



Purpose/Rationale

Head lice are tiny insects that live on the human scalp where they feed and breed. Pediculosis is the medical term for “an infestation of lice”. 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

1. To respond to reports of head lice quickly and effectively.
2. To ensure that an effective process for treating head lice is well known and consistently followed.
3. To ensure that parents and guardians are well informed about head lice treatment.
4. To ensure that students who have head lice are treated with discretion and respect.

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.

1. 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 in their child’s class.
2. Parents are also required to advise the school when they find their children have head lice.
3. A generic note will be sent home to the class where head lice is detected.
4. The school will ask parents to sign a permission form allowing their children to be screened by trained personnel for the presence of head lice. Only children whose parents have returned the permission form will be checked.
5. Consistent with Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001, the principal will ensure the parents of any child found to have live lice are discreetly informed that their child is to be excluded from attending school until appropriate treatment has commenced.
6. The school will provide parents of children found to have live lice with information about head lice treatment and prevention.
7. The school will ensure 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

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

This policy was ratified by the Oberon Primary School Council on 09/05/2017
Next review date: May 2020

Original policy prepared by Genefor Walker-Smith — June 2014