A10 Parents as Partners & Family Support Policy

Grass Roots Nursery Group – Updated October 2026

1. Policy Statement

Grass Roots Nursery Group is committed to building strong, respectful, and collaborative partnerships with parents and carers. We recognise families as children's first and most enduring educators, and we believe that children thrive when nursery and home work together with shared understanding, trust, and open communication.

We value diversity, respect family circumstances, and support parents through transitions, separation, conflict, and changing needs. Our approach is warm, inclusive, and child-centred, ensuring every family feels welcomed, listened to, and supported.

This policy outlines how we work in partnership with families, how we communicate, how we support separated parents, and how we maintain professional boundaries to protect staff wellbeing and ensure safe, consistent practice.

2. Purpose & Scope

This policy ensures:

- families feel welcomed, respected, and included
- communication is clear, professional, and accessible
- both parents with Parental Responsibility are supported
- children's wellbeing remains central during family changes
- home learning is encouraged and celebrated
- professional boundaries are upheld
- concerns are resolved fairly and respectfully

Applies to:

- all parents, carers, guardians, and family members
- all staff, apprentices, volunteers, and students
- all communication channels (in person, Famly, email, phone)

3. Statutory Framework

This policy aligns with:

- EYFS Statutory Framework (2026)
- Children Act 1989 (Parental Responsibility)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
- Data Protection Act 2018 & UK GDPR

4. Building Strong Partnerships with Families

A. Equal Stakeholders

Parents are recognised as their child's primary educators. We work collaboratively, valuing parental insight, cultural identity, and family routines.

B. Key Person System

Each child has a named Key Person who:

- builds a secure relationship
- mirrors home routines
- supports transitions
- acts as the family's main point of contact

C. Famly Communication

We use Famly for:

- daily updates
- photos and learning moments
- announcements
- messaging
- care logs
- accident/incident reporting

D. Onboarding & Information Sharing

Before starting, families complete:

- registration forms
- healthcare and allergy documentation
- funding forms
- permissions
- weaning and dietary information

All documents are shared digitally for accessibility.

E. Community & Home Learning

We strengthen community connections through:

- weekend socials
- stay-and-play sessions
- inclusive events
- monthly digital newsletters
- PEEP Family Learning
- 50 Things To Do Before You're 5

These initiatives help learning flow naturally between home and nursery.

F. Accessibility & Inclusion

We provide:

- translated materials where needed
- adjusted communication formats
- culturally respectful practice
- support for families with additional needs

5. Professional Boundaries & Communication Expectations

A. Respectful Communication

We expect all communication to be:

- calm
- respectful
- child-centred
- solution-focused

Staff will always respond professionally, empathetically, and promptly.

B. Official Communication Channels

To protect staff wellbeing and maintain transparency:

- all communication must take place via Famly or nursery email
- staff cannot accept personal social media requests
- staff cannot communicate via personal messaging apps
- staff cannot share personal phone numbers

C. Pre-Existing Relationships

Any personal connections between staff and families must be disclosed to management to ensure clear professional boundaries.

6. Separated Parents, Family Breakdown & Parental Responsibility

We remain neutral, child-centred, and respectful during family changes.

A. Legal Responsibilities

Under the Children Act 1989:

- parents with Parental Responsibility (PR) have equal rights to information
- both parents with PR may access Famly and developmental records
- we cannot restrict a parent with PR unless a court order explicitly states this

B. Court Orders

We require a **sealed copy** of any:

- Prohibited Steps Order
- Specific Issue Order
- Non-Molestation Order
- Child Arrangements Order

These are stored securely and followed precisely.

C. Communication with Both Parents

Unless legally restricted:

- both parents receive updates
- both may attend meetings
- both may access learning journals

- duplicate newsletters can be provided

D. Collection Arrangements

Parents must provide a clear written collection schedule.

We **cannot** refuse collection by a parent with PR unless:

- a court order prohibits it
- there is an immediate safeguarding risk (e.g., intoxication, aggression)

E. Supporting Children During Family Breakdown

We monitor:

- emotional changes
- behaviour shifts
- sleep or appetite changes
- separation anxiety

Early help pathways may be used where needed.

7. Resolving Concerns & Maintaining a Respectful Environment

We aim to resolve concerns quickly, fairly, and collaboratively.

A. Informal Resolution

Parents are encouraged to speak with:

- their child's Key Person
- Room Leader

Most concerns can be resolved at this stage.

B. Formal Resolution

If needed, concerns may be escalated to:

- Nursery Manager
- Executive Leadership Team

A meeting will be arranged, and a written summary shared.

C. Respectful Conduct

We expect all adults on nursery premises to behave calmly and respectfully.

Aggressive behaviour, shouting, intimidation, or harassment will not be tolerated.

(Full operational procedures for managing aggression are contained in **H7 Staff-Only Policy**.)

8. Home Learning Support & Multi-Agency Collaboration

A. Parent-Requested Support

Families may request guidance on:

- routines
- co-regulation
- behaviour
- language development
- home learning activities

B. Multi-Agency Work

We work closely with:

- Health Visitors
- Social Care
- Portage
- SEND specialists
- Family Support Workers

C. SEND Transitions

For children with complex needs, we may observe the child at home to support transition planning.

D. Welfare Checks

If a child is absent and contact cannot be made, welfare checks may be carried out as part of safeguarding procedures.

(Operational details are in **H7 Staff-Only Policy**.)

9. Safeguarding & Confidentiality

We treat all family information with strict confidentiality.

We will share information only:

- with parents holding PR
- with professionals on a need-to-know basis
- where required by safeguarding legislation

Any concerns relating to:

- domestic abuse
- parental conflict
- substance misuse
- unsafe collection
- emotional distress

will be logged on CPOMS and reviewed by the DSL.

10. Monitoring & Review

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if guidance changes.

The Nursery Manager and Executive Leadership Team ensure consistent implementation across all settings.

11. Linked Policies

- A1 Child Protection & Safeguarding
- A4 Behaviour & Positive Relationships
- A7 Children's Wellbeing & Emotional Development
- B1 Health & Safety
- E6 Positive Feedback & Parent Voice
- F1 Digital Safety & Technology
- H7 Parent Conflict, Aggression & Home Visit Procedures (staff-only)