



LadyBirds Nature Parent Toddler and Play Group

**Dare Valley Nature Kindergarten
Purpose and Parent Handbook**

Why Ladybirds?

“To Unlock the Potential of children and the outdoors”



Introduction

LadyBirds Parent & Toddler group is based on Swedish Nature Pedagogy and is a unique parent and toddler and playgroup set in the woodlands of Dare Valley Country Park.

Our Nature Parent & Toddler Group harnesses all the benefits of nature and the outdoors in order to provide your child with a learning rich and healthy pre-school experience, designed to support your child's physical emotional and cognitive development.

This group is the first step towards creating Wales' first Nature Kindergarten. The diverse and wonderful Dare Valley County Park provides a range of beautiful and natural learning environments.

Children will explore nature in depth which is proven to have significant impacts on their health, wellbeing and achievement.

This group focuses on you as a parent with your child interacting with nature, with support and facilitation of a trained nature teacher. We create structures for learning through play and encourage parents to let your child go where their interest takes them.

Regulation

As the group operates through sessions with parents in the morning and without during the afternoon we keep the afternoon sessions to under 2 hours in length. We are in the process of applying for approval by the regulating authority for childcare in Wales (CCISW) however, our staff and setting comply with all relevant child care, first aid and outdoor based qualification requirements. We base our provision above National Minimum Standards (NMS) and our pedagogy reflects international best practice in Nature Kindergartens from Scandinavia.

Our staff have the following key qualifications:

- Qualified Teacher Status (QTS); or a Level 3 Teaching and Learning Qualifications & Childcare qualifications
- Outdoor and/or Paediatric First Aid
- A nature based qualification or training (e.g Forest School or Skogsmulle Leader)
- Level 2 Food Hygiene qualifications
- DBS checked

Insurance

LadyBirds is part of Cyfleon and Ignite UP, a specialist in nature based pedagogies from across Scandinavia and one of the UK's leading outdoor training and activity provider. As a company with social enterprise status we are a values based organisation and ensure all work we do produces social, financial and environmental impacts for our community. We have current public and employer liability insurance.



Sessions

Fridays have both a morning & afternoon session, Tuesday and Thursday will be a mornings only session. Morning 10am to 1pm Afternoon 1:10 - 3pm.

LadyBird Mornings

During these sessions our LadyBird leader will facilitate a range of free-play, songs and stories, focused nature based activities and snack time. The sessions are designed to be open-ended and child led so that you and your children can explore themselves and nature together, as well as achieve the unique benefits that the outdoors provides.

We provide drinks, teas and coffees, as well as snack such as toast, biscuits and fruit in the mornings.

LadyBird Afternoons

These sessions are playgroup based and without parents. We can accommodate 1 hour & 50 minutes of provision which will allow your child the chance to develop their independence and confidence in Dare Valley Nature Kindergarten as they prepare for longer sessions without parents and carers. These short sessions also provide you the opportunity for a break without having to enrol your little one into a “formal and structured” setting which may not be developmentally appropriate for your child.

LadyBirds who attend in the mornings can stay for the afternoon; as well as children who attend other nursery and day care settings the mornings elsewhere.





We encourage you to bring your child with a little backpack with a healthy snack and drink.

Typical Day

10.00: Meet in courtyard at Dare Valley Park
10.00 - 10.30: Journey to woods and free play
10.30 - 11.00 Songs and stories
11.00 - 11.15: Snack around the fire
11.15 - 12.00: Focused activity or free play
12.00 - 12.50: Lunch

1.10: Meet in courtyard at Dare Valley Park
1.15 - 3.00 Nature Kindergarten session
3.05: Collect child from courtyard

In addition, there will be days/sessions where we will adventure within the park taking advantage of the weather, seasons and the other beautiful areas that Dare Valley Park provides.

Parent participation

LadyBirds provides fantastic opportunities for you to get actively involved in your child's learning and development. We encourage you to explore and facilitate your child's curiosity whether they are constructing, jumping in puddles

and the brook or planting trees in the woods. If you are unsure if an activity is safe or appropriate for your child, please speak with our LadyBird leader who can offer guidance on developmentally appropriate activities for your child. Please remember small things to us as adults are huge steps for our little ones, please encourage and praise your child and others; we are a community.

LadyBirds is about building a community and group for you and your children. We believe that if you have a stake and purpose in this group, not only will your child benefit but the possibilities of the group will grow as well. There will be opportunities to volunteer and support the group in discussion with the LadyBird Leaders.

As this is an inclusive and open group, all we ask is that you help yourselves to drinks and with preparation and sharing of snacks.

Who is LadyBirds For?

Ladybirds mornings are open to all children and families from birth months to 5 years. LadyBirds afternoons are for children aged 2.5-5 years. The woods are accessible to pushchairs and the environment is caring and open to children with different needs.

