

Stockdale Road Primary School

HEAD LICE POLICY

Responsibility: School Council

Reviewed: July 2013

Head lice (pediculosis) are tiny insects that live on the human scalp where they feed and breed. Probably 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. They 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/or hats.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy document is:

- to provide a process whereby head lice is treated as quickly and discreetly as possible for the benefit of the school community
- to provide a process for response to reports of head lice quickly and effectively
- to outline the responsibilities and expectations of the school community in dealing with head lice in a consistent and coordinated manner
- to provide a clear and consistent head lice procedure for the school community to follow

Responsibility of all members of the School Community:

Whilst parents have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, this school community will work in a cooperative and collaborative manner to assist families to manage head lice effectively. All members will exercise tolerance and understanding to avoid stigmatising or blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures. Everyone will behave in a responsible manner, maintaining respect for all parties when dealing with this issue with members of the school and broader community.

Responsibility of Parents and Carers:

- To check the hair of their children at home on a weekly basis (using conditioner and a head lice comb is the most effective method of detection)
- To ensure their child/ren do not attend school with untreated head lice, in accordance with Health Infectious Diseases Regulations 2001
- Notify the school if their child/ren is found to have live lice
- Use safe treatment practices which do not place their child's health at risk in accordance with Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009
- If live lice are found then check the hair of all household members and treat if necessary
- Notify the parents or carers of your child's friends so they have the opportunity to detect head lice quickly and treat their child if necessary
- Encourage your child/ren with long hair (defined as shoulder length or longer) to attend school with their hair tied back
- Agree to be bound by the head lice policy of this school as part of your child's enrolment

Responsibility of Stockdale Road Primary School:

- To develop a comprehensive head lice management plan
- Ensure all families attending this school sign onto an agreement accepting their requirement to be bound by the school's head lice policy
- Obtain written parental permission for head lice inspections
- Encouraging those persons authorised by the school principal to visually check a student's hair if the presence of head lice is suspected
- Provide a letter to all children involved when class inspections are conducted to assist in maintaining the confidentiality of students and families
- Only exclude children from school who have live lice
- Accept the notification from parents that appropriate treatment has commenced
- Ensure that any person engaged in the head lice program adhere to this policy and Department of Human Services information and Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001
- Educate students about head lice in order to prevent stigma or bullying associated with this issue
- Work with families who are experiencing real difficulties in order to obtain additional support where needed
- Distribute comprehensive advice about the use of safe treatment practices which do not place student's health at risk
- To develop clear protocols for a head lice inspection program to be implemented
- To help reduce stigma and maintain confidentiality following head lice inspections
- Training of appropriate school personnel in direction and management of head lice

This policy is to be reviewed in 3 years and is to be endorsed by School Council.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in

October 2013