A1 Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Grass Roots Nursery Group – Updated October 2026

1. Policy Statement

Grass Roots Nursery Group is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child in our care. We strive to create environments where children feel safe, valued, listened to, and protected from harm. Safeguarding is a shared responsibility across our organisation, and every adult working with us plays an essential role in keeping children safe.

Children's voices are central to our safeguarding culture. We ensure children feel confident to express their feelings, share worries, and know that adults will listen and act. Our practice is rooted in professional curiosity, early intervention, and strong multi-agency collaboration.

This policy applies to all Grass Roots Nursery Group settings and should be read alongside our wider safeguarding procedures and linked policies.

2. Purpose & Scope

The purpose of this policy is to set out how Grass Roots Nursery Group safeguards children, prevents harm, and responds to concerns. It outlines our statutory responsibilities, internal procedures, and expectations of all adults working within our settings.

This policy applies to:

- employees
- apprentices and students
- volunteers
- agency staff
- contractors
- regular visitors

Everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children and act promptly on any concern.

3. Statutory Framework

Our safeguarding practice is shaped by national legislation and local procedures, including:

- *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2026)
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2026)
- *Early Years Foundation Stage* (2026)
- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Childcare Act 2006 & 2016
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Data Protection Act 2018 (UK GDPR)
- Equality Act 2010
- Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures
- West Yorkshire Consortium Inter-Agency Safeguarding Procedures

These frameworks guide our decision-making, record-keeping, and multi-agency responsibilities.

4. Definitions

Safeguarding refers to the actions taken to promote children's welfare and protect them from harm.

Child Protection refers to processes to protect children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Significant Harm is the threshold for compulsory intervention under the Children Act 1989.

5. Roles & Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All adults must remain alert to signs of abuse or neglect, act on concerns immediately, and follow the Staff Code of Conduct at all times. Professional boundaries must be upheld consistently.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Team

Our DSL team leads safeguarding practice across Grass Roots Nursery Group:
Primary DSL: Emma Ford
Supervising DSL: Lucy Pottinger
Deputy / Covering DSLs:
Caitlin Bray
Jessica Bruce
Amy Greenwood
Christine Pannell
Amy Boddy
Charlotte Barraclough
The DSL team oversees concerns, liaises with MAST, maintains secure records, coordinates Early Help / Family Help, supports safer recruitment, and ensures staff training and compliance.

6. Safeguarding Culture & Principles

Our safeguarding culture is built on the belief that the welfare of the child is paramount. We prioritise early intervention, professional curiosity, and contextual safeguarding — recognising that risks may arise both inside and outside the home.
Children's voices are actively sought and acted upon. Staff complete mandatory KCSIE reading and safeguarding training to ensure they understand their responsibilities. Low-level concerns are recorded and reviewed, and staff are encouraged to escalate concerns if they feel a child's safety or wellbeing is at risk.
We maintain safe environments through secure premises, robust visitor procedures, and vigilant supervision.

7. Safe Environments & Premises Security

We are committed to providing safe, secure environments for children. This includes controlled entry systems, visitor sign-in procedures, ID verification, safe storage of hazardous materials, and daily risk assessments. Outdoor areas are checked regularly to ensure they remain secure and suitable for play.
Further detail is provided in **B1 Health & Safety** and **B2 Premises Security & Visitor Management**.

8. Recognising Abuse & Indicators of Harm

All staff are trained to recognise a wide range of safeguarding concerns. These include physical, emotional and sexual abuse, neglect, domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), peer-on-peer abuse, online abuse, FGM, fabricated or induced illness, children missing education, and vulnerabilities linked to SEND.
Additional guidance is provided in the **Safeguarding Handbook**, which outlines specific procedures for each type of concern.

9. Responding to Concerns or Disclosures

When a child discloses information or staff observe concerning signs, they respond calmly and sensitively. Staff listen without judgement, avoid leading questions, and offer reassurance. Confidentiality is never promised.
Concerns are recorded factually, including the child's exact words, date, time, context, and observations about their demeanour. All concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.
DSLs follow Achieving Best Evidence principles and contact MAST where required.