Language

LadyBirds is an English medium setting with some use of Welsh. It is our intention to strengthen Welsh medium provision in the near future.



Weather

“Life isn’t about waiting for the storm to pass, its about learning to dance in the rain”

LadyBirds is an all weather group and whilst we love puddles and mud, as well as sunshine and warmth, there are times when shelter and heat is needed.

Don’t worry about really bad weather, we have access to cover and shelters so if it is windy and wet we can escape the worst of the weather and still be outdoors.

Staffing

LadyBirds at preset is led by Tracey Madge and supported by our outdoor learning assistant and volunteers who are passionate about child development and the outdoors. We are a happy, caring and welcoming team. If you are uncertain with any aspect of LadyBirds or would like some guidance on how you can support your child’s development outside of Ladybird session’s please speak to one of our staff.

Morning capacity

We have space and capacity for 24 LadyBirds each morning. As this is a Parent Toddler group we are not required to follow CCISW standard ratios; however we operate a maximum 1:12 ratio to ensure smooth running.

Afternoon capacity

We have space and capacity for 24 LadyBirds each afternoon. For these sessions we follow National Minimum Standards and provide adult supervision at 1:8 or 1:4 adults to children.

Admissions

Previously Ladybirds has been a “soft-book” or turn up on the day group, however, as demand has increased and our goal of opening a full Nature Kindergarten approaches, it is now necessary to have a pre-book enrolment form and system (see below or website).

This will allow appropriate staffing, and the planning and resourcing of the sessions to enable your child to have the best learning experience we can provide. There will be the opportunity to book on at short term notice, if you have purchased the minimum session credits for the term (see fees per term below).

We will run enrolment per half-terms. Ladybirds enrolment will also provide priority for admission to our Nature Kindergarten in Spring 2017.

After receiving your enrolment form and payment, we will confirm your child’s place. If there are any issues with days and availability we will contact you in advance

Term 1: January 10 - February 24

Term 2 - February 27 - April 14



To enrol you must sign up for a minimum of 7 sessions per term.

	Morning sessions (min. 7)	Afternoon sessions (min. 7)
1st LadyBird	£35 / £5 per session	£56 / £8 per session
2nd LadyBird	£21 / £3 per session	£49 / £7 per session
3rd LadyBird	FREE	£42 / £6 per session
Under 1's	FREE	-

Fees per term

Example scenarios:

1. I have 1 child and just want to come on a Friday morning for 1 term, except the last week.

You will need to enrol and pay for the 7 sessions, and we will try our best to get you and your LadyBird in on another day in another week. Cost: £35

2. I have 2 children and want to attend 2 mornings a week for the full term, but not the same morning each week.

You would need to book 28 sessions total (2 lots of 14 sessions and indicate a week in advance to the LadyBird Leaders w

hich days you will attend, but where possible let us know which days you would like to attend with as much notice (a week minimum will guarantee you a place).

Cost: £70 for first child and £42 for second child; attending 28 sessions total.

3. I haven't been before and would like to try it out before paying for 7 sessions.

You of course can come along for a 1 off taster session and if you would like to join, just enrol for the full term.

4. I don't know if I can attend every week. Can I roll my sessions into the next term?

Unfortunately we are unable to roll sessions to ensure we have spaces for other bookings.

5. I want to come every Tuesday morning and an additional 3 Friday Afternoons.

Just book 7 sessions and an additional 3 afternoons, making sure to indicate which weekly sessions you are attending for availability. Cost: £35 for the mornings + £24 for the afternoons.

6. What does 2nd and 3rd Ladybirds mean?

We offer sibling discounts; so if you have more than 1 child and want to attend you get a discount.

7. I want to come for 2 full days on Tuesdays and Fridays with 1 child

2 full days is equal to 2 morning and 2 afternoons sessions in 1 week (Tuesday AM and PM & Friday AM and PM). This would equate to 2 lots of 14 sessions in the 7 week term. Cost: £70 for the mornings and £112 for the afternoons.

We operate a fair and consistent approach to allow as many children and families to attend. If there are any queries on enrolling, just contact us to discuss.

Guiding Principles

- Fee's are due in advance of Ladybirds 1st day of term
- You can book additional sessions at short notice if you have enrolled for a minimum of 7.
- If enrolment forms are received without payment, we will allow you to attend the first session but will request payment before attending the next session.
- If you are booked for a session but cannot attend, just please let us know in advance so we are aware you are not attending.

Cancellations

If you cannot attend a session after enrolment and payment, there are no refunds. If there are unforeseen and extenuating circumstances, please contact us to discuss.

If we have to cancel a session for any reason, we will provide 24 hours notice and honour the session on another day, or in the next term with a credit.

