

Head Lice Management

Policy

Rationale

Head lice are small insects that live and feed on the human scalp, however they do not transmit disease. They are easily transmitted and they crawl from head to head without discrimination. Whilst parents/ guardians have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, our school community will work in a collaborative manner to assist all families to manage head lice effectively.

It is reasonable to expect that most schools will have some students with head-lice at any given time and that head lice can be a source of concern and frustration for some parents, teachers and students.

Policy Statement

This policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of members of the school community to assist with treating and controlling head lice in a consistent and coordinated manner. The policy presents a process for reporting and treating head lice, and ensures that the method is well known and consistently followed in the school community.

Implementation

Parent/guardian responsibilities

Head lice spreads easily from person to person through direct contact. To reduce the changes of head lice spreading through the school, it is requested that parents/guardians conduct the following measures:

- Checking each student's hair for head lice on a weekly basis at home, and if head lice are detected commencing treating all family members.
- Notifying the school if your child is found to have live lice and/or eggs and advising when appropriate treatment commenced (in accordance with the *Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009*).
- Students are not permitted to attend school with untreated head lice (also in accordance with the *Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009*).
- Tying back your child's long hair.
- Using safe and recommended practices to treat head lice as advised by the Pharmacy.
- Agreeing to the terms of the School Head Lice Policy.

Notification is given to parents/guardians of children's friends, so they have an early opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary. A non-judgemental approach is encouraged across the school to facilitate an open and effective system. Insecticide resistance is common and this can mean families may experience difficulty with treatment measures.

School responsibilities

The school will support parents/guardians and the broader school community to achieve a consistent, collaborative approach to head lice management and will conduct the following measures:

- Distribute up to date and accurate information on the detection, treatment and control of head lice to parents/guardians 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.
- Include annual head lice updates for staff in-service programs.
- Access community educational resources and support, such as community health centres and local government.
- Abide by the recommendations of the School Exclusion Policy of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009*, in that the responsibility to notify the parent/guardian of a suspected case of head lice rests with the principal or person in charge.
- Students with live insects will be requested to commence treatment immediately.
- Encourage students to learn about head lice so as to help remove any stigma associated with the issue.

- Request that all families attending this school sign an 'agreement' to accept the conditions of the school's head lice policy.
- Be aware of real difficulties some parents may encounter and seek extra support if required.
- Investigate 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.

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 outbreaks.

Evaluation and review

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....	August 2018	
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References and Related Policies:

'The Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide'.

The Better Health Channel - <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/head-lice-nits>