

Dress Code

Effective Date

Term 1 2024

Rationale for school dress code

Montessori education is known for its child-centred and holistic approach, and this can extend to the way students dress. At Elonera we ask that students dress appropriately at school. We are a non-uniform school that respects the right of students to express both their individuality and character. We do, however, have some requirements for school dress.

1. **Respect for the Individual:** Montessori philosophy emphasises respecting each child as a unique individual with their own needs and preferences. This dress code respects individual expression by allowing for personal choices within certain guidelines. Students should be comfortable and confident in their attire, enabling them to focus on their studies and activities.
2. **Creating a Prepared Environment:** Montessori classrooms are carefully designed to promote independence and learning. The dress code is an extension of this idea, creating a prepared environment by ensuring that students are dressed appropriately for various learning activities. Closed-toed shoes must be worn in both indoor and outdoor environments. Students are encouraged to have supportive shoes that allow for freedom of movement and provide support for sports and walking.

Weather will not deter us from enjoying the outdoors unless we have extreme weather conditions. For excursions and general school activities please ensure that your child has warmer layers for colder weather and a rain jacket during wet weather. To reduce our impact on the climate we encourage children to wear appropriate clothing for the weather, the school will aim to minimise the use of the air conditioner or heater.

Students must always wear sun smart hats when they are outside or on school excursions. This is to be a wide-brimmed hat that covers the face and neck. Students must wear SunSmart clothing that covers as much of the skin (especially the shoulders, back and stomach) as possible. For specific recommendations please see our sun protection policy [here](#).

3. **Order and Organisation:** Montessori classrooms are characterised by order and organisation. By adhering to a dress code, students learn to follow rules and routines.
4. **Community and Social Responsibility:** Montessori education places a strong emphasis on community and social responsibility. This dress code encourages students to show respect for their peers, teachers, and the learning environment. All clothing must adhere to our anti-discrimination policy and promote a safe space for all children. Jewellery may become tangled in equipment and pose a safety threat. Children should minimise jewellery and other distracting items, these items take them away from engaging with the work.

5. **Sensory Awareness:** Montessori philosophy encourages the development of sensory awareness and mindfulness. We promote clothing that provides comfort and sensory awareness, ensuring that clothing does not distract students or hinder their ability to engage fully in their learning experiences.
6. **Self-Discipline and Responsibility:** Montessori education fosters the development of self-discipline and responsibility. We encourage student to take responsibility for their choices and actions, including how they present themselves to the learning community.
7. **Life Skills:** Montessori education aims to prepare children for life beyond the classroom. Teaching students to dress appropriately is viewed as a valuable life skill. It helps them understand societal norms and expectations related to attire, which can be important in future educational and professional settings.
8. **Independence:** Children in the Early Years are encouraged to dress themselves, though some children will need support to choose appropriate clothing. Children the early years of schooling must have spare clothing that is the correct size, and appropriate for the weather. Please offer clothing choices that promote independence, such as shoes that a child can put on or take off independently, and clothing that promotes independent toileting (that can be easily removed or added by the child). The Montessori Approach stresses the importance of total development which includes care of the physical, emotional and moral, as well as the intellectual needs of all children. At all times the interest of the child is at the centre of EMS approach. During the period between 0 and 6 years of age (absorbent mind) children are unable to distinguish the difference between reality and fantasy. We ask that children do not attend school in clothes which depict Disney characters, superheroes, or any fantasy related themes.

Inappropriate Clothing Items

- Tank tops, muscle t-shirts or singlets that display the midriff or shoulders.
- Exposed undergarments, revealing rips or clothing.
- Clothes that have offensive or inflammatory slogans.
- Shorts or skirts that are shorter than mid-thigh.
- Fancy dress or pyjamas (unless there is a special day)
- Thongs, gumboots, slides, open-toed shoes.

Non-Compliance

- Students found not complying will be reminded, for repeated breaches parents will be informed.
- Students may be requested to wear T-shirts inside out or the student's parent/guardian may be asked to bring the necessary replacement garments to school to enable the student to change.
- The school may request the student to wear spare replacement clothing for the day.
- Permitted sanctions for non-compliance with the dress code, can range from preventing the student from attending or participating in any activity for which the student would have been representing the school; or any school activity and is at the principal's discretion.