How to book

You can complete an enrolment form online at: <http://igniteup.co.uk/ladybirds-parent-toddler/> ; or complete the form found at the bottom of this document.

How to Pay

You can pay via CASH or cheque, to Cyfleon Ltd, address: Ignite UP, Dare Valley Country Park, Aberdare CF44 7RG

By phone using a card (there is a 3% fee for this)
You can pay via PayPal via the website link above.





Ladybird Parent Toddler Registration Form

We are member of Wales Pre-school Providers Association (Wales PPA)

*Please complete this form and return to info@igniteup.co.uk or deliver to Dare Valley Country Park. We advise to check availability before submitting and places will only be confirmed upon receipt of the **enrolment form**, **payment** and a **confirmation** from ourselves.

Parent Name:

Mobile number (1):

Work number (2):

2nd person name &
contact number:

Main contact email:

Child Name (1):

DOB & Age:

Child Name (2):

DOB & Age:

Which day will you be attending? (circle below)

Tuesday: AM PM Both

Thursday: AM

Friday: AM PM Both

If you are attending different days on different weeks, please list below your anticipated sessions with AM, PM or BOTH.

If we cannot accommodate all sessions we will contact you to try and be flexible with second choices.



Term 2

	Tuesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1 - Feb. 27			
Week 2 - March. 6			
Week 3 - March. 13			
Week 4 - March 20			
Week 5 - March 27			
Week 6 - April 3			
Week 7 - April 10 (Easter)			

Total sessions booked:

Any known medical conditions:

Any known allergies:

Any known learning needs:

Do we have your consent that if required, your child will be taken by staff to the nearest Accident and Emergency unit to be examined, treated or admitted as necessary, on the understanding that you have been informed and are on your way to the hospital.

Yes No

Should there be a delay in you giving consent for treatment, the medical professional in



charge, will make any decisions necessary in order that your child's health safety is not compromised.

Do you consent to any emergency treatment necessary by the medical professional in charge

Yes No

Have we your consent for outings/walks etc. outside the woodland including the wider country park and riding school

Yes No

Have we your consent to take photos of your child and display them within the setting/website/publicity?

Yes No

Are you happy for your child to appear in the media? This may mean their photo and name is used in print:

Yes No

Do you give consent for information about your child to be shared with others settings such as schools and other statutory bodies?

Yes No

Would you like to join the LadyBirds PTA and receive further information? to join the committee

Yes No

Registration Details and Records:

1. I/we confirm that to the best of our knowledge the information provided on the registration form is accurate, and that I/we will inform the LadyBirds of any changes to it, including any changes in parent/carer status, e.g. in the event of parental separation.
2. Where possible, sessions will be made available to meet your needs subject to the requirements on this form, however, you should confirm with the LadyBirds staff that the sessions are available prior to completion of the form.
3. I/we understand that my/our child's records will be held on a computerised database and that this is kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, and that



they will be used for no other purposes than playgroup business, and will never be passed onto third parties. I/we also agree to the registration form and any others, related to the child, being kept by the playgroup for the period of time the child attends the playgroup and a further 7 years this is for public liability reasons.

Duty of Care/Illness:

1. I/We understand that my/our child will not be admitted to LadyBirds if she/he is unwell, and I/We will keep them out of playgroup as required, according to the exclusion periods as advised by the medical practitioners or play leaders.
2. I/We agree to collect my/our child if they become ill whilst at the Playgroup,
3. I/We understand that the playgroup is only able to administer prescribed medicines.
4. In the event of my/our child requiring medication, as laid out above, I/we shall complete a Medication Form consenting to the Playgroup staff administering the child's medication as instructed by myself/ourselves, in accordance with the prescription. Medication will be given by a Play leader or Assistant, and a further witness will be present. Parents must sign this form prior to medication been given.
5. Infant Paracetamol (i.e. Calpol) - Infant Paracetamol can be very effective at reducing children's temperature, however it may mask symptoms when there could be something more seriously wrong with a child. Because of this it is Playgroup policy not to administer Infant Paracetamol. The Playgroup will only administer Infant Paracetamol to treat the specific problem for which it has been prescribed
6. I/We agree to inform the playgroup if my/our child has head lice. I/We agree that the child will be excluded for a period of time, which depends on the treatment used. Please seek the advice of the playgroup staff
7. I/We agree to the use of individually wrapped sterile adhesives (plasters) unless I/we have already indicated that the child has allergy to these
8. I understand that LadyBirds is a Nature Based Parent and Toddler group in the outdoors and responsibility for the supervision and control of my child(ren) is mine or the person attending with my child(ren) during the Parent Toddler sessions.

Payment via: Online / cheque / cash / card

Signed:

Date: