Outings and Visits Policy

Grass Roots Nursery Group

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures and expectations for all outings and off-site visits undertaken by Grass Roots Nursery Group. It ensures that children experience safe, enriching opportunities beyond the nursery environment while maintaining high standards of safeguarding, supervision, and communication.

This is a practitioner-facing document.

2. Statutory Responsibilities (EYFS)

Our approach reflects the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), including:

- Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements
- Maintaining appropriate ratios and supervision
- Conducting risk assessments for outings
- Ensuring children's safety, health, and wellbeing
- Supporting learning beyond the indoor environment

Outings are planned and delivered in line with our duty of care and all relevant health and safety legislation.

3. Our Approach

Practitioners at Grass Roots Nursery Group are expected to:

- plan outings that enrich children's learning and reflect their interests
- maintain high standards of supervision and safety at all times
- follow risk assessments and procedures consistently
- communicate clearly with parents before, during, and after outings
- support children to explore their community safely and confidently
- model safe behaviour when walking near roads or using public transport
- remain calm, organised, and responsive during off-site activities

Leaders ensure staff are trained, confident, and supported to deliver safe, purposeful outings.

4. Key Principles

Safety First

Children's safety and wellbeing are the highest priority at all times.

Enriching Experiences

Outings provide meaningful opportunities for learning, exploration, and connection with the community.

Clear Communication

Parents are informed about outings, routines, and expectations.

Risk Management

All outings are risk assessed, and staff follow agreed procedures.

Inclusive Practice

Outings are accessible to all children, with reasonable adjustments made where needed.

5. Types of Outings Covered by This Policy

This policy applies to:

- Local walks (parks, libraries, shops, community spaces)
- Public transport trips (buses, trams, trains)
- Planned visits (museums, farms, events, workshops)

No private vehicles or staff cars are used for transporting children.

6. Planning and Preparation

Before any outing:

- a written risk assessment is completed and approved by the Manager
- staff review the route, destination, and safety considerations
- a headcount is completed before leaving
- a first aid kit, emergency contact list, and any medication are taken
- staff ensure children are appropriately dressed for the weather
- parents are informed of the outing in advance

For regular local walks, parents provide general consent on registration.

For planned trips, specific written consent is required.

7. Ratios and Supervision

- Ratios for outings are equal to or lower than those used on site.
- Additional adults may be used to ensure safety.
- Children are supervised at all times, including toilets and transitions.
- A designated lead practitioner oversees the outing and decision-making.
- Staff conduct frequent headcounts, including:
    - before leaving
    - on arrival
    - during transitions
    - before returning
- Children are never left unattended.

8. Local Walks

Local walks may include:

- parks and green spaces
- libraries
- local shops
- community buildings
- short nature walks

Procedures:

- staff walk in formation (lead, middle, rear)
- children wear high-visibility vests where appropriate
- road safety rules are reinforced consistently
- staff remain vigilant to hazards such as dogs, traffic, or uneven ground

9. Public Transport

When using public transport:

- staff plan the route and timings in advance
- children are supported to board and exit safely
- staff sit or stand strategically to supervise the group
- buggies or equipment are secured safely
- children are taught safe behaviour around platforms, bus stops, and crossings

If transport is overcrowded or unsafe, staff wait for the next service.

10. Emergency Procedures

If a child becomes unwell

- staff provide first aid
- parents are contacted
- the group may return to nursery if needed

If a child goes missing

Staff follow the Missing Child Policy, including:

- immediate search
- notifying the Manager
- contacting police (999)
- informing parents
- documenting all actions

If an incident occurs

- staff ensure children are safe
- first aid is administered
- emergency services are contacted if required
- the Manager is informed immediately

11. Risk Assessment

Risk assessments include:

- route hazards
- water, roads, and open spaces
- public transport risks
- weather conditions
- accessibility needs
- staffing and ratios
- emergency procedures

Dynamic risk assessments are completed throughout the outing.

12. Equipment and Supplies

Staff take:

- first aid kit
- emergency contact list
- any required medication
- mobile phone
- wipes, tissues, and spare clothing
- high-visibility vests (where appropriate)

All equipment is checked before leaving.

13. Observation and Learning

Outings support:

- communication and language
- understanding the world
- physical development
- personal, social, and emotional development
- mathematical and literacy opportunities in real-world contexts

Practitioners observe children's engagement and learning and may record significant moments in learning journeys.

14. Parent Communication

Parents are:

- informed of planned outings in advance
- reminded of clothing and kit requirements
- notified immediately if an incident occurs
- updated about children's experiences through conversations and learning journeys

15. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Missing Child from Nursery and Outings Policy
- Health and Safety Policy and Procedures
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Outdoor Adventuring
- Promoting Positive Behaviour
- Arrivals and Departures Policy

These policies work together to ensure safe, enriching off-site experiences.

16. Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required due to changes in legislation, guidance, or following an incident.