

# Headlice Policy

## Rationale

It is the primary responsibility of parents/guardians to detect and treat head lice. The school has a role in the management of head lice infections and in providing support to parents/guardians and students.

## 1. Guidelines

- 1.1 An appropriate school management plan will be in place to ensure prompt and effective response to reports of head lice.
- 1.2 Parents/Guardians will be well informed about effective processes for the treatment of head lice.

## 2. Implementation

- 2.1 Visual head lice checks without physical contact do not require parent consent and are conducted by the Principal or authorised staff e.g. classroom teacher
- 2.2 Up to date information on the detection, safe treatment and control of head lice will be available from the Office
- 2.3 The Principal and School Council will identify specific staff members who will conduct head lice checks of students' heads ie the school's First Aid Officers
- 2.4 If students are found to have a live lice infestation, the parents will be contacted to collect them and commence treatment. The treatment guidelines will also be provided at this time
- 2.5 The Principal has the overall responsibility to exclude a student from school
- 2.6 The presence of eggs in the hair is not a cause for exclusion.
- 2.7 If students are found to have a head lice infestation, all parents in the affected class will be informed via a proforma letter on the day the problem is identified. This letter will not contain information that could identify individual students
- 2.8 Consistent with Health Regulations - Infectious Diseases 2001, the Principal will ensure that the parents of any child found to have head lice are informed that their child is to be excluded from attending school until appropriate treatment has commenced. If a student returns with live head lice, the school may again exclude the student until the live insects have been removed.
- 2.9 There is no requirement for a general practitioner or local council to issue a clearance certificate in order for the student to return to school. Students may be treated one evening and return to school the next day, however, one treatment is usually not sufficient to manage the problem. If a student re-attends school with live head lice then the school may exclude the student until live insects have been removed
- 2.10 Every effort will be made to reduce stigma and maintain confidentiality following head lice inspections
- 2.11 Parents/guardians have the primary responsibility for detection of head lice on their child and should regularly check for lice or eggs. They are expected to notify the school

if their child has been affected and when treatment has commenced. Parents/guardians are required to refrain from sending their children to school with untreated head lice

- 2.12 Students may be treated one evening and return to school the next day. The presence of eggs in the hair is not a cause for exclusion.
- 2.13 Classroom activities may be undertaken to assist students' understanding of the habits and life cycle of head lice to minimise the stigmatisation of affected students and their families, as well as how to apply strategies to reduce the likelihood of an infestation.

### **3. Evaluation**

- 3.1 The Education Sub Committee and Weeden Heights staff will review the effectiveness of the school's Headlice Policy on a cyclical basis in accordance with DET guidelines.

#### **Relevant Documents / Links**

1. Procedures as outlined on the Victorian Department website (School Policy and Advisory Guide) are to be followed in conjunction with the guidelines from the Victorian Health Department
2. The Head Lice Management Toolkit (Victorian Education Department)
3. Scratching for Answers (Department of Human Services)