Sustainability Policy

Grass Roots Nursery Group
Updated September 2026

1. Policy Statement

Grass Roots Nursery Group recognises its vital role in nurturing environmental stewardship, climate resilience, and sustainable habits from early childhood. We are committed to embedding sustainability across all operational levels, from kitchen and procurement to curriculum design, outdoor pedagogy, and family engagement.
Our aim is to balance environmental responsibility with rich, hands-on learning, empowering children to become thoughtful, caring stewards of the natural world.

2. Purpose & Scope

This policy ensures:

- sustainability is embedded across all nursery operations
- children develop early environmental awareness and nature-connected habits
- staff model eco-friendly behaviours
- procurement and kitchen practices reflect sustainable choices
- outdoor learning supports biodiversity and climate resilience
- families are engaged in accessible, meaningful sustainability initiatives

This policy applies to:

- all employees
- apprentices and students
- volunteers
- agency staff
- parents/carers
- visitors across all Grass Roots Nursery Group settings

3. Statutory Framework & Reference Guidance

This policy aligns with:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Calderdale Council Environmental & Climate Commitments
- National Food Standards & Healthy Eating Guidance
- Local Authority Sustainability and Waste-Reduction Initiatives

4. Operational Procedures

A. Plant-Forward Nutrition & Kitchen Operations

Low-Meat & Plant-Forward Menus

Seasonal, nutrient-dense menus incorporate pulses, whole grains, and local produce to reduce carbon emissions associated with food production.

Zero Food Waste Focus

Meals are carefully portioned, and leftover organic food waste is composted for use in our allotment and garden spaces.

Sustainable Partnerships

We collaborate with eco-conscious partners and health initiatives, including Vitamin Angels and local produce suppliers.

B. Wild Roots & Outdoor Pedagogy

Nature Exploration

Daily outdoor play, forest-style sessions, and allotment visits teach children about biodiversity, seasonal growth, and care for living things.

Respectful Nature Language

Practitioners use positive, respectful language (e.g., “soil” or “earth” rather than “dirt”) and teach gentle care for minibeasts and plant life.

Biodiversity Development

We maintain bug hotels, plant native flowers, grow organic vegetables, and conserve water using lidded rainwater butts.

C. Energy Efficiency, Decarbonisation & Waste Reduction

Energy Management

We utilise LED lighting, monitor heating efficiency, and embed a “switch-off” culture across all rooms.

Single-Use Plastic Reduction

Single-use plastics are eliminated where possible, replaced with natural/wooden open-ended resources, loose parts, and recycled craft materials.

Paperless Administration

Digital platforms (Famly, BrightHR, CPOMS, digital sign-offs) support paperless operations and communication.

D. Climate Adaptation & Extreme Weather Safety

Climate Resilience

Outdoor and indoor spaces are prepared for seasonal weather extremes, including shaded zones for high heat, daily water safety checks, and water conservation during dry periods.

Seasonal Outdoor Attire

Families are encouraged to provide reusable, weather-appropriate clothing and outdoor suits to ensure safe outdoor play in all conditions.

5. Family Engagement & Community Connections

Home Learning & PEEP

We share practical, low-cost/no-cost sustainable activity ideas on Famly, using PEEP principles to support home learning.

Calderdale 50 Things Integration

We promote Calderdale’s *50 Things to Do Before You’re 5* to encourage families to explore local nature trails, woodlands, and outdoor experiences.

Seasonal Family Boxes

Families receive seasonal recipe cards, planting activities, and home meal kits to extend nursery eco-initiatives into the home.

6. Responsibilities & Monitoring

Staff Responsibilities

- Model eco-friendly behaviours daily.
- Involve children in recycling, composting, and energy-saving routines.
- Integrate sustainability, climate awareness, and nature stories into room planning.

Management Responsibilities

- Prioritise local, eco-conscious suppliers and sustainable procurement choices.
- Conduct annual sustainability audits and review this policy in line with environmental

guidance.
- Share progress, sustainability tips, and green initiatives with families via Famly and newsletters.

7. Monitoring & Review

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if environmental guidance, sustainability standards, or operational needs change.
The Nursery Manager and Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring consistent implementation across all settings.

8. Linked Policies

- Wild Roots Outdoor Learning Policy
- Food & Nutrition Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct