfE nutrition guidance
- BSACI Allergy Action Plans
- Weaning & Allergen Introduction Policy

C. Oral Health Education

Children learn:

- tooth-brushing routines
- healthy snack choices
- sugar awareness

D. Outdoor Learning & Wild Roots

Daily outdoor play and Wild Roots sessions support:

- physical confidence
- risk-taking
- sensory regulation
- emotional wellbeing

6. Inclusion, SEND & Positive Environments

A. Valuing Diversity

We celebrate:

- family structures
- languages

- cultures
- identities

Every child must feel a sense of belonging.

B. Graduated SEND Support

We adapt:

- environments
- routines
- sensory spaces
- activities

in partnership with the SENCo.

C. Safe, Inspiring Spaces

Daily risk assessments ensure environments remain:

- safe
- clean
- inclusive
- emotionally attuned

7. Partnership with Parents & Digital Wellbeing

A. Famly Communication

We share:

- wellbeing updates
- mood
- physical activity
- mealtimes
- developmental steps

B. Digital Wellbeing Guidance

We support families with:

- screen-time advice
- online safety
- digital boundaries
- shared resources

8. Bereavement Support & Safeguarding Considerations

Children experience grief differently depending on age, development, and communication stage. Our approach is gentle, honest, and attuned.

A. Initial Notification & Family Partnership

Parents/carers are encouraged to inform the Nursery Manager or Key Person of:

- bereavement
- terminal diagnosis
- significant family change

A meeting will explore:

- language used at home (“died” rather than euphemisms)
- cultural or religious practices
- behavioural or emotional changes
- how information should be shared with staff
- attendance at funerals or memorials

Information is recorded confidentially on CPOMS or Famly.

B. Supporting the Child

We provide:

- therapeutic stories and bereavement books
- sensory resources
- creative play
- quiet spaces indoors/outdoors
- co-regulation with a trusted practitioner
- simple, honest answers to repeated questions
- consistent routines with flexibility

C. Supporting Staff & the Setting Community

If a child, parent, or staff member dies:

- critical incident protocols are activated
- staff receive debriefs
- counselling support offered (e.g., BrightHR EAP)
- wellbeing monitored closely

D. External Signposting

Families may be referred to:

- Winston's Wish
- Child Bereavement UK
- Cruse Bereavement Support
- NHS pastoral care teams

E. Confidentiality & Safeguarding

All bereavement information is confidential.

Sudden, traumatic, or unclear circumstances are logged securely under DSL direction. Staff remain alert to:

- emotional distress
- regression
- withdrawal
- changes in behaviour
- safeguarding concerns

9. Monitoring & Review

- reviewed annually or sooner if guidance changes
- DSL and Nursery Manager ensure consistent implementation
- wellbeing trends monitored termly

10. Linked Policies

- A1 Child Protection & Safeguarding
- A4 Behaviour & Positive Relationships
- C1 Safer Eating, Nutrition & Mealtimes
- C3 Allergy & Intolerance
- D1 Curriculum & Learning
- H1 Staff Code of Conduct