

Policy Number	Ratification Date	Reviewed	Review Date
24	2016	2016	2018



# HEAD LICE

## Description

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.

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.

## Rationale

- To support and provide consistent and practical advice on the management of head lice in partnership with parents/carers

## Aim

- To manage and ultimately reduce outbreaks of head lice at Elsternwick Primary School

## Implementation

### School Action

- Upon enrolment, parents will be asked to sign a permission form allowing their children to be inspected by the School Nurse for the presence of head lice for the duration of their attendance at Elsternwick Primary School. Only children whose parents have returned the permission form will be inspected, however, all students may be visually checked.
- Include information & updates in school newsletter, especially during heavy infestations and display head lice policy on the school website
- Distribute up to date information on the detection, treatment head lice to parents (available from website [www.dhs.vic.govc.au/phd/headlice](http://www.dhs.vic.govc.au/phd/headlice))
- Provide advice and maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures
- Abide by the recommendations of the school exclusion Policy as laid down by the policy of the Health (infectious diseases) regulations 2001, in that the responsibility to exclude a child from school rests with the principal or person in charge until initial treatment has commenced.
- Teachers or staff members suspecting that a child is suspected to have head lice are to report their concerns to the school nurse.
- The school nurse will notify parents if a child is found to have head lice and a Konnective will be sent to parents to alert parents of notification of head lice and to be more vigilant with checking their child/children's heads for head lice

### Suggested Parent Action

- Children with long hair should attend school with hair tied back
- Children's hair will be checked on a weekly basis, at home, using recommended conditioner/combing detection method
- Child/children do not attend school with untreated head lice (in accordance with health Infectious Diseases Regulations 2001)
- Regularly inspect all household members and treat them if necessary.
- Manage outbreaks in accordance with their safe and recommended practices for treating head lice
- Parents/carers will notify the school if their child is found to have live lice and advise when treatment has commenced.

- Maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures
- Parents can seek extra support and information from <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/headlice>.

### **Other Resources**

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/headlice.aspx>

<http://ideas.health.vic.gov.au/bluebook/pediculosis.asp>

### **Evaluation**

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