



# Grass Roots Newsletter

Hello March!



We will be saying goodbye to Winter on the 20th March and we welcome the beginnings of Spring, we are really looking forward to the warmer weather.

We have a new student starting with us. Ellie is doing her level 2 at Calderdale College, she is carrying out her placement at St Peter's and will be with us until July.

We have arranged another parent meet up at Sunny Play Gym on Saturday 5th April at 1.45pm. If you would like to come please message us for details of how to book or see the family newsfeed post.

## Monthly Theme - New Beginnings

New beginnings with small children take on a unique and often beautifully chaotic form. It's a blend of embracing change while navigating the constant needs of little ones. Here's a breakdown of what that can look like:

- Routines with Flexibility:
  - Small children thrive on routines, so establishing new ones is crucial. However, flexibility is key. Expect disruptions and be prepared to adapt. New beginnings might involve new routines, like starting in a new room, or a new baby coming into the home. So routines around eating, sleeping, and play are very important.
- Emotional Adjustments:
  - Children, even very young ones, sense change. They may express their feelings through tantrums, clinginess, or regression.
- Involving Children in the Process:
  - Age-appropriate involvement can help children feel a sense of control and reduce anxiety. This could mean letting them help pack for a move, choose new toys, or participate in decorating a new room. Reading books about new beginnings can also be very helpful.
- Prioritising Connection:
  - Amidst the chaos, making time for quality connection is essential. This could be through simple activities like reading together, playing games, or having cuddle time.
- Managing Expectations:
  - New beginnings rarely go perfectly. Be prepared for setbacks and be patient with yourself and your children. Small steps and celebrating small victories can make a big difference.





## Practitioner Spotlight:

Rachael is this month's praise winner! Rachael is the Meadow room leader and Early Years Teacher. She has been with us for five years, developing her skills and knowledge through university education and practice in her role. You will usually find Rachael getting very messy with the children and is amazing at following the children's lead with play and learning. She is an inspiration to the other team members, always full of ideas and is loved by all the children due to her warm and caring nature. She has a great sense of humour and loves nothing more than lots of fun with the children, helping to develop children's confidence and sense of self.



### Event Calendar:

- World book day w/c 3rd March - week long celebration. Come in your PJ's and share your child's bedtime routine with your key worker.
- Red nose day Friday - 21st March
- Family SEND support session @ Grass Roots Family Centre Thursday 20th March at 10am.

### Community News:

- Check out Grass Roots Family CIC facebook page for community events  
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100086769567112>
- 50 things to do before you are 5 has events on their website  
<https://calderdale.50thingstodo.org/app/os#!/welcome>



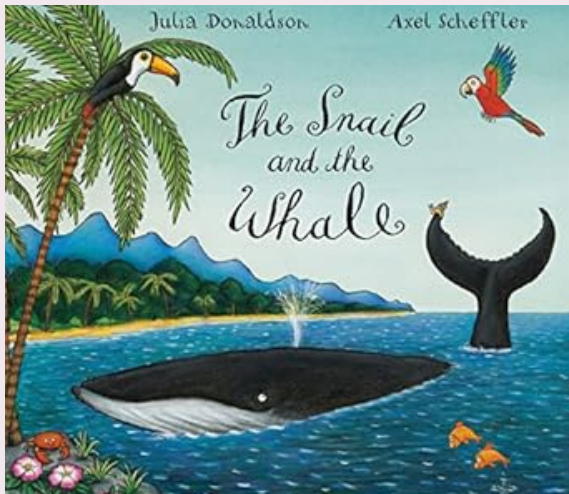
### Curriculum Focus:

In the Meadow, they are currently working on shapes and rhyme. They are also wanting to introduce different art forms, so this week they have been using shapes to make abstract art. Abstract art can be a fantastic tool for reinforcing shape recognition in a fun and engaging way. Abstract art often features simplified, geometric shapes. Encourage children to identify and name the different shapes they see in a painting or sculpture. You can ask questions like, "How many circles can you find?" or "Can you point to the triangles?"





## Book Review:



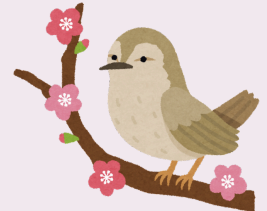
The Snail and the Whale by Julia Donaldson

'The Snail and the Whale is a favourite of my sons bedtime routine. It soothes him to sleep when we read this and he also has it on a tonie box (audible story).

I like the rhyming element to it and it helps with the monotony of the having to read the same book each night. He likes to point out each of the pictures on each page and we anticipate the pictures that are coming on the next page. It is a brilliant way to connect as a family.'

by Ryan, Nursery chef

## Q&A:



Can my child bring a toy to nursery?

