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HEAD LICE POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide some guidelines for the management of head lice infection within St Leonards Primary School.

Head lice continue to cause concern and frustration for some parents, teachers and children. St Leonards Primary School's 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.

Whilst parents and carers have the main 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.

St Leonards Primary School's policy draws on information from the Scratching for Answers? information pamphlet and management guidelines.

PARENT GUIDELINES

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

- Check your children's hair for head lice weekly, at home, using the recommended conditioner/combing detection method.
- Not allow your child to attend school with untreated head lice (in accordance with Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009).
- Regularly inspect all household members and then treat them if necessary.
- Tie your child's hair back if it is long.
- Treat head lice safely and as recommended.
- Notify the parents or carers of your child's friends so they can check their children and treat if necessary.
- Maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising or blaming families who are finding it hard to control head lice.

- Act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community around issues of head lice.
- Sign an agreement accepting the terms of the St Leonards Primary School's Head Lice Policy.

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

- Distribute up to date and accurate information on the finding, treating and controlling 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 or blaming families who are finding it hard to control head lice.
- Access community educational resources and support, such as primary school nurses, community health centres and local government.
- Follow the recommendations of the School Exclusion Policy of the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009 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 reduce stigma or bullying.
- Ask all families to sign an agreement accepting the conditions of the school's head lice policy.
- Be aware of real difficulties some parents may have and seek extra support if required.
- Participate in a Head Lice Local Area Network to work with other schools, childcare centres, health services and pharmacists in your Local Government Area to achieve consistent management and policy.
- Review the head lice policy annually and seek endorsement from the School Council/community.
- Act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community around issues of head lice.
- Seek opportunities to increase our collective understanding of and response to managing head lice.

STAFF AND TEACHERS GUIDELINES

- When live lice are detected in a student's hair during school time, parents/carers 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/carers 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.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy was updated in July 2021 and will be reviewed in July 2025



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COMPASS NEWSFEED

Dear Parent/Carer,

Head lice or eggs have been detected in your child's class.

It's important to check your child's head and if lice are detected commence treatment immediately.

TREATMENT CHOICES

Chemical – Treat and comb to remove the head lice and eggs and repeat in seven days.

Non-Chemical – Use conditioner and comb to remove the head lice and eggs. Repeat every 2 days until no live lice have been found for 10 days.

REMEMBER: Using hair conditioner and comb method every week is the best way to detect head lice early.

Tying back hair can help prevent the spread of head lice.



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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 *Head Lice, Scratching for Answers?* 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

Jenny Cowburn, 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 *Head Lice, Scratching for Answers?* 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: Jenny Cowburn

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 & date of treatment) _____.

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

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