

HEAD LICE

1. RATIONALE:

Head lice are tiny insects that live on the human scalp where they feed and breed. Probably between 2-3% of primary children are infested at one time. While they do not carry or transmit disease, they are the most common cause of head itch and scratching, which may lead to infection and swollen lymph glands; therefore, they need to be eradicated.

2. AIMS:

- 2.1 To respond to reports of head lice or eggs quickly and efficiently.
- 2.2 To ensure that an effective process for treating head lice and egg infestations 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 by the sharing of personal items such as combs, brushes and head gear such as hats.
- 3.3 While teachers and other staff members may believe that a child is infected with head lice or eggs, they are not permitted to search a child's hair, inspect for head lice or eggs, or diagnose a case of head lice.
- 3.4 Teachers and other staff members suspecting that a child has head lice or eggs are to report to the First Aid Officer who will organise to carry out the necessary inspection. Parental or guardian permission will be needed for this to happen.
- 3.5 Upon positive identification of head lice or eggs, the First Aid Officer will ensure that parents of any infected child are contacted as soon as possible and informed that their child is to be excluded from attending school in accordance with the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1990 until the children have been treated.
- 3.6 Upon return to school, we ask for a note from the parents or guardian indicating that the infestation has been treated.
- 3.7 If a child is found to have head lice the child's whole grade will be checked and those of any siblings. Parental or guardian permission will be needed for this to happen.
- 3.8 Information relating to the prevention of head lice will appear at various times in the school newsletter.
- 3.9 There is a requirement that parents/guardians refrain from sending their children to school with untreated head lice. Parents need to be aware that one treatment is not sufficient to manage the problem. If a student re-attends school with live lice or eggs the school will again exclude the student until the live insects and/or eggs are removed.
- 3.10 Upon detection of head lice, parents must notify the school and advise when treatment has commenced.

EVALUATION:

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