

# HEAD LICE

## POLICY

### Rationale:

- 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.

### Aims:

- To respond to reports of head lice quickly and effectively.
- To ensure effective processes for treating head lice are well known and consistently followed.
- To ensure that parents and guardians are well informed about head lice and their 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 may also be spread by the sharing of personal items such as combs, brushes and hats.
- 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, by offering a screening process, and by alerting parents of lice when detected.
- The school principal will ensure all teachers and aides are provided with professional development regarding head lice, who will then be authorised to carry out visual checks of students heads for head lice (observations without touching of the students head or hair). The principal will also identify specific staff members to carry out head lice inspections (physical examinations) of students head and hair for the presence of head lice.
- The school will ask parents to sign a permission form allowing their children to be inspected by our specific staff members for the presence of head lice. Only children whose parents have returned the permission form (which forms part of the enrolment form) will be inspected, however, all students may be visually checked. (see Form1 below).
- All children checked or inspected will be provided with a confidential report indicating to parents the results of the inspection (see Form2 below), as well as advice on the latest information regarding head lice.
- Consistent with Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001, 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 school until appropriate treatment has commenced. Lice eggs are not grounds for exclusion.
- The principal will also provide parents of children found to have live lice with information about head lice treatment and prevention.
- Upon their return to school, parents of excluded children are to present the signed declaration on Form2 indicating that appropriate treatment has commenced. All excluded children to undergo another inspection from our trained head lice inspectors upon recommencement of school.
- The principal will ensure that information relating to the prevention and eradication of head lice is available at the school.

### Evaluation:

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

This policy was last ratified by School Council on....

**16<sup>th</sup> March 2015**

## HEAD LICE INSPECTIONS – CONSENT FORM

Head lice are common amongst children, and remain the parent's responsibility to manage. In support of parents, the school may head lice inspections of students throughout the year.

The management of head lice works best when all children are involved in our inspection program.

The school is aware that this can be a sensitive issue and is committed to maintaining student confidentiality and avoiding potential embarrassment.

Before any inspections are conducted staff will explain to all students what is being done and why, and it will be emphasised to students that the presence of head lice in their hair does not mean that their hair is less clean or well kept than anyone else's. It will also be pointed out that head lice can be itchy and annoying and if you know you have got them, you can do something about it.

The person conducting the inspections will physically search through each student's hair to see if any lice or eggs are present. Moslem girls will only be inspected in the presence of women.

In cases where head lice are found, the person inspecting the student will inform the student's class teacher and the principal. The school will send a written notice home with the child and provide parents with comprehensive advice about the use of safe treatment practices which do not place children's health at risk.

Please note that health regulations require that where a child has head lice, that child is not return to school until appropriate treatment has commenced.

Parent's/Guardian's Full Name: .....

Address: ..... Postcode: .....

Name(s) of Child/Children attending the school:

Year Level:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

I hereby give my consent for the above-named children to participate in the school's head lice inspection program for the remainder of this year.

Signature of Parent/Guardian ..... Date: .....

**PLEASE NOTE:** All students may be visually checked (no touching) for head lice by staff members irrespective of whether or not this consent form for a physical inspection is completed and returned.

## HEAD LICE CHECK REPORT SHEET

Your child was checked today by staff at school for the presence of head lice. This was a:

- Visual Check (observation without physical contact)
- Inspection (physical search of the child's head and hair)

The results of the check are:

- No lice or eggs detected.
- Dead eggs were found.
- Live eggs were found.
- Live lice were found.

Therefore the following action is required:-

- No action required.
- Child's hair must be treated with a method that has killed or removed live lice before the child is returned to school.

**Please Note:** All children who are found to have live eggs will be re-checked by trained staff soon after returning to school to ensure the infestation has been effectively treated.

Regards

(insert name)

Principal

.....

### HEAD LICE TREATMENT REPLY SLIP

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

- I have treated my child's head in a manner that has killed or removed the live lice.
- I would like to be shown how the Dept of Human Services recommends removal of eggs and lice using hair conditioner and a fine toothed comb.

Child's Name:..... Parent Signature:.....