

Head Lice Policy

We are a Child Safe School and we will protect all children at all times.

PROGRAM LEADER: Principal

COUNCIL RATIFICATION: 19 December 2019

Rationale:

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 information pamphlet and Management Guidelines 'Scratching for Answers'.

Purpose:

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

Implementation:

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

- Your children's hair will be checked for head lice on a weekly basis, at home, using the recommended conditioner/combing detection method.
- Your child does not attend school with untreated head lice (in accordance with Health Infectious Diseases Regulations 2001).
- Regularly inspections of all household members will occur and treated if necessary.
- Parents/carers will notify the school if their child is found to have live head lice and advise when appropriate treatment was commenced (in accordance with Health Infectious Disease Regulations 2001).
- Children with long hair will attend school with hair tied back.
- Only safe and recommended practices will be used to treat head lice.
- They will notify the parents or carers of your child's friends so they have an early opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary.
- They will maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures.
- They will act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community especially around issues of head lice.
- They will be respectful of the culture and safety of: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with a disability and children who are vulnerable.
- They will sign an agreement accepting the terms of the School Head Lice Policy.
- They will notify the school when their children have been treated by writing in school diary.

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

- 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.
- Include information about head lice management in orientation and transition programs for new families/staff attending the school.
- Include information and updates in school newsletters.
- Include annual head lice updates for staff in-service programs.
- Provide practical advice and maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures.
- Access community educational resources and support, such as primary school nurses, community health centres and local government.
- Abide by the recommendations of the School Exclusion Policy of the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001 in that the responsibility to exclude a child from the school rests with the Principal or person in charge.

- Only exclude children from school with live insects.
- Accept the advice of parents that appropriate treatment has commenced.
- Encourage children to learn about head lice to help remove any stigma or 'bullying' associated with the issue.
- Request that all families attending this school sign a 'Consent Form to Conduct Head Lice Inspections' annually.
- Be aware of real difficulties some parents may encounter and seek extra support if required.
- Continue to seek opportunities to increase our collective understanding of and response to managing head lice.
- When head lice is reported, issue a generic letter to all parents to inform them and to request they check their children for head lice.
- For the office staff to maintain data of head lice notifications.
- A phone call will be made to the parents of children who have had head lice detected during an inspection.

Review Cycle:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the three-year review cycle, or as required.

CONSENT FORM TO CONDUCT HEAD LICE INSPECTIONS

Permission to cover the current year of the student's schooling at:

Dunkeld Consolidated School

Throughout your child's schooling, the school will be arranging head lice inspections of students.

The management of head lice infection works best when all children are involved in our screening program.

The school is aware that this can be a sensitive issue and is committed to maintaining student confidentiality and avoiding stigmatisation.

The inspections of students will be conducted by a trained person approved by the Principal and School Council.

Before any inspections are conducted the person conducting the inspections will explain to all students what is being done and why and it will be emphasised to students that the presence of head lice in their hair does not mean that their hair is less clean or well-kept than anyone else's. It will also be pointed out that head lice can be itchy and annoying and if you know you have got them, you can do something about it.

The person conducting the inspections will check through each student's hair to see if any lice or eggs are present.

People authorised by the school principal may also visually check your child's hair for the presence of head lice, when it is suspected that head lice may be present. They do not physically touch the child's head during a visual check.

In cases where head lice are found, the person inspecting the student will inform the relevant staff and the principal. The school will make appropriate contact with the parents/guardians/carers.

Please note that health regulations requires that where a child has head lice, that child should not return to school until appropriate treatment has commenced. The school may request the completion of an 'action taken form', which requires parents/guardians/carers to nominate if and when the treatment has started.

Parent's/guardian's/carer's full name:

Parent's/guardian's/carer's full name:

Address:..... Post code:.....

Name of child attending the school:.....

I hereby give my consent for the above named child to participate in the school's head lice inspection program for the current year of their schooling at this school.

Signature of parent/guardian/carer: **Date**.....

Signature of parent/guardian/carer: **Date**.....

Please inform the school if guardianship/custody changes for your child, as this form will need to be re-signed to reflect these changes.

Please also inform the school in writing if you no longer wish to provide consent for the school to undertake head lice inspections for your child.

Head Lice

Dear Parents

We have had an instance of head lice reported this week and seek your co-operation in an effort to contain the situation.

As it is that time of the year again I ask that you regularly check your child's hair and in instances where head lice or eggs are found, treating your child's hair. Please see the attached sheet, *Treating and Controlling Head Lice*, from the Victorian Department of Health. This sheet has informative guidelines regarding detecting and treating head lice and eggs.

Health regulations require that where a child has head lice, that child should not return to school until the day after appropriate treatment has started. Please note, this refers only to those children who have live head lice and does not refer to head lice eggs.

If head lice or eggs are found on your child's hair you need to inform:

- The school and advise when the treatment has started, via the attached *Action Taken Form*.
- Parents or carers of your child's friends so they too have the opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary.

