



Grass Roots Newsletter

Hello April!



What a lovely start to Spring we have had, with some beautiful and warm sunny days!

We have plans for the outdoor area at New Road, and hopefully a nice surprise for the children when they return after Easter. We look forward to lots of time outside in nature, watching flowers bloom and the natural world around us thrive as we head towards Summer.

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 - Easter



Easter, even without its religious context, holds significant importance for young children due to a variety of engaging and enjoyable aspects:

1. Fun and Excitement:

- **Easter Egg Hunts:** This is often the highlight for young children. It encourages exploration and problem-solving (where could they be hidden?).
- **The Easter Bunny:** This mythical figure adds a touch of magic and wonder to the holiday. The idea of a special bunny visiting and leaving surprises is enchanting for young imaginations.
- **Treats and Goodies:** Chocolate eggs, candies, and small toys found during egg hunts or in Easter baskets are a delightful part of the celebration for most children.

2. Creativity and Imagination:

- **Easter Crafts:** Making Easter cards, bunny masks, or other spring-themed crafts encourages imagination and artistic expression. These activities can also be a fun way to spend time together as a family.

3. Family and Social Connection:

- **Family Gatherings:** Easter often involves spending time with family, which can be a source of warmth, belonging, and positive memories for children.
- **Community Events:** There may be local events or elsewhere that host Easter egg hunts or other child-friendly events, providing opportunities for social interaction and fun with peers.

4. Understanding Seasons and Nature:

- **Springtime Symbolism:** Easter coincides with the arrival of spring, and many of its secular symbols (baby animals, flowers, new leaves) represent new life and growth. This can be a gentle way to introduce children to the changing seasons and the wonders of nature.





Practitioner Spotlight:

Heather is this month's praise Winner! Heather works in The Meadow (preschool) at St Peter's. Heather builds good bonds with families and children and she has a strong focus on children building and practicing new skills.

Heather is a Mum of two lovely boys and has a cute little doggy called Titch. Heather has worked at Grass Roots for over four years and tends to be a great support and mentor for some of the other team members.



Event Calendar:

- Easter Holidays - Close for Term Time only children Friday 4th April and reopen for term time only children Wednesday 23rd April.
- Family Get Together @ Sunny Play Gym - Saturday 5th April 1.45pm - 3.45pm.
- Family SEND support session @ Grass Roots Family Centre Thursday 17th April 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>

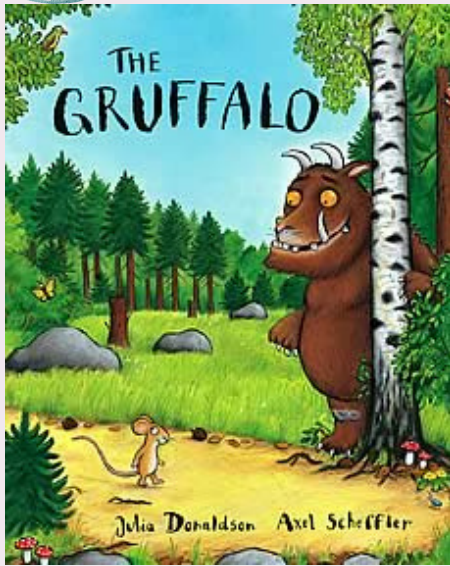
Curriculum Focus:

We are currently planning and preparing for our preschoolers' transition to school. Our focus will be on the essential skills children need to acquire before starting school in September. Each week, we will share a post for families highlighting the particular skills we are concentrating on, as well as suggestions on how to support and enhance their child's learning at home. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's learning and development of these skills, please feel free to speak with your child's key worker. However, please remember that these skills require ample practice and repetition.





Book Review:



The Gruffalo by Julia Donaldson

The babies thoroughly enjoy reading 'The Gruffalo' as it engages all the children. They take out Gruffalo puppets and connect elements like the orange eyes and purple prickles to the story. By using the puppet, they can better visualise the Gruffalo. Additionally, we organise various activities centred around the book.

The Fold Team - Christine, Charlotte, Laurie and Keeley.

Q&A:



How do I create a healthy routine at home to prepare my child for school?

