**Outdoor clothing – appraising the quality of the garments**

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| **Item** | **Comment** |
| Gender neutral |  |
| Made from recycled material |  |
| Responsibly manufactured |  |
| Sufficient reflective tabs |  |
| Value for money |  |
| Suitable colour(s) |  |
| Sufficiently waterproof – *minimum 5000*+ mm |  |
| Taped seams |  |
| Machine washable  |  |
| Dries quickly |  |
| Can be re-proofed |  |

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| **Jackets/ all-in-ones** | **Comment** |
| Removable hood |  |
| Adjustable hood |  |
| Hood will stay up |  |
| Hood will go over a hat |  |
| Long enough to cover waistband (no gap between jacket and trousers) |  |
| Soft collar |  |
| Zip protection |  |

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| **Dungarees/trousers/all-in-ones** | **Comment** |
| Braces easy to adjust |  |
| Clips easy to fasten/unfasten |  |
| Trouser waistband adjustable |  |
| Elastic stirrup at feet |  |
| Elastic or Velcro at arms and feet |  |
| Can be easily put on or taken off  |  |
| Legs will fit over boots |  |

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| **Accessories** | **Comments** |
| Lots of warm, thick socks winter |  |
| Sturdy boots with a good grip and sufficient sole insulation for winter |  |
| Variety of hats for different seasons and weathers |  |
| Lots of gloves and mittens |  |
| Base layers and mid layers available for children who need these. |  |

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| **Children’s concerns** | **Comments** |
| Easy to put on |  |
| Zip or fastenings easy to use |  |
| Hood big enough to cover head |  |
| Comfy wrists |  |
| Not too noisy/rustles |  |
| Choice of colours |  |
| Other matters raised by children |  |

**NOTES**

Above are some considerations when appraising the suitability of outdoor clothing and accessories. Never buy without getting a sample in advance to look at. Involve your children in trialling, appraising and deciding which clothing to purchase. Often variety works well.

* Ask about Fairtrade, look on their website for comments. Don’t be afraid to ask where it is made and how.
* Muddy Faces has very good detail about many practical matters such as waterproof ratings, care guides, environmental and buying advice <https://muddyfaces.co.uk/outdoor-hub>
* Try not to wash outdoor gear and always follow washing and care instructions. A wee scrub down of muddy gear before drying is usually sufficient.
* The more waterproof a piece of clothing is the better. In wet areas of the UK you will need considerably more than 5000mm waterproof rating.
* Re-proof clothing before it loses its waterproofness.
* Black, brown, green, grey and other earthy camouflage colours are not good for children from a safety standpoint. A child who is lost or has run away is very hard to spot in such colours. It also makes it easier for you to keep track of the child when outdoors. Have reflective tabs or reflectors that can be attached to the clothes.
* Zips should have a flap on the inside to protect the child from being hurt when the zip is closed.

There are many opinions expressed around whether dungarees, trousers or all in ones work best.

* Often all-in-ones are warm which is good in winter
* Dungarees provide versatility e.g., can use in summer for wet or messy play with a T-shirt underneath.
* Trousers that can be pulled down easily for children being toilet trained can be handy.

Have a piece of elastic or velcro tabs at the end of the trouser legs so it can close round a boot. This is important in terms of keeping heat within the trousers. The trousers should cover the boots (do not tuck into wellies as water will run inside and the children will get wet feet), and have elastic/velcro at the legs so that water is not let in even if the child jumps in puddles.

* Wool socks are best as they absorb moisture and stay warm when damp, but be aware of any children who have a wool allergy.
* Long socks provide more warmth up the legs and can stop boots from rubbing
* Wide-brimmed rain hats like sou’westers ensure that rain runs over the back of the collar
* Wide-brimmed sunhats are needed for sunny days. Baseball caps are not ideal as the neck can get burned. Have ones with cloth that protects the neck
* Accessories can be carried in children’s pockets or in their hoods if needed.
* Warm, waterproof mittens that cover the wrists and have elastic to help reduce the chances of them falling off
* Gloves that enable more dexterity
* Look for winter boots with a removeable inner – they are easier to dry if the boots get wet on the inside
* Not all children will have warm base layers and middle layers. Encourage children to come to your setting with extra clothing. Have extra clothing available.