



STUDENTS REQUESTING SHOE VARIATION DUE TO SENSORY DISCOMFORT SCHOOL GUIDANCE

The MGSC Student Dress Policy can be viewed in full on the college website. Regarding school shoes, the expectation is:

All students must wear black, leather, low heeled, lace up school shoes. T-bars, Nike or other sports-branded shoes, and Doc Marten boots are not permitted

Background:

Some students with a diagnosis of Autism or Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity disorder can experience sensory issues, including hypersensitivity to lights, sounds, and textures. Students may struggle with sensory overload, causing overwhelm, discomfort, or meltdowns. While sensory processing issues are a core diagnostic criterion for autism, they are not officially part of the diagnostic criteria for ADHD and are frequently present.

Sensitivity to Footwear

Footwear sensitivity is often driven by **tactile defensiveness**, where the brain overreacts to the textures and pressure of shoes and socks.

Common Triggers

- **Internal Irritants:** Rubbing from seams, tags, or rough stitching.
- **Restrictive Fit:** Discomfort from tightness or pressure that feels overwhelming.
- **Moisture & Heat:** Dislike of sweat or "gritty" sensations inside the shoe.
- **Complex Fastenings:** Frustration with laces due to fine motor skill delays.

Sensory-Friendly Features to Look for

- **Seamless Interiors:** Minimizes friction and irritation.
- **Adjustable Closures:** Velcro straps or elastic laces allow for consistent, customizable pressure.
- **Wide Toe Boxes:** Prevents pinching and allows for natural movement.
- **Soft, Breathable Materials:** Mesh or soft leather reduces heat and moisture buildup.

Selecting suitable footwear

To accommodate a teenager with diagnosed sensory discomfort, look for shoes that feature **seamless interiors, soft leathers, wide toe boxes, and easy closures.**

Below is a summary of sensory-friendly school shoe options available from major Australian retailers.

Key Sensory Features to Look For

- **Minimal Internal Seams:** Reduces irritation against the skin.
- **Soft, Breathable Materials:** Premium full-grain leathers and mesh linings prevent overheating and allow the shoe to mould to the foot.
- **Flexible & Lightweight Soles:** Prevents the heavy, clunky feel that can be overstimulating.
- **Adjustable Closures:** Velcro straps or elastic laces provide independence for those who find traditional laces frustrating.
- **Multiple Width Options:** Vital for avoiding the "squished" sensation that many sensitive individuals dislike.

Footwear choice must also comply with the MGSC Student Dress Code

Footwear that is worn with the academic uniform must be school shoes, not street shoes or runners. There is information on the college website that explains the expectation for sports shoes, focusing on suitable support for physical education activities.

Examples of suitable footwear for students with sensory discomfort:

Brand	Image	Brand	Image
Clarks Daytona youth injection black		Target Grosby Gro-Shu Senior Leather Lace Up School Shoes	
Harrison Daytona senior black		Big W Bata Cassie Leather lace up shoes	
Surefit Krista black		Spendless shoes Library	
Athletes' foot Alpha Bella 3			

Requests to vary the shoe choice that does not meet the above examples must be in writing to the Principal.