

HEADLICE POLICY

1. Rationale:

1.1 Head lice (pediculosis) are tiny insects that live on the human scalp where they feed and breed. It is estimated that 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.

2. Aims:

- 2.1 To respond to reports of head lice quickly and effectively.
- 2.2 To ensure that an effective process for treating head lice is well known and consistently followed.
- 2.3 To ensure that parents and guardians are well informed about head lice treatment.

3. Implementation:

- 3.1 Anyone can catch head lice.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 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 whose children have been found to have lice.
- 3.4 The school will organise to have volunteer parents and volunteer staff members trained in the detection of head lice.
- 3.5 The school will ask parents to sign a permission form allowing their children to be screened by our trained personnel for the presence of head lice. Only children whose parents have returned the permission form will be checked.
- 3.6 All children screened will be provided with a confidential report indicating to parents the results of the screening, as well as advice on the latest information regarding head lice.
- 3.7 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 attending school until appropriate treatment has commenced.
- 3.8 The Principal will also provide parents of children found to have live lice with information about head lice treatment and prevention.
- 3.9 Upon their return to school, parents of excluded children must present the signed declaration indicating that appropriate treatment has commenced.
- 3.10 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.

4. Evaluation:

- 4.1 This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the school's three-year review cycle. Ratified by School Council on 25th August 2014.