



Head Lice Policy

Policy No. 3.1

Preamble

Head Lice can sometimes cause concern and frustration for parents, teachers and children. This school policy is intended to outline roles, responsibilities and expectations of the school community to assist with treating and controlling head lice in a consistent and coordinated manner.

Whilst parents have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, our school community will work in a cooperative and collaborative manner to assist all families to manage head lice effectively.

Purpose

- Promote awareness and education regarding head lice with children, teachers & parents
- Attempt to eradicate the stigma involved with head lice.
- Decrease the incidence of head lice within the school community

Guidelines for Implementation

Parent/carers and families of children attending this school are expected to:

- Regularly inspect all household members for head lice on a weekly basis, at home, using the recommended conditioner/combing detection method, then treat them if necessary
- Ensure that children do not attend school with untreated head lice (in accordance with Health Infectious Diseases Regulations 2001)
- Notify the school if their child is found to have live lice and advise when appropriate treatment was commenced (in accordance with Health Infectious Diseases Regulations 2001)
- Ensure children with long hair attend school with hair tied back
- Use only safe and recommended practices to treat head lice
- Notify the parents or carers of your child's friends so they have an early opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary
- Maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures
- Act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community especially around issues of head lice

To support parents/carers and the broader school community to achieve a consistent, collaborative approach to head lice management the school will undertake to:-

- Distribute up to date and accurate information on the detection, treatment and control of head lice to parents and staff at the beginning of the year or more frequently if required
- Include information about head lice management in orientation and transition programs for new families/staff attending the school
- Include information and updates in school newsletters
- Provide practical advice and maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures
- Access community educational resources and support
- Abide by the recommendations of the School Exclusion Policy of the Health Infectious Diseases Regulations 2001 in that the responsibility to exclude a child from the school rests with the principal or person in charge, and
 - only exclude children with live insects
 - accept the advice of parents that appropriate treatment has commenced

- Encourage children to learn about head lice so as to help remove any stigma or “bullying” associated with the issue
- Be aware of real difficulties some parents may encounter and seek extra support if required
- Participate in a Head Lice Local Area Network to work with other schools, childcare centres, health services, and pharmacists in our Local Government Area to achieve consistent management and policy across sectors
- Act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community especially around issues of Head Lice
- Continue to seek opportunities to increase our collective understanding of and response to managing head lice

Procedure for head lice/nits check:-

When a child presents to class with a note from parents indicating lice/nits have been found and treated, the school nurse is notified. The nurse will then distribute, via the class teacher, a letter to all students in that class on the day. This letter notifies parents to check their child’s hair and treat accordingly. It also provides instructions on how to check for lice using the conditioner method.

Ideally all children in that class have then been checked by family and treated.

If that same class were to re-present regularly with head lice/nits then the school nurse will organise a time with the class to check children for head-lice (who have prior permission from parents), so as to establish why re infections are occurring. Re-infection can occur because of many reasons i.e. knowledge/technique/product uses. This will be addressed with parents who require assistance in this area.

The process of checking will be one that minimises a child feeling ostracised i.e.

-parental permission forms will be checked before assessment.

-checks will be made in accordance with the teacher, a suitable time that impacts as little as possible on the children’s learning time

-all children will be provided with a letter to parents ,placed in children’s bags or made accessible for older children in the First Aid Room.

-for older children, checks will be made outside the classroom one at a time. The child will have an opportunity to be told with discretion-and receive the note as noted.

-the school nurse will be wearing gloves and changing them if lice/nits are found.

Resources

Victorian Government Department of Human Services

Research conducted by Professor Ric Speares – James Cook University

National Pediculosis Association of USA

Nitpickers Head Lice Education & Prevention

Nitwits

Evaluation

This policy is to be reviewed triennially. Minor adjustments may occur in the implementation of the policy when information gathered is updated.

FAMILY NAME: _____

HEAD LICE CONTROL - AGREEMENT

I have read and understood the responsibilities involved under the Guidelines, for the implementation of the Wales Street Primary School Head Lice Policy. I accept the terms of the head lice policy and agree to comply with it to the best of my ability.

I hereby give consent for my child to be checked by an approved staff member for Head Lice/Nits throughout the school year as required.

Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

This permission note will be kept on file and valid for the entire time of enrolment at Wales Street Primary School or until a new request is made by parents/staff.