

MARKETHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Dear Parent / Carer

Welly Wednesdays at MPS

Welly Wednesdays will be starting in Markethill PS in January 2024. Each Wednesday, children from P1 – P4 will go outside to enjoy the wonderful outdoor space around MPS.

Welly Wednesday is an educational experience which considers the whole child and promotes learning through play and exploration. Children learn about the natural environment, how to handle risks and to use their own initiative to solve problems and cooperate with others. Our aim is to provide an opportunity for the children to develop, to learn and to enjoy themselves in a safe and non-threatening environment. We also want to help children understand, appreciate and care for the natural environment.

In MPS, we believe the outdoor area provides our children with one of the best possible environments in which to learn. It is our aim that our children experience joy and excitement as they learn new skills and make fresh discoveries. We have 2 members of staff who are completing training as Forest School leaders and they will help in the planning of outdoor learning.

Some of the benefits of enjoying the outdoor provision include:

- ✓ Improves health and well-being.
- ✓ Improves social skills when working together.
- ✓ Promotes independence.
- ✓ Encourages children to take risks, explore and get creative.
- ✓ The sensory experience of listening to and feeling different weather conditions such as the wind, rain, and snow.
- ✓ Discovering about seasons and the changes that happen in the environment such as crunchy leaves falling off the trees.
- ✓ Learning to manage the new risks that come with different weathers such as drinking lots of water and sun cream when it is hot or being careful of ice when it is cold.
- ✓ Discovering about living things in the environment when the weather changes, e.g., snails may come out when it rains!
- ✓ New learning experiences such as painting with wet mud when it is raining or catching rain in containers and talking about quantities and numbers.
- ✓ Fun activities such as den building to keep dry or to provide shelter from the sun, splashing in puddles, crunching leaves, mini beast hunting and much more.

Every Wednesday, the teachers and children will dress in their outdoor clothes, coats, hats, gloves and scarves. **We ask that each child brings a pair of wellington boots into school, clearly marked with their name.** We have purchased welly stands for each class. The wellies will stay in school so that these are easily accessible for the children. Everyone is looking forward to our Welly Wednesdays and you will be able to view photos of the children enjoying these days.

Yours sincerely

Dr Helen McLernon, Principal