



Killermont Early Years Centre Barefoot Policy



Rationale

To support individual children's decision making and choices round wearing footwear indoors and outdoors.

- Research has shown being barefoot has significant beneficial impact on children's connection with their world. Barefoot stimulation enhances the connection between the foot and the brain. This means that it increases proprioception. Proprioception is our ability to perceive the motion and position of our body in space. These receptors in the body are activated by movement and pressure. Then they communicate the body's position and orientation to the brain.
- Sensorial stimulation of the feet is important throughout our lives, however early childhood is a particularly crucial period for stimulation due to it being a peak window of neuroplasticity, or a period of neurodevelopment. About 90 percent of the brain develops during the first six years of life. It's during this period that a child's neural pathways form and change in response to stimuli, including that from the foot.
- Being barefoot strengthens their feet and body as when barefoot we grip the ground more easily and engage the muscles in our toes and feet, this will strengthen then and reduces the risks of trips and falls.
- Barefoot walkers are also proven to have more awareness of their senses, this is due to the multiple pressure points and nerve endings to convey messages to other parts of the body.
- It is thought that children who experience being barefoot have increased motor skills due to the strengthening of the Joints and muscles, walking barefoot can strengthen the feet and ankle muscles improving balance and posture, this is due to the foot's arches becoming more engaged and improves this alignment or muscles throughout the leg, resulting in children having better balancing, jumping and coordination skills.

Aims

The aim of Killermont Early Years Centre Barefoot policy, is to support children's individual development needs, and to support children's rights to choice.

Methodology

- Professional reading has been offered to staff to ensure they have good understanding of the benefits around barefoot play.
- Staff are informed of the decisions around creating a barefoot policy and will be included in reviews of this policy after seeing it in practice.
- Staff will ensure a safe environment for the children through ensuring resources are tidied and daily risk assessments are completed.
- A risk assessment will detail times where shoes MUST be worn to protect the risk of injury to the child.
- Parents / Carers have a right to be informed on the decisions regarding their child, all parents will be informed of our barefoot policy if their child show interest in following this.
- Barefoot policy will not be forced, children who show a keen interest in learning barefoot will have the ability to make their own choice and the right to their voices being heard.

Resources

	<i>Aussie Childcare network</i>
Dr Daniel Howel, The Barefoot Book (2010)	<i>Early childhood outdoors</i>
McDougal, Born to Run (2009)	<i>Naboso,- benefits of children going barefoot.</i>
Educated by Nature	https://educatedbynature.com/

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Senior Staff
• Must support children's individual needs and development. • Ensure children are kept away from harm. • Ensure staff have a good understanding of the benefits
Staff
• Must actively support children's interests in the Barefoot policy. • Ensure areas are kept risk free. • Risk assessment is followed and understood.

Policy Updated	April 25
Review Date	April 26
Reviewed By:	Patricia Ross Depute Head of Centre
Document	Document Links
Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors	Children are supported to achieve – Nurturing Care
Health and Care Standards	1.2, 1.9, 1.31 2.27, 3.13, 3.15, 4.1, 4.11, 4.3, 5.17,
UNCRC	Article 12,24