We do allow children to bring toys to nursery, especially comforters but we would usually discourage it due to the following issues:

- It can cause conflict between children who have seen the toy and want it. It can be difficult for some children to understand why they can't play with it.
- Toys can get damaged or lost in setting. We can't take responsibility for these items when in nursery.
- It can be a barrier to learning and a disruption if they choose to just play with the particular toy and not engage in planned activities.
- These toys can be a safety concern, for example small loose parts or may be unhygienic.
- It can cause emotional distress if the toy is lost or broken. Causing the child anxiety.

Rachael the preschool lead's response to the question:

'Yes, but in pre school we do have a toy nursery where toys stay during the day due to them being lost or broken, if your child is happy to leave their toys with you or at home for the day that would be a big help.'

If you would like support in stopping your child bringing toys with them to nursery, we can help with this.'





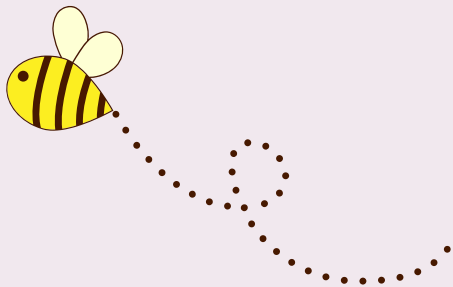
## Recipe Corner:

Our recipe of the month is:  
Tomato Sauce/Pizza Sauce

This versatile recipe can be used as a side to your meal, either in a tub or squeezed out of a container, just like tomato ketchup, Or use it as a base for pizzas (see our homemade pizza base recipe on the website)

Another easy alternative for pizza sauce, is tomato puree, mixed with italian herbs and thinned out with water. Let us know what you like on your pizzas!

<https://www.grassrootsdaynursery.com/post/tomato-sauce--pizza-sauce>



## Tips and Tricks:

If you are struggling with transitions at home, or want to prepare for a significant transition in your child's life, here are some tips and tricks for you to try:

- Depending on your child's age and understanding, you need to give them advanced warning. For children who are non verbal try using objects of reference to support this.
- Consistent routines are brilliant to ensure children have the predicability they need to reduce anxiety.
- Visual cues such as schedules and picture charts help children to understand their routine, and especially helpful when establishing a new routine.
- Explain and give the 'why' to why you need to 'go home' or whatever you are doing. Some simple explanation may stop or reduce a meltdown.
- Where possible involve the child as much as possible and try to make it playful,
- Try to give a limited choice, for example 'we are going to Grandma's would you like to cycle or hop?' - This will give your child a sense of control.
- Validate their feelings, don't dismiss them, 'I know you are happy playing, and this is making you sad'
- Make eye contact and get attention before giving instructions. Try to refrain from shouting across the room.
- Acknowledge a positive transition, give your child recognition
- Remain calm and patient if things don't go smoothly.
- Remember that things take time to embed into routine. Practice these transitions often.





## Risky Play:

Providing your child with the opportunity for risky play can be quite easy. Risky play isn't about being dangerous or reckless. It's about children exploring boundaries, testing their limits, and learning to manage potential dangers in a safe and controlled environment. It helps develop physical skills, emotional resilience, and problem-solving abilities. Here are some ways you can enable risky play for your child:

- **Climbing and Heights:** Provide opportunities to climb on safe, age-appropriate structures. This could include climbing frames, low tree branches, or sturdy indoor climbing structures.
- **Rough-and-Tumble Play:** Allow for supervised wrestling, and play fighting. Set clear boundaries and ensure everyone understands the difference between play and aggression.
- **Speed and Movement:** Encourage activities like running, jumping, and rolling. Provide opportunities for riding tricycles, scooters, or balance bikes. Allow for spinning and swinging.
- **"Disappearing" and Getting Lost:** Play hide-and-seek or create opportunities for children to explore small, safe spaces. Set clear boundaries and ensure children know they can always find you.

By providing these opportunities, you can help your child develop essential skills and build confidence.

## Healthy Choices:

Navigating nutrition with a young child can be very difficult. First Steps Nutrition advise following 3 easy steps, The Three Golden Rules - Eating Well for 1 - 4 year olds:

- Base meals and snacks around minimally processed and natural foods.
- Mealtimes matter - take your time, make eating a happy event, and be a good role model in how to eat yourself.
- Avoid ultraprocessed foods, if there are more than a handful of ingredients, leave it on the shelf.

For snack and meal ideas or further information, follow the link <https://www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-early-years>



## Online Safety:

To keep your child safe online, here is a helpful tip for you:

Have secure passwords - Keep devices out of reach and set passwords on all your devices and don't share them. Then you'll know when and where your child is accessing the internet. Also, use passwords to make sure they're not making additional purchases when they're playing games or using apps.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/0-5/#:~:text=Choose%20safe%2C%20fun%20and%20educational,inappropriate%20videos%20and%20other%20content>

