



CAULFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

HEAD LICE POLICY

POLICY NO. 1.4

Rationale:

Head lice (pediculosis) are an on-going challenge in schools. Most schools will have some students with head lice or nits (lice eggs) at any given time. Head lice can become very distracting for children who may be unable to concentrate in class due to the itchiness of their scalp. If head lice are left untreated, persistent scratching may lead to skin irritation, inflammation and even infection. Head lice are not dangerous and they don't spread disease, but they are contagious. They are transmitted by head to head contact with someone who has head lice. Anyone can get head lice and nits, and they can be found in all types and lengths of hair. Head lice are not a sign of poor hygiene.

It is important to identify head lice early and take steps to eliminate them for the comfort of children, and to stop them spreading throughout the class and school. Parents have prime responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice. The best outcome is achieved when school staff and parents work in partnership.

Our school community will work in a cooperative and collaborative manner to assist all families to manage head lice effectively. This policy outlines expectations of the school regarding detection, reporting and treatment of head lice.

In relation to head lice the school aims to:

- Respond to head lice quickly and effectively.
- Ensure that parents and guardians are well informed about head lice detection and treatment.
- Ensure that when necessary, effective treatment is undertaken quickly to minimise disruption to children's learning and to minimise the spread of head lice within the school.

Policy statement:

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

- Distribute up to date information on head lice management to parents and staff at the beginning of the year. This information and any updates may be circulated in the form of school newsletters or flyers.
- Include information about head lice management in orientation and transition programs for new families/staff attending the school.
- Follow the recommendations of the School Exclusion Policy of the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009.
- Accept the advice of parents that appropriate treatment has commenced.

- Encourage children to learn about head lice to help reduce stigma or bullying.

Parents are expected to:

- Regularly inspect their child’s head to detect the presence of head lice or nits
- Ensure that their children do not attend school with untreated head lice
- Notify the school if their child is affected and advise when treatment has begun

If a child is suspected of having head lice:

- The child’s parents/guardians will be contacted and informed that their child may have head lice
- Verbal consent will be obtained from the parents/guardians to inspect the child’s head
- The child will be told privately that they may have head lice and a staff member will inspect the child’s head
- If head lice and/or nits are evident then the school will send a written notice home with the child and provide the family with advice about treatment.
- Children with confirmed head lice are excluded from school until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced.

Date of approval: 2016	Date of review: 2019
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Resources

Detection and treatment of head lice

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/factsheets/Treating%20and%20controlling%20headlice>

Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/factsheets/Public%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Regulations%202009>

Minimum exclusion from primary schools and children’s services centres for infectious diseases cases and contacts

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/researchandreports/Minimum%20Period%20of%20Exclusion%20from%20Primary%20Schools%20and%20Childrens%20Services%20Centres%20for%20Infectious%20Diseases%20Cases%20and%20Contacts>