Try focusing on these key areas:

- Going to bed around the same time each night, waking up in time to get ready for school. Do the same relaxing things in the same order, at the same time every night. These could include a warm bath, dimming the bedroom lights, and reading a story together quietly. Try to avoid screens for an hour before bedtime, and make sure there's no TV or tablet on in the room when they're going to sleep.
- Limiting screen time to the recommended daily amounts (2-4-year-olds: no more than 1 hour of sedentary screen time, though "less is better.")
- Eating a healthy diet and trying new foods. There are four main food groups our children need each day: starchy carbohydrates, fruit and vegetables, dairy (or appropriate substitutes) and protein. Include them in food preparation, meal planning and shopping and try to be a good role model, trying new foods and having fun with your child at mealtimes.
- Brushing their teeth with fluoride toothpaste twice a day (you'll need to supervise this until they are at least 7) Success with brushing in the early years is all about making it fun, so try to brush children's teeth at a time they're most happy or when they're playing and distracted.





Recipe Corner:

With Easter approaching, we thought it would be nice to give you a handful of recipes and ideas to do with your children rather than just one. If the sun is shining you can prepare some treats for a picnic or have your little helpers get stuck in, making lots of lovely delicious food to enjoy as a family (or share with loved ones).

Check out our website for the list of ideas:

<https://www.grassrootsdaynursery.com/post/easter-recipe-ideas>



Tips and Tricks:

The Toilet Training Process:
Establish a Routine:

- Encourage your child to sit on the potty or toilet at regular intervals, such as:
 - First thing in the morning.
 - After meals (as digestion can stimulate bowel movements).
 - Before and after naps.
 - Before going out.
- Don't force them to sit if they resist, but encourage them to try for a few minutes. Make it a positive experience by offering books or quiet toys.
- Nappy-Free Time: Once your child seems comfortable with the potty, start having short periods of nappy-free time at home. This helps them feel the sensation of needing to go.
- Dress them in easy-to-remove clothing.
- Positive Reinforcement: Praise your child's efforts, even if they don't produce anything.
- Celebrate successes with enthusiasm (e.g., clapping, cheering, stickers, a small non-food reward).
- Avoid punishment or scolding for accidents, as this can create anxiety and hinder progress. Simply clean up calmly and remind them to try the potty next time.
- Respond to Signals: Pay attention to your child's cues (fidgeting, squatting, grunting, going to a quiet place) that they might need to use the toilet and promptly guide them to the potty.
- Consistency is Key: Ensure that all caregivers (parents, grandparents, nursery) follow the same approach and use the same language.

Toilet training is a journey, not a race. By being patient, observant, and positive, you can help your child achieve this important developmental milestone.





Risky Play:

Hanging and swinging are incredibly important activities for children under 5 because they significantly contribute to their sensory, motor, and cognitive development. Here's some key reasons why:

Vestibular System Development:

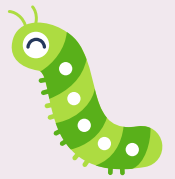
- **Balance and Spatial Awareness:** Swinging and hanging provide crucial stimulation to the vestibular system, located in the inner ear. This system is responsible for our sense of balance, spatial orientation, and awareness of our body in space. The back-and-forth and up-and-down motions help children understand where their body is moving and how to maintain equilibrium.
- **Coordination:** A well-developed vestibular system is fundamental for gross motor skills and coordination. It helps children learn to coordinate their head and eye movements, which is essential for tasks like reading and tracking moving objects.
- **Body Awareness (Proprioception):** Hanging engages muscles and joints, providing proprioceptive input – the sense of where your body parts are in relation to each other without looking. This enhances body awareness and helps with motor control.

In summary, hanging and swinging are not just playful activities for under 5s; they are fundamental for building a strong foundation for their physical, sensory, cognitive, and emotional development.

Healthy Choices:

Eating healthier as a family:

It's not just about what your child eats, but also the environment around them when they are eating. When children eat with other members of the family and have the same meals, this encourages children to enjoy a variety of foods. If you can, try to sit down and eat meals as a family, without the distractions of the television or computer games. Snacking can also affect a child's eating habits and can mean that they don't have a balanced diet. Try to keep snacking to twice per day and opt for fruit and vegetables, in place of snacks high in fat, salt and sugar. Food and eating should be enjoyable and fun! Children love to get involved. Take them to the shops to help choose different foods.



Online Safety:

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

Be involved:

Encourage them to use devices in the same room as you so you can keep an eye on how they're using the internet. Stay inquisitive about what they are doing and encourage them to share their enjoyment with you.

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

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