



## HEADLICE POLICY CREEKSIDE K-9 COLLEGE

Last Ratified by School Council	Review Date	Responsible for Review
May 2018	May 2021	School Council

### Purpose

Headlice continues to cause concern and frustration for some parents, teachers and children. This 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/guardians have the primary 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.

This school policy draws on information from the 'Scratching for Answers?' Information pamphlet and management guidelines.

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 infected at any one time.

While head lice 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.

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.

### 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.
- To outline the roles and responsibilities of the many players involved in the detection, treatment and control of head lice.

## Implementation

### *Parents/Carers/Families*

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

- check your children's hair for head lice on a weekly basis, 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 longer than shoulder length
- 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 especially around issues of head lice
- sign an agreement accepting the terms of the School Head Lice Policy
- notify the school if your child is found to have live lice and advise when appropriate treatment commenced (in accordance with Health Infectious Diseases Regulations 2001)
- present the signed action taken on the bottom of the Head Lice Check Report, indicating that appropriate treatment has been completed.

### *School*

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

- distribute up to date and accurate information on the finding, treating and controlling of 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 professional learning 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 with live head lice
- accept the advice of parents that appropriate treatment has commenced
- encourage children to learn about head lice so as to help remove any stigma or 'bullying' associated with the issue

- 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 encounter 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 especially around issues of head lice
- seek opportunities to increase our collective understanding of and response to managing head lice
- ensure that any person employed by the school, or volunteering, to undertake head lice inspections will adhere to the school policy and department of health information
- only inspect the heads of children whose parents have given consent
- develop a consent form which parents sign at the commencement of the school year
- respect the wishes of parents/families who elect not to participate in a school head lice check
- give a letter to all children involved in head lice inspections to help reduce the stigma and maintain confidentiality
- include teachers and school staff in the inspection
- ensure consent are updated when the guardianship or custody arrangements change for the student or if parents/guardians no longer wish to consent to inspections
- conduct visual checks without physical contact as they do not require parent/guardian consent
- ensure staff employed by the school undertaking 'head lice inspections' adhere to the school policy and latest department of human services information and health (infectious diseases) regulations 2001
- only inspect the heads of children whose parents have given prior consent
- alert parents/guardians of an infestation, particularly the parents of other students in the same class as the affected child/children
- use discretion about informing the school community about an infestation
- maintain confidentiality when conducting head lice inspections
- provide a confidential report to parents indicating the results of the screening as well as advice on the latest information regarding head lice.

## In the Event of Head Lice

Inform First Aid Personnel



First Aid Personnel to inform Principal Team



Send out Notification letters to the  
Class/es in which head lice is reported.



Check that all children have a signed  
permission form for inspection.



Principal or nominee may engage appropriate  
personnel to carry out an inspection



Parents are informed via a letter of the status of their  
child and are expected to treat infected children as per policy.



A master list of children inspected will  
be kept by the First Aid Personnel.



Parents/guardians must return the signed Head Lice Treatment reply slip  
as per the school policy.



All documentation with personal information  
must adhere to the privacy policy of the school