

POLICY: HEAD LICE (Pediculosis)

INTRODUCTION:

While parents/guardians have primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, schools also have a role in the management of head lice infections and in providing support for parents/guardians and students.

PURPOSE:

- To provide a healthy learning environment for all students.
- To effectively control and minimise head lice infestation within the school.
- To provide support and advice to families on the management of head lice infestations.

GUIDELINES

1. Guidelines published by the Victorian Government Department of Human Services for effective management of head lice infestation will be adopted.
2. In accordance with Department of Education and Training regulations the principal will exclude an infested student until he/she is treated for the condition.
3. Each year the issue will be covered for students through the Health curriculum. Information will include identifying symptoms, appropriate action to rid lice and nits and emphasise the benefits of frequent and regular hair combing and brushing.
4. Information will be forwarded to parents at the beginning of each school year and more frequently as required.
5. A consent form for head lice inspections will be sent home to all families at the beginning of each school year.
6. Information on head lice from the Department of Human Services will be included in the school information pack.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Teachers or parents should refer known or suspected cases of infestation to the principal.
2. On receiving such advice the principal will take appropriate action.
 - Parents/guardians of students with head lice will be notified as soon as practicable and provide information on the recommended procedures for control of infestation as advised by Human Services.
 - Upon notification it is the responsibility of parents/guardians to arrange or administer treatment. The child may return to school once the treatment has commenced. For example a student with head lice can be treated one evening and return to school the next day however a follow up treatment within 7 days is required.
 - On return to school the principal will request a note from the parent to the effect that their child has undergone the prescribed treatment for this condition and their child will be inspected by the first aid officer as soon as possible that day.
 - A notice to parents of students in the relevant class will be issued as soon as practicable to advise that all parents check their child's hair for lice or nits.
3. The Municipal Head Lice nurse will be called in to inspect students' hair if deemed necessary.
4. In order to reduce stigma and maintain confidentiality following head lice inspections a letter will be given to all students inspected not just those found to have head lice.
5. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to adopt the following procedures:
 - regularly (preferably once per week) inspect their child/children's hair for lice or lice eggs (using conditioner and a head lice comb is the most effective method)
 - regularly inspect all household members followed by treatment if head lice are detected
 - upon detection of head lice, notify the school and advise when treatment has commenced.

EVALUATION

The incidence of head lice infestation will be monitored to ensure that the school's management of instances of head lice is effective.

CONSENT FORM-HEAD LICE INSPECTIONS

ANTONIO PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Throughout each year, the school will be arranging head lice inspections of students.

The management of head lice infection works best when all children are involved in our screening program.

The school is aware that this can be a sensitive issue and is committed to maintaining student confidentiality and avoiding stigmatisation.

Before any inspections are conducted staff will explain to all students what is being done and why, and it will be emphasised to students that the presence of head lice in their hair does not mean that their hair is less clean or well kept than anyone else's. It will also be pointed out that head lice can be itchy and annoying and if you know you have got them, you can do something about it.

The inspection of students will be conducted by nurses from the Health Department of the City of Whitehorse or the school first aid officer as required.

The person conducting the inspections will check through each student's hair to see if any lice or eggs are present.

In cases where head lice are found, the person inspecting the student will inform the student's class teacher and the principal or the School First Aid Officer. The school will make appropriate contact with the parents/guardians.

Parent's/guardian's full name:

Address: Postcode:

Name of child attending the school: Year level:

.....

I hereby give my consent for the above-named child to participate in the school's head lice inspection program.

Signature of parent/guardian:Date:

The signing of this Consent Form for Head Lice Inspections will remain in force for the duration of your child's stay at Antonio Park Primary School unless otherwise notified.