10. Reporting & Escalation

Where a child is at immediate risk of harm, staff must contact:

- **MAST:** 01422 393336
- **Police:** 101 or 999

Out-of-hours concerns should be directed to:

- **Emergency Duty Team:** 01422 288000

If concerns remain, staff may escalate to Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership, the police, Ofsted, or the NSPCC. Escalation is a professional responsibility.

11. Safer Recruitment

Grass Roots Nursery Group follows safer recruitment procedures to ensure all adults working within our settings are suitable. This includes identity checks, Enhanced DBS checks, barred list checks where appropriate, right-to-work verification, qualification checks, reference verification, employment history scrutiny, and safeguarding-focused interviews.
Full details are outlined in **H2 Safer Recruitment & Induction**.

12. Staff Conduct & Safe Working Practices

All staff are expected to maintain professional boundaries, use respectful language, avoid unsupervised one-to-one situations, follow safe touch guidance, uphold confidentiality, and model positive behaviour. Safe working practices include safe supervision, appropriate physical contact, safe use of technology, responsible social media conduct, safe handling of disclosures, and respectful intimate care.
Further guidance is provided in **H1 Staff Code of Conduct**, **F1 Mobile Phone & Electronic Device Use**, **F2 Safer Internet & Technology Use**, and **G1 Intimate Care & Toileting**.

13. Information Sharing & Confidentiality

Information is shared lawfully, proportionately, and securely. Consent may be overridden if a child is at risk. Records are factual, timely, signed, dated, and stored separately from development files. Only DSLs have access to safeguarding records.

14. Early Help / Family Help

Grass Roots Nursery Group works proactively with Family Help services to support early intervention. Early Help may be offered when concerns arise about a child's health, development, behaviour, or family circumstances. DSLs coordinate referrals and multi-agency involvement to ensure children and families receive timely support.

15. Specific Safeguarding Issues

We have procedures for a range of specific safeguarding concerns, including FGM, Prevent Duty, online safety, safer eating and choking prevention, allergies, peer-on-peer abuse, SEND vulnerabilities, domestic abuse, exploitation, and missing children.
Full details are provided in the **Safeguarding Handbook**.

16. Multi-Agency Working

We work closely with MAST, Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership, health professionals, schools, police, and early help teams. Information is shared appropriately to support children's welfare and ensure coordinated support.

17. Allegations & Whistleblowing

Concerns about staff behaviour must be reported to the DSL. Allegations follow **A2 Allegations Against Staff** and involve the LADO:

- 01422 392897 / 07596 888147
- ladoadmin@calderdale.gov.uk

Staff may raise concerns through **A3 Whistleblowing**.

18. Monitoring & Review

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if legislation, local procedures, or organisational needs change. DSLs oversee implementation across all settings.

19. Linked Policies

Safeguarding & Welfare (Category A)

A2 Allegations Against Staff
A3 Whistleblowing
A4 Behaviour & Positive Relationships
A5 Physical Contact & Physical Intervention
A6 Prevent Duty & British Values
A7 Children's Wellbeing & Emotional Development
A8 Complaints
A9 Equality, Inclusion & SEND
A10 Parents as Partners & Family Support

Health, Safety & Premises (Category B)

B1 Health & Safety
B2 Premises Security & Visitor Management
B3 Accidents, First Aid & Medication

Nutrition & Eating (Category C)

C1 Safer Eating, Nutrition & Mealtimes
C3 Allergy & Intolerance Management

Digital Safety (Category F)

F1 Mobile Phone & Electronic Device Use
F2 Safer Internet & Technology Use

Care & Intimate Care (Category G)

G1 Intimate Care & Toileting

Staff Policies (Category H)

H1 Staff Code of Conduct
H2 Safer Recruitment & Induction
H7 Parent Conflict, Aggression & Home Visit Procedures

Safeguarding Handbook

Detailed procedures for specific safeguarding issues.

20. Key Contacts

MAST: 01422 393336
Emergency Duty Team: 01422 288000
LADO: 01422 392897 / 07596 888147
NSPCC: 0808 800 5000

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231
Police: 101 / 999
West Yorkshire Safeguarding Procedures: westyorkscb.proceduresonline.com