



# HEAD LICE MANAGEMENT POLICY

## Basic Beliefs

Head lice (pediculosis) are tiny insects that live on the human scalp where they feed and breed. Probably between 2-3% of primary school children are infested at any one time. While they do not carry or transmit disease, they are a cause of head itch and scratching, which may lead to infection and swollen lymph glands; therefore, they need to be controlled.

While parents have primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, schools also have a role in the management of head lice infections and in providing support for parents and students.

## Goals

- To respond to reports of head lice quickly and effectively.
- To ensure effective processes for treating head lice are well known and consistently followed.
- To ensure that parents and guardians are well informed about head lice and their treatment.

## Implementation

- Anyone can catch head lice. Head lice cannot fly, hop or jump. They spread from person to person by head to head contact, and may also be spread by the sharing of personal items such as combs, brushes and hats.
- While it is parents who have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice on their children, the school will assist by offering up-to-date information, by offering a screening process, and by alerting parents of lice when detected.
- The school principal will ensure all teachers and aides are provided with professional development regarding head lice, who will then be authorised to carry out visual checks of students heads for head lice (observations without touching of the students head or hair). The principal will also identify specific staff members to carry out head lice inspections (physical examinations) of students head and hair for the presence of head lice.

- The school will ask parents to sign a permission form allowing their children to be inspected by our specific staff members for the presence of head lice. Only children whose parents have returned the permission form will be inspected, however, all students may be visually checked.
- All children inspected will be provided with a confidential report indicating to parents the results of the inspection, as well as advice on the latest information regarding head lice.
- In the case of parents who do not provide written permission for head lice inspections, if live lice are observed on their children's hair, the parents will be advised of the presence of live lice.
- Consistent with Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001, the principal will ensure that the parents of any child found to have live lice are informed that their child is to be excluded from attending school until appropriate treatment has commenced.
- The presence of eggs in the hair is not cause for exclusion.
- The principal will also provide parents of children found to have live lice with information about head lice treatment and prevention.
- Upon their return to school, parents of excluded children must present the signed declaration form indicating that appropriate treatment has commenced. All excluded children will undergo another inspection from our trained head lice inspectors upon recommencement of school.
- The principal will ensure that information relating to the prevention and eradication of head lice appears throughout the year in the school newsletter, particularly at times of heavy infestations.
- Parents will be encouraged in the school newsletters to regularly (preferably once per week) inspect their child/ren's hair for lice or lice eggs and the need to commence treatment of lice are found.

## **Responsibility for Implementation**

The School Wellbeing Team will be responsible for the implementation and continuous monitoring of the policy

## **Date Passed by School Council**

The Head Lice Policy was passed by School Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2018.

## **Proposed Date of Review**

The School Wellbeing Subcommittee will be responsible for coordinating and planning the review of the Head Lice Policy, under the auspices of School Council. In line with Department of Education and Training requirements the Head Lice Policy will reviewed on a three yearly cycle.