

Head Lice Policy

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. They 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/or hats.

Head lice are a common and costly problem which continues to cause concern and frustration for parents, teachers, children and members of this school community.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy document is:

- to provide a process whereby head lice is treated as quickly and discreetly as possible for the benefit of the school community.
- to provide a process for response to reports of head lice quickly and effectively.
 - to outline the responsibilities and expectations of the school community in dealing with head lice in a consistent and coordinated manner.
 - to provide a clear and consistent head lice procedure for the school community to follow.

Implementation

RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Whilst parents have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, this school community will work in a cooperative and collaborative manner to assist families to manage head lice effectively. All members will exercise tolerance and understanding to avoid stigmatising or blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures. Everyone will behave in a responsible manner, maintaining respect for all parties when dealing with this issue with members of the school and broader community.

RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS AND CARERS

- to follow the school's procedure for head lice as set out below.
- to check the hair of their children at home on a weekly basis
- to notify the school if their child/ren is found to have live lice – commence treatment in accordance with Health Infectious Disease regulations.
- to ensure their child/ren do not attend school with untreated head lice, in accordance with Health Infectious Diseases Regulations 2001.
- to use only safe and recommended practises to treat head lice.
- if live lice found then check the hair of all household members and treat if necessary.
- encourage your children with long hair (defined as shoulder length or longer) to attend school with their hair tied back.
- agree to be bound by the head lice policy of this school as part of your child's enrolment.

RESPONSIBILITY OF SEVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

- ensure all families attending this school to sign onto an agreement accepting their requirement to be bound by the school's head lice policy.
- Notify parent/guardian if a child/ren is suspected of having head lice via our computerised Communication system to assist in maintaining the confidentiality of students and families.
- accept the notification from parents that appropriate treatment has commenced.
- distribute up to date and accurate information on the detection, treatment and control of head lice to parents and staff as it becomes available.
- Hats from infected students to be sent home for washing. All student hats to be kept separately in tubs or bags.
- educate students about head lice in order to prevent stigma or bullying associated with this issue.
- include annual head lice updates for staff in-service programs.
- work with families who are experiencing real difficulties in order to obtain additional support where needed.
- The Principal will ensure that information relating to the prevention and eradication of head lice appears throughout the year, particularly at time of heavy infestation. The procedure below to be distributed to all parent/guardians.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the School's three-year review cycle

This policy was ratified by School Council in 2017.

This policy will be reviewed by School Council in 2020.