The Dunkeld Consolidated School is aware that head lice can be a sensitive issue and is committed to maintaining your confidentiality.

Yours sincerely

Paul Jeffreys
Principal



Dunkeld Consolidated School No 6215

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We are a Child Safe School and we will protect all children at all times.

Dear Parents

Head lice or eggs are suspected to have been detected on your child and it is very important for you to treat your child as soon as possible, using safe treatment practices. Please see the attached pamphlet, *Treating and Controlling Head Lice*, from the Department of Human Services. This pamphlet has informative guidelines regarding detecting and treating head lice and eggs.

It is very important for you to notify the Dunkeld Consolidated School and to advise when appropriate treatment has commenced.

It is important to note, that health regulations require that where a child has head lice, that child should not return to school until the day after appropriate treatment has started. Please note that this refers only to those children who have live head lice and does not refer to head lice eggs.

Please complete the below form and provide this to the Principal on the return of your child to school.

.....



Action Taken – Student Head Lice Parent/Guardian/Carer Response Form

CONFIDENTIAL

To: Principal, Dunkeld Consolidated School

Student's Full Name: _____

Year Level: _____

I understand that my child should not attend school with untreated head lice.

I used the following recommended treatment for head lice or eggs for my child (*please insert name of treatment*) _____.

Treatment commenced on (*insert date*) ___/___/___

Signature of Parent: Date.....



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Dear Parents

If you have detected head lice or eggs on your child's hair and it is very important for you to treat your child as soon as possible, using safe treatment practices. Please see the sheet, *Treating and Controlling Head Lice*, from the Department of Human Services. This pamphlet has informative guidelines regarding detecting and treating head lice and eggs.

It is very important for you to notify the Dunkeld Consolidated School and to advise when appropriate treatment has commenced.

It is important to note, that health regulations require that where a child has head lice, that child should not return to school until the day after appropriate treatment has started. Please note that this refers only to those children who have live head lice and does not refer to head lice eggs.

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Action Taken – Student Head Lice Parent/Guardian/Carer Response Form

CONFIDENTIAL

To: Principal, Dunkeld Consolidated School

Student's Full Name: _____

Year Level: _____

I understand that my child should not attend school with untreated head lice.

I used the following recommended treatment for head lice or eggs for my child (*please insert name of treatment*) _____.

Treatment commenced on (*insert date*) ____/____/____

Signature of Parent: Date.....

While children are at school many families will have contact with head lice. The information contained here will help you treat and control head lice.

Catching head lice

Head lice have been around for many thousands of years. Anyone can get head lice.

Head lice are small, wingless, blood sucking insects. Their colour varies from whitish-brown to reddish-brown. Head lice only survive on humans. If isolated from the head they die very quickly (usually within 24 hours).

People get head lice from direct hair to hair contact with another person who has head lice. This can happen when people play, cuddle or work closely together.

Head lice do not have wings or jumping legs so they cannot fly or jump from head to head. They can only crawl.

Finding head lice

Many lice do not cause an itch, so you have to **look carefully to find them**.

Head lice are found on the hair itself and move to the scalp to feed. They have six legs which end in a claw and they rarely fall from the head. Louse eggs (also called nits) are laid within 1.5 cm of the scalp and are firmly attached to the hair. They resemble dandruff, but can't be brushed off.

Lice can crawl and hide. The easiest and most effective way to find them is to follow these steps:

- Step 1** Comb any type of hair conditioner on to dry, brushed (detangled) hair. This stuns the lice and makes it difficult for them to grip the hair or crawl around.
- Step 2** Now comb sections of the hair with a fine tooth, head lice comb.
- Step 3** Wipe the conditioner from the comb onto a paper towel or tissue.
- Step 4** Look on the tissue and on the comb for lice and eggs.
- Step 5** Repeat the combing for every part of the head at least four or five times.

If lice or eggs are found, the hair should be treated.

If the person has been treated recently and you only find empty hatched eggs, you may not have to treat, as the empty eggs could be from a previous episode.

Treating head lice

Treating head lice involves removing lice and eggs from the hair. There are two ways you can do this:

- Buying and using a head lice lotion or shampoo, following the instructions on the product
- Using the conditioner and comb method (described under 'finding head lice') every second day until there have been no live lice found for ten days.

If you choose to use a head lice product always read and follow the instructions provided with the product carefully. The following points may also be helpful:

- Head lice products must be applied to all parts of the hair and scalp.
- No treatment kills all of the eggs so treatment must involve two applications, seven days apart. The first treatment kills all lice; the second treatment kills the lice that may have hatched from eggs not killed by the first treatment.
- Cover the person's eyes while the treatment is being applied. A towel is a good way to do this.
- If you are using a lotion, apply the product to dry hair.
- If you are using a shampoo, wet the hair, but use the least amount of water possible.
- Apply the treatment near the scalp, using an ordinary comb to cover the hair from root to tip. Repeat this several times until all the hair is covered.

There is no need to treat the whole family - unless they also have head lice.

Concentrate on the head - there is no need to clean the house or the classroom.

