



Bacchus Marsh  
Grammar

# ELC POLICY

## Early Learning Centre Clothing and Footwear Policy

Approved by the Approved Provider: 31 March 2026

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## Clothing and Footwear Policy

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## 1 Quick Reference

clothes | footwear | barefoot play | what to wear | temperature | sun protection | safety | clothing fabric | labelling | respect for cultural diversity | messy play | WHS | sleep and rest | neurodiversity

## 2 Purpose and Background

- 2.1.1 To set out our expectations regarding children's clothing and footwear with the aim of ensuring their safety and comfort
- 2.1.2 This policy helps us to comply with the National Regulations (s 168(2)), which requires us to have policies and procedures related to children's health and safety, and sun protection

## 3 Scope

- 3.1.1 This policy applies to:
- 'Staff': the approved provider, nominated supervisor, paid workers, volunteers, work placement students, and third parties (e.g., contractors, subcontractors, self-employed persons, employees of a labour hire company) who carry out work on behalf of our service
  - Children in our care, their parents, families and care providers
- 3.1.2 This policy only covers clothing and footwear for children, not staff or other adults

## 4 Definitions

- 4.1.1 The following definitions apply to this policy and related procedures:
- 'Parents' includes guardians and persons who have parental responsibilities for the child under a decision or order of court
  - 'Staff' refers to the approved provider (unless otherwise indicated), paid employees, volunteers, students, and third parties who are covered in the scope of this policy

## 5 Policy Statement

### 5.1 General Clothing Requirements

- 5.1.1 Children should wear our Uniform clothes that:
- Allow them to move comfortably and safely, participate in active play, and be safe for rest and sleep
  - Are not too loose or tight
  - Are free from cords, ribbons, drawstrings or any other accessory that can pull tight around the child's neck and pose a choking or entanglement risk
  - Give them protection from the sun
  - Are appropriate to the weather and temperature
  - Cover the child in such a way that maintains their privacy and dignity
  - Are clearly labelled with the child's name
  - Are suitable for active and messy play (i.e., not their best clothes)
  - Allow for easy dressing and toileting (e.g., elasticated waist bands rather than buttons, zips or belts; tops with large necks; cardigans; bigger buttons rather than small buttons or studs)
  - Are low fire danger
- 5.1.2 Families should pack a spare set of clothes (including socks and, if possible, shoes) in case of accidents or changes in the weather. These do not have to be uniform clothes
- 5.1.3 Educators will encourage children to wear aprons for art and messy or water play
- 5.1.4 Educators will inform families in advance if children need specific clothing or footwear for excursions, or other planned activities or events such as cultural celebrations

### 5.2 General Footwear Requirements

- 5.2.1 Children should wear footwear that:



- Is stable and supportive with a good grip
  - Fits comfortably and securely (i.e., not too loose or small)
  - Is closed toe
  - Allows them to participate in active play such as running, climbing, jumping etc
  - They can put on and take off according to their age and stage of development (e.g., velcro fastenings or slip-on shoes for younger children)
- 5.2.2 Children should not wear thongs, slides, high-heeled shoes, clogs, shoes with slippery or flimsy soles, or backless shoes that might cause them to trip
- 5.2.3 Our service offers barefoot play for children. We:
- Help children to remove their outside shoes before they enter indoor spaces and invite them to play outside without shoes, if it is safe to do so
- 5.2.4 The nominated supervisor and educators will communicate the possible benefits of barefoot play to children and families, including that it may:
- Enhance sensory experiences and feedback from the environment, promoting better spatial awareness and coordination
  - Support the development of foot muscles and arches, contributing to overall posture and physical development
  - Encourage a closer connection with nature and the outdoor environment, fostering a sense of freedom and exploration
  - Reduce the risk of foot deformities and improve balance and agility
- 5.2.5 To support safe barefoot play, we will:
- Follow our barefoot / no shoes procedure (attached)
  - Conduct a regular risk assessment of barefoot play and ensure that children and staff are safe from harm or hazards
  - Promote and encourage barefoot play as part of the daily routine, ensuring it is safe and appropriate for the developmental stage of each child
  - Ensure environments are safe and suitable for barefoot activities, regularly checking for hazards that could pose risks to barefoot children
  - Incorporate into the curriculum barefoot activities that support the development of gross motor skills, balance, and spatial awareness
  - Respect individual family and children's preferences regarding barefoot play and accommodate children who, for cultural, health, or personal reasons, do not wish to remove their shoes
  - Train our staff so they know how to identify and manage risks
  - Consider and meet our obligations under work health and safety laws to provide a safe work environment for our staff
  - Review and monitor this policy regularly to ensure it meets current best practices and safety standards.

