

## Head Lice Policy

### Rationale

Head lice - also known as louse or nits - are miniscule insects that live on the human scalp, where they feed and breed. Head lice are transmitted by having head to head contact with someone who has head lice which can happen frequently in families and schools. Head lice do not transmit any infectious disease.

Head lice management is a complex issue for schools and head lice can be difficult to manage. While parents/guardians have primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, the school will provide support in the management of head lice for parents/guardians and students.

This policy is intended to outline the roles, responsibilities and expectations of the school community to assist with treating and controlling head lice in a consistent and coordinated manner.

### Guidelines

- The Public health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009 require that while head lice do not spread disease they are included on the school exclusion table. Any student with head lice should be excluded from school until treated
- The school will ask parents to sign the permission (located on our enrolment form), allowing their child to be inspected by trained staff authorized by the Principal. Only students who have signed consent will be inspected. However, all students may be visually checked for the presence of head lice or lice eggs by staff delegated by the Principal
- The presence of head lice is treated as a confidential health issue and in a sensitive manner so that children and families are not stigmatized
- The provision of parent information is vital to reducing infestation supporting families to better manage head lice

### Implementation

**It is the expectation of parents/guardians and families attending this school that:**

- Student's hair will be checked for head lice or lice eggs on a weekly basis at home, using the combing detection method and recommended treatment if necessary
- Students do not attend school with untreated head lice in accordance with the *Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009*
- Parents/guardians regularly inspect all household members and treat head lice and lice eggs if necessary using safe and recommended treatments
- Parents/guardians will notify the school if their child is found to have live head lice and advise in writing when appropriate treatment has commenced in accordance with the *Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations - 2009 - Appendix One*
- Parents/guardians act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community, especially around issues of head lice
- For further information consult the websites:
  - <http://health.vic.gov.au/headlice/regulations.htm>
  - <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/headlice>

**To support parents/guardians and the broader school community to achieve a consistent and collaborative approach to head lice management the school will:**

- 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 and more frequently if required
- Include information about head lice management in school newsletters
- Inform parents/guardians when it is suspected that their child has head lice or lice eggs - Appendix One. The parent/guardian will be asked to collect their child to be treated
- Inform parents/guardians when there is an outbreak of head lice in a particular level - Appendix Two
- Accept written notification from parents that appropriate treatment has been correctly given and completed and that head lice and lice eggs have been removed, enabling the student to return to school
- Provide students with an understanding of the habits and life cycle of head lice in order to minimise the incidence of stigmatisation of students and families
- Be aware of difficulties some parents may encounter and encourage them to seek extra support if required
- Continue to seek opportunities to increase our collective knowledge, understanding of and response to managing head lice

**Evaluation**

Monitor and review the effectiveness of the policy regularly and revise the policy where required or as directed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Policy and Guidelines

**Policy Ratification**

May 2017

Useful websites (current March 2017):

Vic Health – Head lice -

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/head-lice>

Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009 -

[http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web\\_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf/f932b66241ecf1b7ca256e92000e23be/8B1B293B576FE6B1CA2574B8001FDEB7/\\$FILE/08-46a.pdf](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf/f932b66241ecf1b7ca256e92000e23be/8B1B293B576FE6B1CA2574B8001FDEB7/$FILE/08-46a.pdf)

<http://health.vic.gov.au/headlice/regulations.htm>



## HEAD LICE TREATMENT REPLY SLIP

If your child has been detected with live head lice or lice eggs, this reply slip must be returned to school at the same time that your child returns.

If more than one child has been treated, please complete separate forms for each child.

I..... (print your name) have treated  
.....(child's name) with  
..... (name of treatment).

Treatment commenced on (insert date) .. \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

Parent signature .....

Date .....