



Head Lice Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide some guidelines for the management of head lice infections within the school.

BROAD GUIDELINES

- ❑ Whilst parents have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, the school has a role to play in providing support for parents and students.
- ❑ At any given time, most schools will have some students with head lice, so it is important that no stigma is attached to those who are infected.
- ❑ Information regarding the detection, treatment and control of head lice will be distributed to parents each year, and as new information becomes available.
- ❑ Children with untreated head lice will be excluded from the school until treatment occurs.
- ❑ The community cannot do anything to discourage headlice unless cases are reported and families check regularly

IMPLEMENTATION

- ❑ Up-to-date information about detection, safe treatment practices and control of head lice will be distributed to each family in term 1, and as new information becomes available with links to current information.
- ❑ Parents will not send children to school with untreated head lice. Students may be treated one evening and return to school the next day. Parents need to be aware, however, that one treatment is not sufficient to manage the problem.
- ❑ Parents will be strongly encouraged to report any head lice infections to the office.
- ❑ When live lice are detected in a student's hair during school time, the parents will be contacted and asked to take the child home for treatment. The presence of eggs is not cause for exclusion.
- ❑ If a case of head lice is reported or detected in a class, a note will be sent home with all students in that grade informing parents of the need to check for head lice.

- ❑ If eggs are detected in a student's hair, a note will be sent to the parents with a detachable slip for them to return indicating the treatment used and when it commenced.
- ❑ If an inspection program is to take place, all parents will be informed and will need to complete a permission form for each child.
- ❑ Following head lice inspections, to reduce the stigma and maintain confidentiality all children will be given a note, not just those found to have head lice.

OUTCOMES

- ❑ Parents will be informed about the best ways of treating head lice.
- ❑ The stigma associated with head lice infection will be reduced.
- ❑ The incidence of head lice in the school may be reduced.

This policy was ratified by School Council on October 10, 2016
It will be reviewed as deemed necessary



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Dear Parents/Guardians/Carers,

It has come to my attention that some students in the school may have head lice and I seek your cooperation in checking your child's hair this week (insert date __/__/__ to __/__/__).

Head lice do not transmit infectious diseases – they are transmitted by having head to head contact with someone who has head lice. You may be reassured to know that head lice are commonly found in places other than at St Leonards Primary School. Head lice are common in school-aged children and are the most adaptable of creatures. They have survived living solely on humans for 10,000 years!!!!

What can you do?

I seek your cooperation in checking your child's hair and in those instances where head lice or eggs are found, treating your child's hair.

Please see the attached pamphlet *Treating and Controlling Head Lice*, from the Department of Health. This pamphlet has informative guidelines regarding detecting and treating head lice and eggs.

How do I treat my child for head lice?

The attached pamphlet (as noted above) has informative guidelines regarding detecting and treating head lice and eggs. The school also has additional information available regarding treatment and controlling head lice. Please don't hesitate to contact Chris Layley on 5257 1460 to obtain this information.

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.

When can my child return to school?

Health regulations requires 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.

St Leonards Primary School is aware that head lice can be a sensitive issue and is committed to maintaining your confidentiality.

Kind regards

Principal.



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Dear Parent/Guardian/Carer,

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 Health. This pamphlet has informative guidelines regarding detecting and treating head lice and eggs.

Whenever you find head lice, you should notify St Leonards Primary School and advise when appropriate treatment 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**

To: Natalie Jenkins

CONFIDENTIAL

Student's 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 (insert name of treatment) _____.

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

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



HEAD LICE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS/CARERS

Head lice continues to cause concern and frustration for some parents/guardians/carers, teachers and children. Head lice do not transmit infectious diseases – they are transmitted by having head to head contact with someone who has head lice. Whilst parents have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, the control and management of head lice infections is a shared responsibility amongst a number of agencies, including the Department of Education and Training; Department of Human Services; schools and parents. The Department of Education and Training is responsible for providing advice and support to schools regarding head lice management.

This agreement outlines the:

- Responsibilities of both the school and the parent/guardian/carer;
- Importance of an all inclusive health approach, to ensure an appropriate and efficient solution to the problem of head lice.

Responsibilities

Parent/Guardian/Carer - responsibilities include:

- Regularly (preferably once a week) inspecting their child's hair to look for lice or lice eggs and regularly inspecting all household members and then treating them if necessary;
- Ensuring their child does not attend school with untreated head lice;
- Using safe treatment practices which do not place their child's health at risk (see the *Treating and Controlling Head Lice* pamphlet).
- Notifying the school if their child is affected and advising the school when the treatment has started via an *Action Taken* form;
- Notifying parents or carers of your child's friends so they too have the opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary.

I have read and agree to the above responsibilities:

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

School - responsibilities include:

- Distributing policies and information on the detection, treatment and control of head lice to parents/guardians/carers and staff and having accessible clear protocols for the inspection program that the school implements;
- Developing a school policy on head lice which reinforces an accurate, consistent approach to the management of head lice infections, which is approved by the school council;
- Obtaining written parental consent to conduct head lice inspections, upon the enrolment of a student to cover the duration of their schooling at a particular school and to nominate a trained person/s to conduct the head lice inspections, who is approved by the Principal and school council;
- Encouraging those person's authorised by the school principal, e.g. teacher, to visually check a student's hair, i.e. with no physical contact with the child, if the presence of head lice is suspected;
- Encouraging parents/guardians/carers to continue to regularly (preferably once per week) check their child for head lice and providing a sympathetic attitude and practical advice to those parents experiencing difficulty with the control measures;

- Encouraging students to learn about head lice so as to help remove any stigma or 'bullying' associated with the issue;
- Being aware that the responsibility to exclude a child from a school rests with the principal or person in charge of the school and being aware that exclusion only refers to those children who have live head lice and does not refer to head lice eggs; and being aware of the recommendation that students should be excluded from school at the conclusion of the school day where the student should be provided with a note to take home to inform the parent that their child may have head lice.
- Being aware that there is no requirement in the *Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001* for a child treated for head lice to obtain a clearance certificate to be issued either by a general practitioner or a municipal council, on return to school.
- Where appropriate, and at the principal's discretion, providing an alert notice to the school community, when head lice has been detected in the school;
- Encouraging parents/guardians/carers to identify treatment used and the commencement date, via an *Action Taken form*.

St Leonards Primary School is committed to managing head lice in a sensitive and confidential manner. We are committed to the above responsibilities.

Signature of Principal **Date**.....