



## HEAD LICE

### 1. PURPOSE

Head lice continue to cause concern and frustration for some parents, teachers and children. This school policy is intended to outline roles, responsibilities and expectations of the school community to assist with treating and controlling head lice in a consistent and coordinated manner.

### 2. BROAD GUIDELINES

Whilst parents have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice our school community will work in a cooperative and collaborative manner to assist all families to manage head lice effectively.

This school policy draws on information obtained from the following website:

<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/headlice/>

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION

**It is the expectation of parents/carers and families attending this school that:**

- 3.1 Children's hair will be checked for head lice on a weekly basis, at home, using the recommended conditioner/combing detection method
- 3.2 That your child does not attend school with untreated head lice
- 3.3 Families will regularly inspect all household members and then treat them if necessary
- 3.4 Parents/carers will notify the school if their child is found to have live lice and advise when the appropriate treatment was undertaken
- 3.5 Children with long hair will attend school with hair tied back
- 3.6 Use only safe and recommended practices to treat head lice
- 3.7 Notify the parents or carers of your child's friends so they have an early opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary
- 3.8 Maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures
- 3.9 Act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community especially around issues of head lice

**To support parents/carers and the broader school community to achieve a consistent, collaborative approach to head lice management the school will undertake to:**

- 4.1 Distribute up to date and accurate information on the detection, treatment and control of head lice to parents and staff at the beginning of the year or more frequently if required. Also include information about head lice management in orientation and transition programs for new families/staff attending the school;
- 4.2 Include information and updates in school newsletters
- 4.3 Provide practical advice and maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures
- 4.4 Encourage children to learn about head lice so as to assist to remove any stigma or social isolation that may be caused by the issue
- 4.5 Access community educational resources and support, such as primary school nurses, community health centres and local government
- 4.6 Accept the advice of parents that appropriate treatment has commenced;

- 4.7 Be aware of real difficulties some parents may encounter and offer extra support if required
- 4.8 Act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community especially around issues of Head lice
- 4.9 Continue to seek opportunities to increase our collective understanding of and response to managing head lice and review the policy regularly

**There is no requirement for any school to undertake 'head-lice inspection' programs however those that do need to consider the following as additions to a school head lice policy:**

- 4.10 Ensure that any person employed by the school, or volunteering, to undertake 'head lice inspections' will adhere to the school policy and carry out the inspection in a discreet manner maintaining confidentiality at all times.
- 4.11 Only inspect the heads of children whose parents have given prior consent
- 4.12 Develop a generic/blanket consent form which parents sign at commencement of school year
- 4.13 Respect the wishes of parents/families who elect not to participate in a school head lice check
- 4.14 To help reduce the stigma and maintain confidentiality when conducting head lice inspections a letter should be given to all the children involved
- 4.15 Include teachers and school staff in inspection.

**This Policy was ratified by School Council in ....**

**August 2015**