



Handbook Sensory Woodland Experiences & C-19 Policy



GENERAL INFORMATION:

Judith Riddell Contact Details: Phone: 07714172361 Email: Judithriddell@empoweringlittleminds.co.uk

Website= www.empoweringlittleminds.co.uk

Address: 49 Crawfordstown Road, Ballynahinch BT248LZ

(Follow google maps – 1st house on private lane on the right with log gate)

Qualifications: 17 Years Teaching & specialist SEN experience - BA, MA (cantab), PGCE – Cambridge University.

Venue:

Empowering Little Minds venue is based within Riddell Wood, which is a privately owned site providing multiple outdoor woodland teaching spaces each with secure boundary fenced areas so all can freely explore & relax as the site has been designed with the specific needs of those with SEN in mind:



1. Tree House Area with: large climbing area, 2 slides, 2 swings & sheltered water pumping station.



2. Willow Garden with: sawdust kitchen, willow structures, bridge & den building, sheltered craft zone, edible sensory garden & 3 swings.



3. Woodland Classroom with: flexible teaching space for all ages, sheltered log burning stove with water boiler, fire pit sitting area & sheltered main teaching area with sound, screen & projector if required.



4. Vegetable garden area with: raised beds and wide paths for accessibility for all ages & abilities to learn about growing fruit & vegetables.

Hygiene Facilities



There are 2 compost toilet facilities.
This smaller one is situated within the carpark area.



This main facility situated within the Willow Garden has a changing room space with a permanent changing bed for all ages & a mini kitchen with: fridge/freezer & microwave.



For hand hygiene and C-19 safety there are multiple hand washing water stations with at least one in each of the woodland areas for easy accessibility.

Accessibility: The site is flat with woodchip accessible paths to provide access for wheelchairs, pull along trucks & buggies. The changing room access has 1 step, but the smaller compost toilet access is flat.

Car Parking:

- There are car parking spaces for up to 10 cars. There is also a wide turning circle for minibus turning & minibus parking spaces instead.



Covid-19 Precautions:

- The Empowering Little Minds sensory experience areas are all outdoors with at least 1 small, sheltered area in each of the 3 woodland areas. The 3 woodland areas are spread out over approximately 1 acre of space. Covid-19 research suggests, with working outdoors there is less inclination for the virus to spread on natural surfaces but Empowering Little Minds still a number of extra precautions in place to help reduce the risk.
- ⊗ Please contact Judith immediately if you or anyone in your group are told to self-isolate due to track & trace government policy or test positive for Covid-19.
- ⊗ Should Judith or her staff ever test positive for Covid-19 all clients will be contacted & will be refunded for sessions cancelled due to the business being closed.

Staffing Policy:

- All sessions will be taught by Judith Riddell an experienced teacher & SEN specialist.
- When required for bigger group sessions Judith will provide an experienced support assistant to ensure all children receive adult support & play modelling and can be fully empowered to achieve their potential.
- All staff will be easily identifiable by staff uniform.
- During all sessions parents or guardians are requested to stay on site. There will be FREE tea/coffee provided for adults within the main woodland classroom area or alternatively all adults are welcome to join in activities with their children. For small groups whenever possible, Judith will try to provide a parent/adult coaching style while also teaching children to help extend learning beyond sessions & empower parents as well as their children.

Clothing Policy:

- To help reduce covid-19 spread & cross contamination please do not wear any school uniforms onsite. For children coming directly from school feel free to bring a spare set of clothes with you if not time to change before sessions. (Changing room provided)
- Everyone attending sessions is expected to dress appropriately for the season. (No flipflops, sandals or high heels at any time)
- To enable children to freely play in all areas without getting cold they are best to wear waterproof puddle or ski suits with welly boots or old shoes. You are welcome to simply bring a change of clothes for after sessions & changing room is provided.
- In cold weather or in winter it is best to wear thin multiple layers with a water-proof suit or water-proof outer layers & waterproof shoes or boots. Please bring a hat & gloves to wear when required to reduce getting cold.
- There is a heating & cooking stove in the woodland classroom. Hot water will be readily available during all sessions for adults & children to keep warm. Please bring your own cup & drinking bottle to reduce contamination risks. Please feel free to help yourself to hot water for drinks & there will be a refreshment time during all sessions when possible, especially on cold days.

