

# 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 effective processes for treating head lice are well known and consistently followed.
- To ensure that parents and guardians are well informed about head lice and their 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/carers 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 principal will ensure all teachers and aides are provided with professional development regarding head lice, who will then be authorised to carry out visual checks of students heads for head lice (observations without touching of the students head or hair). The principal will also identify specific staff members to carry out head lice inspections (physical examinations) of students head and hair for the presence of head lice.
- The school will ask parents to sign a permission form allowing their children to be inspected by our specific staff members for the presence of head lice. Only children whose parents have returned the permission form (which forms part of the enrolment form) will be inspected, however, all students may be visually checked. (see Form1 below).
- All children checked or inspected will be provided with a confidential report indicating to parents the results of the inspection (see Form2 below), as well as advice on the latest information regarding head lice.
- 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 school until appropriate treatment has commenced. Such children will be sent home during the school day.

- 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 are to present the signed declaration on Form2 indicating that appropriate treatment has commenced. All excluded children to undergo another inspection from our trained head lice inspectors upon recommencement of school.
- The principal will ensure that information relating to the prevention and eradication of head lice is available at the school.

**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....

June

2012

Form 1

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