A4 Behaviour & Positive Relationships Policy

Grass Roots Nursery Group – Updated October 2026

1. Policy Statement

Grass Roots Nursery Group is committed to fostering warm, respectful, emotionally attuned relationships that support children's social, emotional, and behavioural development. We recognise behaviour as communication and respond using relational practice, Emotion Coaching, co-regulation, and consistent boundaries.
We do not use punitive, shaming, or exclusionary behaviour management. All responses to behaviour are developmentally appropriate, trauma-informed, and aligned with the EYFS 2026, the SEND Code of Practice, and our curriculum ethos.

2. Purpose & Scope

This policy ensures:

- behaviour is understood as communication
- staff respond using relational, attuned strategies
- children are supported to regulate emotions safely
- biting incidents are managed consistently and sensitively
- staff follow consistent expectations across all rooms
- parents receive clear, supportive communication
- SEND needs are considered within the Graduated Approach

Applies to:

- all children
- all staff, apprentices, volunteers
- all rooms and outdoor areas
- all outings

3. Statutory Framework & Reference Guidance

This policy complies with:

- EYFS Statutory Framework (DfE, 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, 2026)
- SEND Code of Practice
- Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance
- EEF Emotion Coaching
- Think Equal programme

4. Key Principles & Philosophy

Behaviour as Communication

We recognise that behaviour reflects:

- emotions
- unmet needs
- developmental stage
- sensory processing
- communication frustration
- environmental triggers

Children are not "naughty"; they need connection, guidance, and support.

Relational Practice

We prioritise:

- co-regulation
- attuned interactions
- serve-and-return communication
- predictable routines

- emotional literacy
- restorative conversations

Positive Reinforcement

We use:

- descriptive praise
- modelling
- celebrating gentle hands and kind interactions
- acknowledging effort rather than outcome

We avoid:

- sticker charts
- reward systems
- competitive praise
- shaming or public correction

Confidentiality

Children involved in incidents are **never named** to other families.

5. Universal Support: Emotion Coaching & Think Equal

All staff use EEF Emotion Coaching:

Recognise

1. Observe the child's emotional cues.

Validate

Name and acknowledge the emotion.

2. ("I can see you feel frustrated because your tower fell.")

Set Limits

Calmly state boundaries.

3. ("It's okay to feel angry, but I can't let you throw toys.")

Problem-Solve

4. Support the child to find a safe, kind resolution.

Think Equal principles support:

- empathy
- diversity
- emotional literacy
- conflict resolution
- kindness and peer respect

6. Targeted Support & SEND Graduated Approach

For persistent or complex behaviour:

- SENCo leads the **Assess–Plan–Do–Review** cycle
- Individualised Support Plans (ISPs) created with parents
- External agencies consulted where appropriate
- Root causes explored (speech delay, sensory needs, SEND, trauma, anxiety)

7. Prohibited Actions & Safeguarding Controls

Strictly forbidden:

- corporal punishment
- shouting
- humiliation
- isolation
- time-out
- removal from play as punishment

Physical Intervention

Used **only as a last resort** to prevent:

- immediate physical injury
- harm to others
- serious property damage

If used:

- incident logged immediately on CPOMS
- management notified
- parents informed same day

8. Managing Biting Incidents

Biting is a common developmental behaviour, especially in under-threes.

A. Immediate Response

Support the child who has been bitten

- comfort and reassure
- administer first aid
- help them feel safe

Respond to the child who has bitten

- remove calmly from situation

use simple language:

- "Biting hurts. I can't let you bite. Let's find another way."
- avoid shame or punishment
- support regulation (breathing, sensory tools, comfort from key person)

B. Recording & Communication

- incident form completed for both children
- factual, neutral language used
- confidentiality maintained
- both sets of parents informed same day
- reassurance provided that biting is common and being managed sensitively

C. Identifying Causes & Prevention

Staff observe for:

- crowding or overstimulation
- transitions or busy routines
- teething
- communication frustration
- sensory needs
- emotional overwhelm
- patterns (time of day, peers, activities)

Preventative strategies include:

- sensory alternatives (chewelry, cold teethers, crunchy snacks)
- increased adult presence
- environmental adjustments
- predictable routines
- reducing high-arousal moments

D. Ongoing Support

If biting persists:

- tailored support plan created
- weekly review of strategies
- SENCo involvement
- external advice sought if needed
- close partnership with parents

9. Supporting Challenging Behaviour

Staff use:

- co-regulation
- modelling calm breathing
- offering choices
- reducing sensory overload
- supporting transitions
- small-group relational play

We do **not** use:

- time-out
- isolation
- shaming
- forced apologies

10. Recording & Monitoring

- significant incidents logged on CPOMS
- emotional patterns monitored
- termly behaviour reviews conducted
- SENDCo involved where needed
- parents kept informed via Famly

11. Roles & Responsibilities

Key Person

- builds secure relationships
- monitors patterns
- supports regulation
- communicates with parents

Room Leader

- ensures procedures followed
- supports staff
- reviews environment and routines

Manager

- oversees incident reporting
- leads escalation
- ensures staff training

Parents/Carers

- share relevant information (teething, sleep, home changes)
- work with staff on strategies
- maintain consistent messaging

12. Monitoring & Review

- reviewed annually or sooner if guidance changes
- behaviour trends analysed termly
- staff receive ongoing training in Emotion Coaching, Think Equal, and relational practice

13. Linked Policies

- A1 Child Protection & Safeguarding
- A7 Children's Wellbeing & Emotional Development
- C1 Safer Eating, Nutrition & Mealtimes
- C3 Allergy & Intolerance
- D1 Curriculum & Learning
- G1 Intimate Care