LAYERING FOR WINTER

A layer-by-layer guide to staying warm and dry.

- 1 Base Layer:** The layer worn next to the skin should be moisture-wicking, like 100% merino or a wool blend. Avoid cotton.
- 2 Mid Layer:** Should be flexible, and leave room for warm air, such as a thick sweater and knit leggings, like Tubes.
- 3 Outer Layer:** Choose a wind-, rain- and snow-proof "shell" that will keep the elements out.

MINIMIZE LAYERS - CHOOSE THE RIGHT FABRIC
Opting for less bulky layers increases comfort and mobility! Sometimes two strong but light layers is enough. For example, a pair of moisture-wicking merino long Johns under a quality, weatherproof shell layer to keep the wind and wetness out.

LAYER WINTER CLOTHES EFFECTIVELY
IT IS NOT JUST ABOUT THE FABRICS, IT IS HOW THEY ARE WORN:

- Keep layers loose. Too tight layers will squash air pockets and push out all the warm air.
- With the right fabrics, you'll rarely need more than three layers total, no matter the weather.
- Keep your layers dry to stay warm. Moisture replaces warm air and saps heat quickly.
- It's not the fabric itself, but the air trapped in your clothes, that keeps you warm.

WINTERIZING YOUR KIDS. TIP # 3
ellawool.com

To fully build resilience we need to learn to enjoy experiences in all types of weather. There is no such thing as bad weather just inappropriate clothing.

WHAT'S THE WEATHER LIKE?	WHAT TO DRESS THEM IN			
	BASE LAYER (next to skin)	MIDDLE LAYER	OUTER LAYER	EXTRAS
MILD DRY CALM 15-20°C (10 months)	MERINO BASE LAYER			
MILD WET 15-20°C	MERINO BASE LAYER		WATERPROOF SHELL	WELLES OR OVERSHOES
COLD DRY CALM 5-14°C	MERINO BASE LAYER	WOOL OR MICRO-FLEECE		WOOL HAT, WARM BOOTS OR BOOTIES
COLD RAIN WIND 5-14°C	MERINO BASE LAYER	WOOL OR MICRO-FLEECE	WATERPROOF SHELL WITH HOOD	WOOL HAT, WELLES OR OVERSHOES
V. COLD DRY CALM -3-7°C	MERINO BASE LAYER	POLAR-FLEECE		WOOL HAT, WARM BOOTS OR BOOTIES, WOOL SOCKS
V. COLD RAIN WIND -3-7°C	MERINO BASE LAYER	POLAR-FLEECE	WATERPROOF SHELL WITH HOOD	WOOL HAT, INSULATED SNOW BOOTS OR OVERSHOES
FREEZING AND/OR SNOW -5-2°C	MERINO BASE LAYER	WOOL OR MICRO-FLEECE	WATERPROOF SHELL WITH HOOD	EXTRA THICK WOOL SOCKS, INSULATED MITTENS, WARM BOOTS OR BOOTIES, WIND PROOF GLOVES, WIND PROOF HAT

When it's windy it feels colder. To factor in wind chill, deduct 5 degrees from the actual temperature and dress little ones accordingly.

Prepared monthly (or as needed)
1. Temperature (15-20°C) Base Layer only
2. Windy/Precipitation/Any Wind/Chill
3. Quality Outer Layer/Fabric
4. Quality Outer Layer/Fabric
5. Quality Outer Layer/Fabric
6. Quality Outer Layer/Fabric

