



HEAD LICE POLICY

Introduction

Head lice are small, wingless blood sucking insects, which are only able to crawl. They are transferred via hair to hair contact with another person and range in size from between 2 - 4mm.

They have been around for thousands of years and will always be with us. Even though they are responsible for an itchy scalp and the treatment can be tiresome for families and children, it seems that we will always have them in our school communities and wider environment.

While parents/guardians have primary responsibility for the detention and treatment of head lice, our school does have a role in the management of head lice infections and in providing support for parents/guardians and students.

Management

1. The Health Regulations which came into effect in May 2001, removed the power of local government nurses, among others, to inspect children's hair for head lice without parental permission.
2. If live lice are detected parents are notified immediately and children removed from the classroom situation.
3. Children identified with head lice will receive a letter of notification with a detachable slip indicating the treatment used and when it commenced. This is to be signed by parents prior to children returning.
4. It is a requirement that children with untreated head lice don't attend school until the day after treatment has begun. They can return once all live head lice have been removed. Parents should note that the presence of eggs in the hair is not cause for exclusion.
5. Parents/guardians should be aware that one treatment is not sufficient to manage the problem and all children with live lice need to be excluded again if the treatment is unsuccessful.
6. Our school will communicate with families of other children in the same classroom, explaining that head lice have been identified on a child and families should then check their children's hair and treat accordingly.
7. Our school records the distribution of notices to classrooms for future reference. If a significant number of notices are sent to the same grade level for example, we have an option of organised inspections by local government nurses.
8. If contacted by the school, Hume City Council will inspect children, whose parents provide permission, as soon as practicable. This may involve a delay of a couple of weeks.

In addition

Sunbury West Primary School will:

- Commit to reducing the stigma associated with this problem by maintaining confidentiality following any head lice inspections.
- Provide parents with comprehensive advice as new information becomes available to us.

Suggestions to Parents:

- Regularly inspect your children's hair for lice or eggs (nits) each week.
- Contact the school whenever you detect lice in any child attending school.
- Refer to the website of the Department Human Services for the latest advice.
www.dhs.vic.gov.au/phd/headlice