



MOONEE PONDS WEST PRIMARY SCHOOL HEAD LICE POLICY

Basic Beliefs:

- Head lice cause concern and frustration for parents, teachers and students.
- Head lice can be an embarrassing issue for many students and their families.
- There is no significant health risk associated with head lice.
- Whilst parents have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice our school community will work in a collaborative manner to assist families to manage head lice effectively.

Aims:

Head lice continue to cause concern and frustration for some parents, teachers and students. This school policy is intended to outline roles, responsibilities and expectations of the school community to assist with treating and controlling head lice in a consistent and coordinated manner.

Whilst parents have the main responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice our school community will work in a cooperative and collaborative manner to assist all families to manage head lice effectively.

This school policy draws on information obtained from:

- *Headlice Management Toolkit* published by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/health/headlice/default.htm>
- Treating and controlling head lice pamphlet produced by the Victorian Government of Human Services, Public Health Group.
<http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Treating-and-controlling-headlice>
- Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009.
<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/headlice/regulations.htm>

Guidelines for Actions

It is the expectation of parents/guardians and families attending this school that:

- Children's hair will be checked for head lice on a weekly basis, at home, using the recommended treatment/combing detection method (if necessary).
- Children do not attend school with untreated head lice in accordance with the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009.
- Families regularly inspect all household members and then treat them if necessary.
- Parents/guardians will notify the school if their child is found to have live lice and advise when appropriate treatment was commenced in accordance with the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009. Please refer to Appendix 1.
- Students with long hair will be actively encouraged to attend school with hair tied back.
- Parents/guardians only use safe and recommended practices to treat head lice.
- Families notify the parents/guardians of their child's friends so they have an early opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary.
- Families act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community especially around issues of head lice.

- For further information please consult the websites:
 - <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/headlice/regulations.htm>
 - <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/headlice>

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

- Distribute up to date and accurate information on the detection, treatment and control of head lice to parents and staff at the beginning of the year or more frequently if required.
- Include information about head lice management in orientation and transition programs for new families/ staff attending the school.
- Include information and updates in school newsletters.
- Include annual head lice updates for staff professional development programs.
- Inform parents when there is an outbreak of head lice in a class. Please refer to Appendix 2.
- Abide by the recommendations of the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009, in that the responsibility to exclude a student from the school rests with the Principal or person in charge, and only exclude students from school with live insects.
- Accept the advice of parents that appropriate treatment has commenced.
- Encourage children to learn about head lice so as to help remove any stigma or bullying associated with the issue.
- Be aware of real difficulties some parents may encounter and encourage them to seek extra support if required.
- Act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community around issues of head lice.
- Continue to seek opportunities to increase our collective knowledge, understanding of and response to managing head lice.

Evaluation:

The school council and staff monitor and review the effectiveness of the policy regularly and revise the policy where required or as directed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development policy and guidelines.

Endorsed by School Council November 19th 2012

Review Date: 2014