

HEAD LICE POLICY

PURPOSE

To minimise outbreaks of head lice.

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

Most schools will have some students with head lice at any given time. However the habits of head lice and their propensity to spread throughout the student population make it necessary for the school to have a management plan.

POLICY

Schools must:

- obtain informed written consent from parents/guardians prior to students being inspected for head lice
- exclude infected students until the day after treatment has commenced. (The current recommendation is 2 treatments 7 days apart). Parents/guardians need to be aware that one treatment is not sufficient to manage the problem. If a student re-attends school with live lice the school may again exclude the student until the live insects have been treated.

Parent/guardian consent

A pro forma consent form:

- obtains parent/guardian consent to head lice inspections
- should be provided to parents for completion as part of enrolment
- must be updated when:
 - guardianship or custody arrangements change for the student
 - parents/guardians no longer wish to consent to inspections
- applies for the duration the child is at the school.

BILLANOOK PRIMARY SCHOOL – POLICY BOOK

Throughout the year, the school will be arranging head lice inspections of students. The management of head lice infestation works best when all children are involved in our screening program on a regular basis.

The school is aware that this can be a sensitive issue and is committed to maintaining student confidentiality. 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 approved person(s) who are trained. The person conducting the inspections will check through each student's hair to see if any lice or eggs are present. In cases where live head lice are found, the person inspecting the student will inform the student's class teacher and the principal. The school will make contact with the parents/guardians.

Please note that the law requires that where a child has live head lice, that the child should not return to school until appropriate treatment has commenced.

BILLANOOK PRIMARY SCHOOL HEAD LICE INSPECTION CONSENT FORM

Parent's/guardian's full name:

Address: Postcode:

Name(s) of child/children attending the school:

_____ Year _____

_____ Year _____

_____ Year _____

I hereby give my consent for the above-named child/children to participate in the school's head lice inspection program whilst attending Billanook P.S.

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

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Visual head lice checks

Head lice have been found in most schools, Checks for head lice occur via:

- visual checks without physical contact:
 - do not require parent/guardian consent
 - are made by people authorised by the Principal, e.g. classroom teachers.
- head lice inspections involving the examination of a student:
 - require written parental consent, usually obtained at enrolment
 - are made by people authorised by the Principal and school council e.g. First aid staff or parent volunteers.

Exclusion of students

Students identified with live head lice should be:

- provided with a note to take home to inform the parent/carer that their child may have head lice at the conclusion of the school day.
- excluded from school until the day after treatment has commenced, as set out in the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001, School Exclusion Table.

Note 1: Principal has the overall responsibility to exclude a student from school.

Note 2: The presence of eggs in the hair is not a cause for exclusion. There is no requirement for a general practitioner or local council to issue a clearance certificate in order for the child to return to school.

Detection and treatment responsibilities

Responsibilities for managing head lice are shared between: parents/guardians, schools and Principals.

Parents/guardians have primary responsibility for detection and treatment of head lice.

Parents/guardians should:

- regularly, preferably once a week, check for lice or eggs in the hair of:
 - their child
 - all household members
- notify the school:
 - if their child is affected
 - when treatment commenced
- not send their children to school with untreated head lice.

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BILLANOOK PRIMARY SCHOOL – POLICY BOOK

Schools must:

- exercise sensitivity towards students and families with head lice
- maintain student confidentiality to avoid stigmatisation
- support and provide practical treatment advice to parents/guardians.

Principals must:

- 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.

Note: The Department of Human Services indicates at any one time there are likely to be cases of head lice in most schools, so it is not advocated that the Principal informs the whole school community each time head lice are detected.

RELATED POLICIES

- [Infectious Diseases](#)

RELATED LEGISLATION

- Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001

DEPARTMENT RESOURCES

- [Headlice Management ToolKit](#)

REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION

This policy was last updated on:

Date:

Feb 2019

Evaluation and Review:

Feb 2022

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