

Headlice Policy

Ratified by School Council: May 2025

PURPOSE:

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 primarily with the parents/guardians but it is important for them to be given practical advice and support. The aim of this policy is to promote partnerships between families and the school so that students with head lice can receive appropriate treatments.

The discovery of head lice can be a sensitive issue. At all times the school will exercise sensitivity towards this issue by maintaining student confidentiality.

GUIDELINES and IMPLEMENTATION:

Up-to-date information on the detection, treatment and control of head lice will be distributed to parents/guardians and staff on a need basis. Up-to-date information, approved for circulation by the Department of Education (DE) is available from <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/head-lice/policy>

Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the school and confidentially discuss management of head lice if their child is suspected of having head lice.

If a child upon visual observation appears to have head lice, then the parent/guardian will be contacted and the child is to be collected from the school where possible. Parents/guardians are to refrain from sending their children to school with untreated head lice. Students may be treated in the evening and return to school the next day with written confirmation from the parent that the infestation has been treated.

The presence of eggs in the hair is not cause for exclusion. Parents/guardians need to be aware that one treatment is not sufficient to manage the problem. If a student re-attends school with live head lice, the school may again exclude the student until the live insects have been removed.

If it is detected that a student has head lice, the students in the same year level will have a letter sent via Compass informing the parents/guardians of appropriate treatment and steps available.

If the school is directed by the DE to conduct a whole school or year level inspection program, the school will obtain written parental permission for all inspections, including those conducted by local government personnel.

Where suitable and age-appropriate, the classroom teacher may lead a class discussion to increase students' understanding of the habits and life-cycle of head lice, in order to minimise the incidence of stigmatisation.

RELATED LEGISLATION:

DE School Policies Advisory Guide

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/head-lice/policy>

Treating and Controlling Head lice in Schools: Department of Health

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/head-lice>

RELATED POLICIES:

Engagement and Wellbeing Policy

POLICY EVALUATION:

This policy is to be reviewed every two years by the Policy Review (Education) Sub Committee of the School Council.

DUE DATE FOR REVIEW:

Due for review in May 2027