

# Head Lice Policy

## Brighton Primary School

### 1542

#### Rationale

Head lice management is a complex issue for schools and head lice infections can be difficult to manage. The responsibility for detecting and treating head lice rests with the parents.

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 the most common cause of head itch and scratching which may lead to infection and swollen lymph glands; therefore, they need to be eradicated.

Anyone can have head lice. Head lice cannot fly, hop or jump. They spread from person to person by head to head contact, and by the sharing of personal items such as combs, brushes and head gear such as hats.

#### Purpose

- 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 reduce the spread of head lice.

#### Implementation

- At the time of enrolment, the school will organise for parental consent to head lice checks. This will remain in effect throughout the student's primary schooling years.
- Teachers or staff members suspecting that a child has head lice, are to report their concerns to the School Nurse. Not all staff members are permitted or qualified to search a child's hair, inspect for head lice, or diagnose a case of head lice.
- Parent consent must be checked before the student's hair is to be inspected.
- The School Nurse, or a First Aid trained staff member, will check the reported student for head lice.
- Upon positive identification of head lice, the School Nurse will ensure that a parent of the infected child is contacted as soon as possible.
- The student will be excluded from attending school, in accordance with the Victorian Health Regulations.
- Treatment requires two applications; the second treatment must be repeated after one week
- The student will be sent home for initial treatment and must be kept away from school until this initial treatment is administered.
- The School Nurse will inform the parents of the grade affected that there has been an incident of head lice and the treatment necessary for eradication. This is in the form of a generic letter. Information relating to the prevention and eradication of head lice will be provided throughout the year in the school newsletter.

Please refer to <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/health/Pages/headlice.aspx> for more information.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in May 2017

To be reviewed in 2020