

Head Lice Policy 2012

Aims

- A.** We aim to manage the ongoing problem of head lice as a community so:
 - 1.** the incidence of head lice is minimised
 - 2.** there is no stigma attached to having head lice
 - 3.** parents are free to choose any effective method of management.

Scope and Application

This policy is available on the school website and is included in the staff induction manual.

This policy applies to:

- A.** Employees
- B.** Students
- C.** Parents
- D.** Community members
- E.** Visitors to the school

Principles

A. Attitude

We encourage members of the school community to consider head lice as a common but irritating condition that can and should be effectively managed because it is detrimental to the well-being of the child and is a communicable disease which affects others in the community.

B. Information

We maintain an information file at school on head lice, their life cycle and effective methods of treatment. This file is always available to parents and, from time to time, selected information is distributed to the school community.

C. Communication

Communicating the presence of head lice promptly can stop them breeding unchecked or spreading to other heads. All members of the school community are encouraged to pass on observations of a child scratching their head repeatedly or a sighting of lice or nits in a child's hair. This information may be passed directly to the child's parent if the person feels comfortable to do so, or via the child's teacher. Equally valuable is the passing on of information that you have found significant numbers of lice in your child's hair, so other families can check their own hair.

D. Treatment at home

1. It is the family's responsibility to manage head lice.
2. Kerry Street recommends the ten day conditioner method of treating head lice, in combination with regular checking (at least once a week). However, all effective methods of managing head lice are respected as valid.
3. All parents are encouraged to check their child's hair regularly and thoroughly.
4. At times, home checks will be suggested in the newsletter, so everyone checks over the same time period.

E. Checks at school

1. Checking for lice at school has the advantage of everyone having their hair checked around the same time, which can break the cycle of reinfestation within the community. It prompts everyone to check their child's hair and is a way of ensuring all families have an effective method of managing head lice. It removes any stigma that could occur with isolated checks. Regular school checks have been observed to reduce the prevalence of head lice within the community.
2. However, we respect the wishes of individual members of the school community and realise that not everyone wishes their child to have their hair checked at school. Only students whose parents have freely given their permission will be checked. In addition, from time to time, the whole school community may decide to discontinue or reinstate the checks.
3. The checks will be carried out according to the procedure in Attachment A.

F. Exclusion

Although head lice are very contagious, we recognise it would be impractical to exclude students from school because of them because they are so prevalent and treatments are ongoing. However:

1. If head lice are observed or suspected, the child's parents will be informed and it is expected treatment will begin before the child returns to school
2. If the same family has repeated incidences of observable head lice, they will be given information suggesting alternative effective methods of treatment
3. If other students are being affected by ongoing ineffective management of head lice, the coordinator may require the student to be excluded until the head lice are effectively managed.

Responsibilities

A. Coordinator

1. To act according to this policy, in the case of an individual or family regularly having lice, where this is affecting other students.

2. Maintain an information file on head lice and, from time to time, distribute information about head lice within the school community

B. Administration Staff

1. Maintain permission records showing which students may be checked for head lice at school.

C. Teaching Staff

1. Inform parents if their child is suspected to have head lice
2. Inform the coordinator if an individual of family regularly has head lice.

D. Parents

1. to effectively manage head lice in their family by:
 - a. accessing information on head lice, their life cycle and ways of treating them
 - b. regular checks for lice
 - c. regular treatment as necessary
 - d. informing the school if large numbers of lice are found
 - e. encouraging their children to tell an adult if they suspect they have lice.

E. Student

1. It is the responsibility of the student to inform their parents if they suspect they have lice.

F. Whole School Community

1. It is the responsibility of the whole school community to determine whether they wish to discontinue or reinstate checks for head lice at school and to carry out those checks.

Related Legislation

- A. Occupational Health and Safety Act
- B. Privacy Act

Related Kerry Street Documentation

- A. Information File on Head Lice
- B. Communicable Diseases Policy

Contact Person

Enquires relating to this policy should be directed to the School Coordinator or Council President.

Breaches of this Policy

Any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Attachments

- A. Head Lice Checks at School

Authorisation and Review

- A. This policy was read, discussed, modified and endorsed by the staff on 1/12/04
- B. It was authorised by the Kerry Street Community School Council on 3/2/05
- C. It will be reviewed by February 2006
- D. Reviewed on 13/1/06 by meeting of staff and council
- E. This policy was reviewed September 2012
- F. To be reviewed December 2018

Helen Sugars Duff

Head Lice Policy 2012 – Attachment A

Head Lice Checks at School

Head lice checks at school will be undertaken on a regular basis, if desired by the current school community, according to the following guidelines.

1. One person will volunteer to coordinate the lice check.
2. All parents will be asked for permission to check their child's hair for lice. Only those students whose parents have given permission will be checked (this permission is usually given on enrolment)
3. The date of the check will be advertised a week in advance and students asked to bring in their own brushes and combs. Parents will be asked to volunteer to help with the checks, so staff are not required to do them.
4. On the date of the check all students whose parents have given permission will have their hair checked with an electronic lice comb. If students are absent they will be checked later in the week.
5. Students' feelings and wishes will be considered and respected. Their desire for privacy and confidentiality will be complied with. As the aim is to check everyone's hair, mild objectors may be encouraged to participate but no student will be forced to have their hair checked.
6. Students' hair will be brushed, if necessary, with their own brush or comb or with a brush that has not been used in hair found to contain lice.
7. If any lice are found in a student's hair, their parents will be informed as soon as possible.