Only the pillowcase requires washing - either wash it in hot water (at least 60°C) or dry it using a clothes dryer on the hot or warm setting.

Testing resistance

Head lice products belong in one of the following categories depending on the active compound they contain:

- pyrethrins
- synthetic pyrethroids (permethrin, bioallethrin)
- organophosphates (maldison or malathion)
- herbal with or without natural (non-chemical) pyrethrins.

Insecticide resistance is common, so you should test if lice are dead. If they are, treat again in seven days using the same product. If the lice are not dead, the treatment has not worked and the lice may be resistant to the product and all products containing the same active compound. Wash off the product and treat as soon as possible using a product containing a different active compound. If the insecticide has worked, the lice will be dead within 20 minutes.

Any head lice product could cause a reaction and should be used with care by women who are pregnant or breastfeeding, children less than 12 months old and people with allergies, asthma or open wounds on the scalp. If you are unsure, please check with your pharmacist or doctor.

Head lice combs

Combs with long, rounded stainless steel teeth positioned very close together have been shown to be the most effective, however, any head lice comb can be used.

Head lice eggs

Head lice eggs are small (the size of a pinhead) and oval. A live egg will 'pop' when squashed between fingernails.



Dead eggs have crumpled sides and hatched eggs look like tiny boiled eggs with their tops cut off.

Regulations

According to the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009, children with head lice can be readmitted to school or children's service centres after treatment has commenced.

The department recommends a child with head lice can be treated one evening and return to school or children's service centres the next day, even if there are still some eggs present. There is no need to miss school or child care because of head lice.

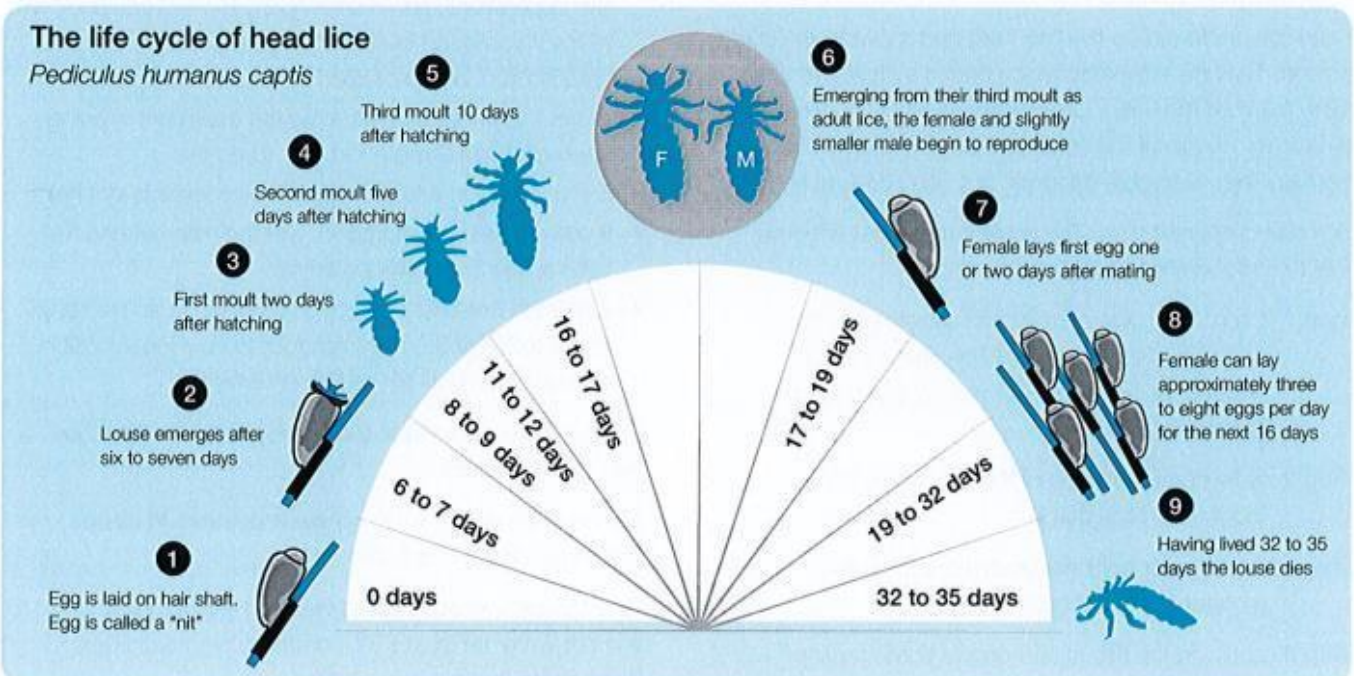
Preventing head lice

Check your child's head regularly with comb and conditioner. There is no research to prove that chemical or herbal therapies can prevent head lice.

Further information

The following website offers further information:

www.health.vic.gov.au/headlice



The information in this pamphlet is based on the research conducted and written by Associate Professor Rick Speare and the team of researchers at, School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, James Cook University.

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