



Head Lice Policy

2017

This procedure is applicable to: Teachers, Parents and Students

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HEAD LICE POLICY

Head lice continue to cause concern and frustration for some parents/guardians, 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.

Under Section 27 of the School Education Act 1999, an Administrator/Principal may exclude a child with head lice from school until treatment has commenced. However, students will be treated with sensitivity if head lice are found. The Department of Health advises that students do not necessarily need to be excluded from class activities until the end of the school day. Students may be given tasks which do not involve close group work and remain at school for the remainder of the day. The Administrator/Principal, however, does have authority to exercise discretion and withdraw a student from school programs at any time.

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.

INTRODUCTION

Head Lice are a perennial problem in any school and we understand the frustrations many parents face in dealing with them within a class community. With this in mind, the faculty of teachers and the School's Administrator encourage all members of the Silver Tree Community to understand that -

1. Without the whole school undertaking regular head lice checks the effectiveness of one segment of the school doing it is minimal
2. It is the parents' responsibility to monitor and deal with head lice when and if their child has them.
3. Head lice checks at school are for surveillance only. They are not for treating head lice. They can be disruptive to lessons and are seen as intrusive by some parents.
4. We regard the parent body as adult collaborators and expect them to act responsibly for the welfare of everyone.
5. We will monitor the situation and review it annually.
6. We will report any belief that a child may have Head Lice directly to the parent concerned and provide regular reminders in the Newsletter.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND FAMILIES

It is the expectation of parents/guardians and families attending this school that:

- Children's hair will be checked for head lice regularly, at home, using the recommended conditioner/combing detection method;
- Children do not attend school with untreated head lice;
- All household members will regularly be inspected and then treated if necessary;
- Parents/guardians will notify the school if their child is found to have live lice and advise when appropriate treatment was commenced;
- Children with long hair will attend school with their hair tied back;
- Parents/guardians will only use safe and recommended practices to treat head lice;
- Parents/guardians will notify the parents or guardians of their child's friends so they have an early opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary;
- Parents/guardians will maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures;
- Parents/guardians will act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community especially around issues of head lice;

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL

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

- Distribute up to date and accurate information on the detection, treatment and control of head lice to parents and staff members 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 members attending the school;
- Include information and updates in the school newsletter;
- Provide practical 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's Administrator in that the responsibility to exclude a child from the school rests with them under the *School Education Act 1999* and only children with live head lice will be excluded from school;
- Send an email out immediately that a parent has advised that Head Lice have been found and treated to all other parents of that class.
- Accept the advice of parents/guardians 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;
- Be aware of real difficulties some parents may encounter and seek extra support if required;
- Review the school's *Head Lice Policy* annually and seek endorsement from the School Board/community;
- Act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community especially around issues of head lice;

REFERENCES

AISWA Head Lice Guidelines

Available: <https://www.ais.wa.edu.au>

Head Lice Fact Sheet

Available: <http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au>

Health Act 1911

Available: http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/wa/consol_act/ha19116

School Education Act (WA) 1999 and Regulations 2000 (WA) – Independent Schools

Available: <http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf>

Appendix A FACT SHEET

This information is obtained from the Western Australian Department of Health, via the website - http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/3/258/3/communicable_disease_guidelines_booklet.pm

This document states the following:

Head Lice (Pediculosis)

Transmission:	Head-to-head contact with an infested person.
Incubation period:	7 to 10 days.
Infectious period:	Until lice and eggs (Head Lice) are killed.
Exclusion:	Exclude until the day after treatment has commenced.
Contacts:	Do not exclude.
Treatment:	See Head Lice Fact Sheet.
Immunisation:	None.

How to treat head lice

The Department of Health, Communicable Disease Control has produced a Head Lice Fact Sheet that discusses in detail how head lice is to be treated. This document can be sent home to families when a case of head lice is identified.

Available at:
http://www.health.wa.gov.au/docreg/Education/Diseases/Communicable/Parasitic/HP0149_head_lice_FS.pdf