### 5.3 Sun Safety

- 5.3.1 To comply with our Sun Safety and Heat Protection Policy, children should wear:
- A UV protective, legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket style hat when outdoors Purchased as part of the child's uniform
  - Clothes (Uniform Clothes) that cover as much skin as possible, including on their chest and back, shoulders, upper arms and upper legs (preference is to cover lower arms and legs too, but this may not be practical)
  - Where practical, close-fitting, wrap around sunglasses that meet Australian Standards and cover as much of the eye area as possible
- 5.3.2 Children should not wear caps, visors, or sleeveless or backless tops

#### 5.4 Dressing for the Weather

- 5.4.1 In cold weather, children should wear warm layers (Uniform Clothes)(e.g., jackets, long pants, hats, beanies - if necessary)
- 5.4.2 In wet weather, children should bring raincoats (Uniform Clothes) and gumboots
- 5.4.3 In warm weather, children should wear light, breathable clothes and bring a jacket or jumper in their bag to be ready for cool changes (uniform clothes)
- 5.4.4 Educators will monitor children's clothing and footwear to ensure it is suitable for the weather

#### 5.5 Sleep and Rest

- 5.5.1 Educators must ensure that children are dressed safely for sleep and rest
- 5.5.2 Children must be:
  - Wearing well-fitting clothes that are not too loose or tight
  - Not wearing clothes that may obstruct or cause strangulation or suffocation, including: crocheted jackets, jewellery, teething necklaces, headwear, or clothes with hoods, capes, ties, ribbons, strings, cords, loose buttons or toggles
  - Dressed appropriately for the temperature of the room, without heavy or excess layers of clothing. Children should be comfortably warm, not too hot or too cold
  - Helped to remove shoes

#### 5.6 Jewellery, Teething Necklaces, Sensory Chewy Necklaces

- 5.6.1 Children should not wear decorative or teething jewellery at our service
- 5.6.2 Children may wear cultural or religious jewellery, or safe sensory chewy necklaces that are designed to support children with neurodiversity
- 5.6.3 If a child arrives wearing jewellery that is not allowed, educators may remove it and give it to the child's parent at collection time

#### 5.7 Supporting Children and Families

- 5.7.1 Staff will be aware that families have diverse needs, values and beliefs associated with clothing, jewellery and footwear, and some children will have disabilities or sensory sensitivities that may dictate their choice of fabrics, fits and fastenings
- 5.7.2 We will respect all families' cultural, religious and personal preferences regarding their child's clothing and footwear, provided they do not pose a risk to a child's safety or prevent them from participating in activities
- 5.7.3 Educators will support children's autonomy by respecting their clothing and footwear choices where they do not pose a risk to themselves or others or stop them from participating in our activities
- 5.7.4 Educators will discuss respectfully any concerns they have about children's clothing, jewellery or footwear, and work with families to find suitable solutions
- 5.7.5 Educators will encourage children to become increasingly independent to dress themselves
- 5.7.6 Educators must respect children's privacy and modesty when they are helping children with dressing

## 6 Principles

- 6.1.1 Clothing and footwear should keep children safe and allow them to move, sleep, rest and play without risk
- 6.1.2 Children should feel comfortable and be dressed appropriately for the weather
- 6.1.3 We support children's independence and autonomy regarding clothing and footwear
- 6.1.4 We respect and celebrate the cultural, religious and individual clothing needs and preferences of our children and families
- 6.1.5 We regularly review and update our policies and practices to make sure they still reflect current best practices

## 7 Policy Communication, Training and Monitoring

- 7.1.1 This policy and related documents can be found on the BMG Web site, Policy folder in the Gallery and on the staff One Drive Policy file
- 7.1.2 The approved provider and nominated supervisor provide information, training and other resources and support regarding the Clothing and Footwear Policy and related documents
- 7.1.3 All staff (including volunteers and students) are formally inducted. All staff (including volunteers and students) are formally inducted. They are given copies of/access to, review, understand and formally acknowledge this Clothing and Footwear Policy and related documents.
- 7.1.4 The nominated supervisor runs a professional development program for each staff member, which covers this policy
- 7.1.5 Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined in this policy and in individual position descriptions. They are communicated during staff inductions and in ongoing training
- 7.1.6 The approved provider and nominated supervisor monitor and audit staff practices and address non-compliance. Breaches of this policy are taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action against a staff member
- 7.1.7 At enrolment, families are given information about/ given access to our Clothing and Footwear Policy and related documents
- 7.1.8 Families are notified in line with our obligations under the National Regulations when changes are made to our policies and procedures

