

# Muddy Puddles Forest and Coastal School

Building confidence and resilience through forest school play



## Impact ...

- Children overcome fears of getting muddy or wet, and learn to wash independently in the stream
- Reluctant participants build courage to climb and walk in streams, learning to adjust technique after falls
- Resilience and problem-solving skills grow through hands-on learning
- Confidence grows as children take responsibility around fire and tools

## Background

Muddy Puddles is a forest school in Conwy offering holiday and half term sessions for children aged four to 11. Based in Dolwen Farm's woodland, it provides child-led outdoor learning where children explore, create and develop within the forest school ethos. Each session welcomes up to 15 children, with flexible timings for working parents. Many children return year after year, always discovering something new.

## What are they doing differently?

Muddy Puddles uses a child-led forest school ethos, giving children freedom to explore creatively while learning about risk and safety. The approach builds resilience and confidence through:

- fire lighting, where children are encouraged to take responsibility and persist with support when needed
- physical challenges such as tree climbing, rope work on slopes, stream walking and wooden swings
- creative problem-solving, like experimenting with materials to make mud slides faster
- risk-benefit activities, with safety talks followed by opportunities to try activities that interest them

Each session is unique, with activities shaped by the children's interests and ideas on the day.

“ *Seeing a child arrive nervous and leave covered in mud, smiling and proud of what they've achieved, is the best part of forest school.* ”