

Nathalia Primary School

HEAD LICE

POLICY

Rationale:

- 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.

Aims:

- 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:

- Anyone can catch head lice.
- Head lice 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 hats.
- While it is parents who have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice on their children, the school will assist by offering up-to-date information, by offering a screening process, and by alerting parents of lice when detected.
- The school will organise to have volunteer parents and volunteer staff members trained in the detection of head lice.
- The school will ask parents to sign a permission form allowing their children to be screened by our trained personnel for the presence of head lice.
- All children screened will be provided with a confidential report indicating to parents the results of the screening (see Form2 below), as well as advice on the latest information regarding head lice.
- Children who do not have signed consent forms for physical inspections may have non-physical inspections or visual checks in accordance with Departmental policy (Circular 017/2005 Head Lice Management)
- Consistent with Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001, the principal will ensure that the parents of any child found to have live lice are informed that their child is to be excluded from attending school until appropriate treatment has commenced.
- The principal will also provide parents of children found to have live lice with information about head lice treatment and prevention.
- Upon their return to school, parents of excluded children must present the signed declaration on Form2 indicating that appropriate treatment has commenced. All excluded children are to undergo another inspection from our trained personnel before recommencing school.
- The principal will ensure that information relating to the prevention and eradication of head lice appears throughout the year in the school newsletter, particularly at times of heavy outbreaks.

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

Nathalia Primary School

Head Lice Inspection – Consent Form

Throughout the year, the school will be arranging head lice inspections of students. The management of head lice 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.

Before any inspections are conducted staff 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.

Trained staff from our school will conduct the inspection of students.

The person conducting the inspections will either physically or non-physically search through each student's hair to see if any lice or eggs are present. Parents are welcome to be present during this time.

In cases where head lice are found, the person inspecting the student will inform the student's class teacher and the principal. The school will send a written notice home with the child and provide parents with comprehensive advice about the use of safe treatment practices which do not place children's health at risk.

Please note that the law requires that where a child has head lice, that child should not return to school until appropriate treatment has commenced.

The following table is copied from the DEECD Circular 017/2005 Head Lice Management:

Differences between Head Lice Inspections and Visual Checks

	Definitions	Authorised Persons	Parent Consent
Head Lice Inspection	Examination of a child's head for the presence of head lice.	Persons authorised by the school principal and school council, e.g. School nurse, parent volunteer	Parental consent is required (obtained upon child's enrolment at school).
Visual Checks	Observations without physically touching a student's head.	Persons authorised by the school principal e.g. classroom teacher.	No parental consent required.

Parent's/Guardian's Full Name: _____

Address: _____ Postcode: _____

Name(s) of Child/Children attending the school:	Year Level:

I hereby give my consent for the above-named children to participate in the school's head lice inspection program.

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Date: _____

Nathalia Primary School

Head Lice Check Report Sheet

Name: _____

Your child was checked today by our trained staff at school for the presence of head lice.

The results of the check are:

- No lice or eggs detected.
- Dead eggs were found.
- Live eggs were found.
- Live lice were found.

Therefore the following action is required:-

- No action required.
- Child's hair must be treated with a method that has killed or removed live lice before the child is returned to school.

Please Note: All children who are found to have live eggs will be re-checked by trained staff soon after returning to school to ensure the infestation has been effectively treated.

Regards,

Chris McCallum
Principal

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HEAD LICE TREATMENT REPLY SLIP

If your child has been detected with live lice, this reply slip must be returned to school at the same time that your child returns.

- I have treated my child's head in a manner that has killed or removed the live lice.
- I would like to be shown how the Dept of Human Services recommends removal of eggs and lice using hair conditioner and a fine-toothed comb.

Child's Name:..... Parent Signature:.....

Child's Class:.....