

	<b>Policy Name</b>	Head Lice Policy	<b>Date of Approval</b>	2021
	<b>Responsible</b>	First Aid Officer	<b>Review Date</b>	2024

## HEAD LICE POLICY

### PURPOSE

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 the most common cause of head itch and scratching which may lead to infection and swollen lymph glands; therefore, they need to be eradicated.

### AIM

- To respond to reports of head lice quickly and effectively.
- To ensure that an effective process for treating head lice is well known and consistently followed.
- To ensure that parents and guardians are well informed about head lice 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 by the sharing of personal items such as combs, brushes and head gear such as hats.
- Parents have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice. Parents will be encouraged to check their child's hair on a regular basis and must notify the school if their child has been affected and when treatment has commenced. Parents should not send their children to school with untreated head lice.
- Once notified the school will send a note home (Form 2) informing all parents within this class that head lice has been detected and that they should inspect, monitor and treat their child's hair.
- 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 and by alerting parents of lice when detected.
- The School Principal will ensure that all teachers and aides are provided with professional development regarding head lice. Teachers and aides will then be authorised to carry out visual checks of student's heads for head lice. Checks for head lice can be visual without physical contact. These checks do not require parent/guardian consent and are only made by people authorised by the principal, e.g. classroom teachers and aides.
- The Principal will nominate trained staff members to carry out head lice inspections (physical examinations) of students head and hair for the presence of head lice. These inspections will only take place when there have been repeated cases (more than 2 per term) of head lice within the same class and where parent notification has not lead to its eradication.
- The school will organise to have volunteer staff members trained by the Department of Human Services or the local council in the detection of head lice.

- Once head lice has been detected either through a visual or physical inspection the school will alert parents/guardians of an infestation, particularly the parents of other students in the same class as the affected child/children.
- The school will ask parents to sign a permission form allowing their children to be inspected by a trained staff member for the presence of head lice. Only children whose parents have returned the permission form (which forms part of the enrolment form and covers the duration of their schooling) be inspected, however, all students may be visually checked.
- After a class has had a head check, parents will be provided with a confidential report indicating the results of the screening (see Form 3 below), as well as advice on the latest information regarding head lice and their treatment and prevention.
- 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. Exclusion only refers to those children who have live head lice and does not refer to head lice eggs.
- It is our school's policy that when live eggs are detected parents will be contacted to collect their child and commence immediate treatment.
- If the school is unable to reach a parent or parents are not available to collect their child, this child will be discretely monitored and a note will be sent home at the conclusion of the day.
- 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.
- Teachers will provide classroom activities/discussions that give students an understanding of the habits and life-cycle of head lice in order to remove any stigma or 'bullying' associated with the issue.
- The discovery of head lice can be a sensitive issue. Our school will exercise sensitivity towards this issue and will avoid any student distress by maintaining student confidentiality.

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

School Policy and Advisory Guide:

- [www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/headlice.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/headlice.aspx)

## REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION

The Head Lice Policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle or as directed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.



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This policy was last updated **2021** and is scheduled for review in **2024**.

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