## 8 Legislation (Overview)

### 8.1 Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations

Law	Description
s 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
Regulations	
s 168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
s 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
s 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
s 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

### 8.2 National Quality Standard

Stand ard / Eleme nt	Concept	Description
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazards
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing

### 8.3 Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) V2.0 / Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework

Outcome	Key component
1: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF IDENTITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and agency</li> </ul>
3: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF WELLBEING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children become strong in their social, emotional and mental wellbeing</li> <li>Children become strong in their physical learning and wellbeing</li> <li>Children are aware of and develop strategies to support their own mental and physical health and personal safety</li> </ul>

### 8.4 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

#### Most relevant principles

Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

## 9 Related Documents

### 9.1 Key Policies

Child Safe Environment Policy | Family and Community Partnerships Policy | Enrolment Policy | Orientation Policy | Sleep and Rest Policy | Positive Relationships for Children Policy | Access and Inclusion for Children Policy | Physical Activity Policy | Excursions Policy | Sun Safety and Heat Protection Policy

### 9.2 Procedures

Roles and Responsibilities – Clothing and Footwear (attached) | Barefoot Procedure (attached)

## 10 Sources

Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations | National Quality Standard | StartingBlocks resources | Red Nose | Sun Protection Policy Guidelines ACECQA | Cancer Council Australia

## 11 Authorisation

<b>ELC Document Name</b>	<b>Clothing and Footwear Policy</b>	
<b>Name of Reviewer:</b> Approved Provider	<b>Andrew Neal</b>	<b>Signature:</b>
<b>Name of Reviewer:</b> Nominated Supervisor	<b>Kerry Osborn</b>	<b>Signature:</b>
<b>Date Revised</b>	<b>March 2026</b>  Reviewed annually and when there are changes that may affect this policy or related procedures. The review will include checks to ensure the document reflects current legislation, continues to be effective, or whether any changes and additional training are required	

## 12 History

<b>Date</b>	<b>Amendment</b>
August 2025	1. New policy
March 2026	2. Reviewed – no changes

### 13 Appendix A: Roles and Responsibilities – Clothing and Footwear

#### Approved provider responsibilities (not limited to)

Ensure our service meets its obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law* and *Regulations*, including to take every reasonable precaution to protect children from harm and hazards likely to cause injury

Ensure that our service's governance, management, operations, policies, plans, (including risk management/action plans), systems, practices and procedures for children's clothing and footwear are appropriate in practice, up-to-date, best practice, and comply with all relevant legislation, standards and guidelines

Ensure this Clothing and Footwear Policy and related procedures are in place and available for inspection

Take reasonable steps to ensure our Clothing and Footwear Policy and related procedures are followed (e.g. through clear and accessible communication, and systemised inductions, training and monitoring of all staff – including volunteers, students)

Regularly review this Clothing and Footwear Policy and related procedures in consultation with children, families, communities and staff

Notify families at least 14 days before changing this Clothing and Footwear Policy if the changes will: affect the fees charged or the way they are collected; or significantly impact the service's education and care of children; or significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service

#### Nominated supervisor / persons in day-to-day charge responsibilities (not limited to)

Ensure our service meets its obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law* and *Regulations*, including to take every reasonable precaution to protect children from harm and hazards likely to cause injury

Support the approved provider to ensure that our service's management, operations, policies, plans, (including risk management/action plans), systems, practices and procedures for children's clothing and footwear are appropriate in practice, up-to-date, best practice, and comply with all relevant legislation, standards and guidelines

Implement this Clothing and Footwear Policy and related procedures

Take reasonable steps to ensure our Clothing and Footwear Policy and related procedures are followed (e.g. through clear and accessible communication, and systemised inductions, training and monitoring of all staff – including volunteers, students)

Contribute to policies and procedure reviews and risk assessments and plans in consultation with children, families, communities and staff. Support the approved provider to notify families of reviews and changes according to legislation and our policies and procedures



**Educator / other staff responsibilities (not limited to)**

Follow this [Clothing and Footwear Policy](#) and related procedures, including for sun protection, and safe sleep and rest

