

FAIRFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL HEAD LICE POLICY

Rationale:

- Head lice (*Pediculus*) are tiny insects that live on the human scalp where they feed and breed. Probably between 2 - 3% of primary school children are infested at any one time. While they do not carry or transmit disease, head lice are the most common cause of head itch and scratching in children. This may lead to infection and swollen lymph glands; therefore, head lice need to be eradicated.
- Anyone can catch head lice.
- Head lice cannot fly, hop or jump. They spread from person to person by head to head contact. Research indicates that they do not spread through the sharing of personal items such as combs, brushes and hats.

Aims:

For the school to

- respond to reports of head lice quickly and effectively
- ensure that an effective process for treating head lice is well known and consistently followed
- ensure that parents and guardians are well informed about head lice treatment.

Implementation:

- While it is parents who have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice on their children, the school will assist by offering up-to-date information, by offering a screening process, and by alerting parents when head lice are detected.
- Each year, the school will organise to have volunteer parents and school staff trained by the Department of Human Services or the local council in the detection of head lice.
- On a child's enrolment, the school will ask parents to sign a permission form (Form 1 attached) allowing their children to be screened by trained personnel, for the presence of head lice. This form will cover the duration of the child's schooling at Fairfield Primary School. Only children whose parents have returned the permission form will be included in this screening.
- All children screened will be provided with a confidential report indicating to parents the results of the screening (see Form 2 below), as well as advice on the latest information regarding head lice.
- Consistent with Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001, the principal will ensure that the parents of any child found to have live lice are informed that their child is to be excluded from attending school until appropriate treatment has commenced.
- The school will also provide parents of children found to have live lice with information about head lice treatment and prevention.
- Upon their return to school, parents of excluded children must present the signed declaration on Form 2, indicating that appropriate treatment has commenced. All excluded children are to undergo another inspection from our trained personnel as soon as possible after recommencing school.
- The Principal will ensure that information relating to the prevention and eradication of head lice appears throughout the year in the school newsletter, particularly at times of heavy outbreaks.

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in ...

October 2006

CONSENT FORM TO CONDUCT HEAD LICE INSPECTIONS

Permission to cover the duration of the child's schooling at Fairfield Primary School

Throughout your child's schooling, the school will arrange head lice inspections of students.

The management of head lice infection works best when all children are involved in our screening program.

The school is aware that this can be a sensitive issue and is committed to maintaining student confidentiality and avoiding children being stigmatised.

The inspections of students will be conducted by a trained person approved by the Principal.

Before any inspections are conducted the person conducting the inspections 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 the hair does not mean that their hair is unclean. 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 person conducting the inspections will check each student's hair to see if any lice or eggs are present.

Persons authorised by the school principal may also visually check you child's hair for the presence of head lice, when it is suspected that head lice may be present, *whether a consent form has been signed or not*. They do not physically touch the child's head during a visual check.

In cases where head lice are found, the person inspecting the student will inform the student's teacher and the principal. The school will make appropriate contact with the parents/guardians.

Please note that health regulations require that where a child has head lice, that child should not return to school until appropriate treatment has commenced. The school may request the completion of a "treatment reply slip" (Form 2), which requires parents/guardians/carers to nominate if and when the treatment has started.

Parent's/Guardian's/Carer's full name:.....

Address:.....Post Code:.....

Name of child attending the school:.....

I hereby give my consent for the above named child to participate in the school's head lice inspection program for the duration of their schooling at this school.

Signature of Parent/Guardian/Carer:.....Date.....

Please inform the school if guardianship/custody changes for your child as this for will need to be re-signed to reflect these changes. Please also inform the school in writing if you no longer wish to provide consent for the school to undertake head lice inspections for your child.

HEAD LICE CHECK REPORT SHEET

Your child was checked today by our trained staff at school for the presence of head lice.

The results of the check are:

- No lice or eggs detected.
- Dead eggs were found.
- Live eggs were found.
- Live lice were found.

Therefore the following action is required:-

- No action required.
- Child's hair must be treated with a method that has killed or removed live lice before the child is returned to school.

Please Note: All children who are found to have live eggs will be re-checked by trained staff soon after returning to school to ensure the infestation has been effectively treated.

Judy Walsh
Principal
Fairfield Primary School

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HEAD LICE TREATMENT REPLY SLIP

If your child has been detected with live lice, this reply slip must be returned to school at the same time that your child returns.

- I have treated my child's head in a manner that has killed or removed the live lice.

Child's Name:..... Parent Signature:.....

Child's Class:.....

- Additionally, I would like to be shown how the Dept of Human Services recommends removal of eggs and lice using hair conditioner and a fine toothed comb.

