

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 and by alerting parents of the presence of lice when detected through observation.
- If a staff member through incidental observation suspects a child has head lice, the child's parents will be contacted.
- 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 been commenced.
- The principal will also provide parents of children found to have live lice with information about head lice treatment and prevention.
- All parents of students who are in the same class as the infected child will be alerted that head lice have been detected and request that they also check their individual child's hair.
- 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.
- Classroom teachers will be required to insist hair is to be tied up and will discuss the importance of not sharing combs, brushes and hats in their classrooms.

Evaluation:

- This policy was last ratified by School Council in 2017.