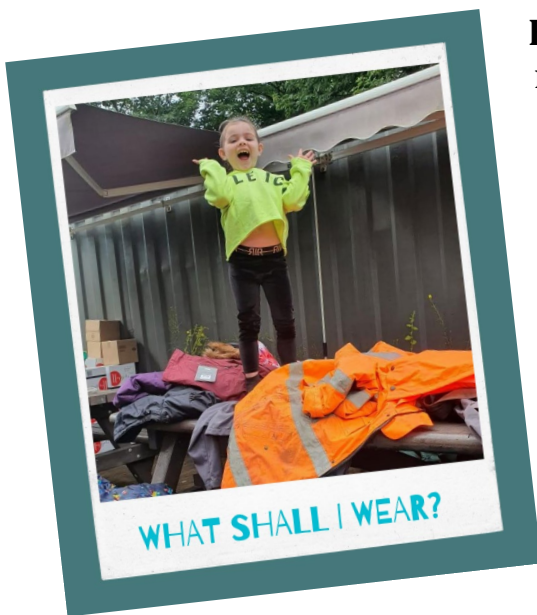


# CHILDREN'S A Practitioner's Guide to OUTDOOR PLAY BASED LEARNING

## WHAT TO WEAR

“Help – I’m starting Outdoor Nursery, what should I wear?”



**Being outside is so exciting**, there is just so much to explore! But what should a mud-exploring little adventurer wear for outdoor nursery/forest kindergarten?

What you need are clothes and shoes that are **comfortable** and allow for lots of movement. You know the clothes we mean, the ones that that come in the ‘it’s ok if they get muddy, torn, soaked’ category, these are perfect. Clothes that render a response from an adult of ‘oh, no you’ve ruined your good jacket/trousers/designer hoody’ should definitely be left at home.

Together we take a closer look at what you might have in your wardrobe that you can use, or what you can ask the family to look out for.

### Sunny and Dry Weather

As warm, sunny days are quite rare in Scotland, understandably, you want to wear your favourite shorts and maybe flip flops or open toe sandals. While these are fun and great for wearing at home, you will need something a little bit more practical for nursery, but what?





Outdoor explorers need a little bit of protection, so look out those loose and comfortable T shirts or long sleeve cotton tops/shirts as these provide protection from the sun, nettles, bugs that bite and things that sting!

Hats and sunscreen help a lot (we know you might not like it so ask a grown up to make sunscreen fun by pretending you are getting tiger stripes on your face!).

**Light rain and summer showers** – perfect for impromptu splashing. Our outdoor explorer on the left looks like she is dressed for the outdoors right? She is sporting a lovely silver puffa jacket, leggings and cool trainers. What you might not be able to see, is that she is **SOAKED** due to an unexpected downpour! This young lady is a bit of a guru when it comes to outdoor play, so we asked her for her top tips:

- ✓ Wear your old clothes
- ✓ Put a waterproof jacket on before you get soaked
- ✓ If your leggings get wet, have a spare pair!
- ✓ Pull on your waterproof trousers or dungarees for serious puddles
- ✓ Wellies or boots, anything waterproof - once your trainers are wet they are horrible!



Showers can pass quite quickly, so if you have a T-shirt or a top that is made of quick drying material that takes away moisture really quickly, it's usually ok to skip wearing a jacket. Otherwise a lightweight rain jacket and a pair of lightweight over trousers will keep those underlayers dry. Loose fitting ones can pop off and on quickly. Practice those zips, toggles and velcro for extra independence!



**Heavy rain** need not stop play. A fully waterproof jacket and trouser set will keep you dry in the heaviest rain. Breathable fabric with taped seams will keep the rain out and let the air flow. Savvy young outdoor explorers also care about the planet. They know that we should waste less and recycle more. A great way to buy less is to embrace those hand-me-downs and buy pre-loved items of quality clothing online. You can pick these up at a very reasonable price--good for your budget and the planet! Remind your grown up to re-proof for extra protection (wash or spray with waterproof top ups).

**Cold, wind and rain require layers.** Get this right and you will never want to go inside to play – ever

**The key to comfort outdoors is proper insulation.**

There are 3 layers.

1. Base layer
2. Insulation or mid layer
3. Outer or weather protection layer

Each part of this layering formula has its own important function. On most winter days, your grown up will want to start you out wearing all three groups to keep you comfortable and playing outdoors happily for as long as possible, though if you get too hot you can shed some of it.







First off, **AVOID COTTON**. That Batman T shirt may be your favourite, but when you are sweaty or damp it will take ages to dry next to your skin. Tell your grown up that your base layer should keep you warm and dry underneath the rest of your gear. Sweating and exposure to moisture in the air can cause your skin to become cold, so a first layer of wicking fabric is really important. Moisture-wicking describes a material that transfers the water molecules from the surface of your skin to the outer clothing layers, keeping you dry.

Cotton, on the other hand, is a hydrophilic material (it easily absorbs water) and shouldn't be worn as an inner layer. Be sure to use both a top and bottom base layer, and wear socks that are made for outdoors and use similar wicking materials. Did we mention, don't wear cotton!

## More Top Tips

**Clothes - How they feel.** We know that some outdoor clothes are not the most comfortable. **Waterproof clothing is not always warm! (See 'layers' above)**

**Hats** – Are fabulous when we get it right! Get it wrong and they fall over our eyes, they twist round, they are itchy, they have annoying labels, they blow off. We sometimes lose them.

**Gloves** – There are very limited waterproof gloves with fingers for small children. Mittens keep hands warm but prevent fine motor movement. Gloves with fingers get very wet, very quickly, so spare sets are useful. We lose these items. A LOT.

**Scarves** – These look cute and can be great if they are tucked inside the jacket, however, flapping loose scarves, or big giant furry ones at best get in the way, at worst, are a safety hazard. We leave them hanging on pallets, trees, toilet tent floor. Soft snood style neck warmers work better and stay put for longer.

**Wellies and Boots** – Wellies are usually made out of rubber - without warm socks they will rub young feet and toes can get very cold. Good

quality socks are the answer to this, make sure there is enough room in the wellie for the socks.

**Socks** – Last but not least, these are one of the most important items of clothing for any would-be outdoor adventurer. Check out ones that keep your feet cool in summer and extra warm ones for keeping toes toasty in winter. Spare socks are a must.

**Love watching our videos?**

**This week, check out Baltic Street Adventure Playground and Earthtime Outdoor ELC's 'Weather-Wise Tips' featuring Mirren Kennedy age 5: <https://bit.ly/Children OutdoorWear>**

## Useful Links

**Children's Foot Health**

<https://cop.org.uk/foot-health/keep-on-walking/guide-to-childrens-foot-health/>

**The Outdoor Dad**

<http://theoutdoordad.co.uk/reviews/best-toddler-waterproofs-2018/>

**Little Trekkers**

<https://www.littletrekkers.co.uk/>