Communicate respectfully with families about children’s clothing and footwear, and be mindful of families’ cultural, religious or individual needs and preferences

Monitor children’s clothing and footwear and make sure it is safe, comfortable and appropriate to the weather and the specific activity the child is engaged in

Give families advanced information about children’s clothing or footwear requirements for excursions, or special events and activities (e.g., harmony day or other dress up days)

Make sure children are dressed safely for sleep and rest, in line with our procedures

Make sure children are wearing protective clothing in the sun and heat

Encourage children to wear aprons or smocks for messy play and art

Allow children to make decisions about their clothing and footwear, but only insofar as it does not pose a risk to themselves or others

Model appropriate clothing (e.g., wearing hats and close-in shoes)

Respect children’s privacy and modesty when helping them dress or with toileting

Support children to build the skills for self-dressing

Contribute to policy and procedure reviews and risk assessments and plans, and participate in training and professional development opportunities that are relevant

**Families responsibilities (not limited to)**

Dress your child in our Uniform clothing appropriately for the weather and play, in line with this [Clothing and Footwear Policy](#)

Label your child’s clothes and shoes with their name (not just initials)

Pack a spare set of clothes for your child in case of accidents. If possible, also pack a pair of shoes

Make sure your child is wearing sun protective Uniform clothing

Discuss any specific needs your child has related to clothing and footwear with educators or the nominated supervisor

Dress your child in clothes (uniform clothing) that are okay to get dirty while playing – that is, don’t dress them in their best clothes

## 14 Appendix B: Barefoot / No Shoes Procedure

### Introduction

- These procedures apply to our Clothing and Footwear Policy
- 'Parents' includes guardians and people who have parental responsibilities for the child under a decision or order of court
- 'Staff' includes volunteers, students and third parties defined in the scope of the Clothing and Footwear Policy

#### When to use this procedure

- To assess and manage the risk of promoting barefoot play
- When entering indoor spaces

#### 1. Assess and manage risks

- The nominated supervisor and approved provider must conduct regular risk assessments that identify and manage the risks to children, staff, families and visitors who are not wearing shoes at our service
- Risk assessment should cover risks such as:
  - Injuries, e.g., heavy items dropped on feet, slipping and tripping, stubbing toes, stepping on sharp objects or hot surfaces (such as metal outdoor play equipment, soft fall materials, astroturf, sand)
  - Harms and hazards in different environments/areas at the service, e.g., outdoor/indoor, play equipment, in bathrooms and toilets, in rest/sleep areas, food preparation and eating areas, arts/craft area, arrangement of furniture and play equipment
  - Material quality of walking surfaces, e.g., on hot days/cold days, tiled / paved / floorboards / carpets / rugs, soft play, mulch, woodchip, grass, tree roots etc.
  - Fungal or bacterial infections being spread by direct contact with uncovered feet or by contaminated floors/soil
  - Emergency situations or accidents when the service needs to evacuate quickly
  - Obligations under work health and safety laws to provide a safe work environment for our staff

#### 2. Ensure safe and hygienic barefoot play

- Feet must be covered if there are any wounds, or fungal or bacterial infections present
- Help children to wash and dry their feet
- Keep tiled and hard surfaces, including toilet and bathroom floors, clean and dry to prevent slips and the spread of infectious diseases

**3. Monitor safety and environmental conditions**

- Check indoor and outdoor spaces for hazards throughout the day
- Tidy up toys, play equipment and other materials regularly to prevent trips
- Remove sharp sticks and stones from outdoor play areas
- On hot days, check the temperature of:
  - Play equipment
  - Soft fall surfaces
  - Astroturf
  - Walkways and other surfaces (e.g., tiles, bricks, metal grates)
- If surfaces are too hot and could cause burns, shoes must be worn
- In colder months, ensure that surfaces are not uncomfortably cold for bare feet and hard floors are covered with secured rugs, where appropriate

**4. Wear shoes in the following situations:**

- On excursions or during higher-risk activities
- when children are preparing food
- When surfaces (e.g., play equipment, tiles, bricks, metal flooring) are too hot
- When surfaces are too cold to walk on comfortably

**5. Respect children and families' preference to wear shoes**

- Do not compel any child, family member, staff member or visitor to remove their shoes
- Instead, you should:
  - Explain the possible benefits of barefoot play
  - Respect a child's choice to keep their shoes on and provide time for adjustment to barefoot play