



MUDDY BUDDIES - JOINING NOTES AND INFORMATION

WHAT TO WEAR

Well, we live in Scotland and we are used to all weathers in a single day. Wherever possible, we will continue to run a session, regardless of weather.

Severe wind and rain or lightning would force us to postpone.

With that in mind, the advice is the same for you as it is for your child: think 'many thin layers' rather than 'one thick one' and have a good waterproof outer layer.

Avoid denim if you can; once it gets wet, it stays wet and is very cold. Hats and gloves are also a good idea.

Wellies are fine, or walking boots if you have them. The ground can be both boggy and uneven.

Bring a change of clothes for you and your child, especially if you are going on elsewhere, immediately after.

WHAT TO BRING

Apart from the clothing detailed above, it's worth bringing along a wee tub of things that your child likes to eat.

Staying hydrated is important outdoors - the wind dries you out quicker than you think.

Bring something for both of you. There will be tea, coffee and juice available but self-sufficiency is always best.

If your child has a favourite toy that they tend to cling to when uncomfortable, consider bringing it with you.

FOR CARER AND CHILD:

Many layers

Waterproofs

Wellies

Change of clothes

Food

Drink

Cup or thermos mug

HOW WE WORK

This is child-led play. The equipment and activities are made available pretty much throughout the sessions.

This allows the child to take up whatever they fancy.

We will call everyone together half-way through and we shall have a song or a story or a talk or a game.

SAFETY OUTDOORS

We provide a safe environment (relatively) for everyone to play in.

We walk the site before each session, looking out for any hazards and either removing them or flagging them.

We have safety equipment for the fire and first aid supplies and expertise.

There is pop-up tent for changing nappies but also to act as a refuge if required.

Playing in the outdoors is marvellous but it can never be entirely safe.

Risk is managed and care taken but risk is inherent in any activity.

It can serve as an excellent educational tool for children - getting soaked or muddy is an excellent way to learn the importance of balance!

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

We value you your child's safety very highly but we need **you** to be **primarily responsible** for **your** child or children.

We welcome those who want to bring more than one child to the woods but please bear in mind what you can realistically handle. Some children require more attention than others.

We would like common sense to apply - you need to be able to relax and have a chat and a cup of something hot. This is easier if everyone is aware of the safety of all the children around them; be prepared to act if a child is about to roll in nettles or face-plant in a huge puddle! Allow other adults to help keep your child safe.

We want everyone to have fun and enjoy themselves.

Everyone will be coming together in the same outdoor space and we may find that we have different levels of play safety.

Hopefully this will lead to some interesting discussions around risk / play benefit.

REGISTRATION AND CHARGING

Muddy Buddies is relatively low cost, thanks to the generosity of the Woodland Group, Sustaining Dunbar and East Lothian Council. We do, however, have some running costs and the need to buy in supplies. We also need to purchase some equipment to replace that which we are borrowing.

As such, we intend to charge a small fee per child, per session, to keep the group sustainable.

After these first sessions, we will look to build a program for the next six months. This will include the Summer holidays - why stop when the weather is good? We will invite registration and ask people to pay in advance for sessions.

We are keen for Muddy Buddies to be a success and to reach as many children and carers as possible.

We are starting out small but we hope to provide more in the future.

Your support and enjoyment mean a lot to us.

Please spread the good word!