



## HEAD LICE POLICY

### Rationale

- Head lice (pediculosis) are tiny insects that live on the human scalp where they feed and breed. It is estimated between 2-3% of primary school children are infested at any one time. While they do not carry or transmit disease, they are the most common cause of head itch and scratching which may lead to infection and swollen lymph glands; therefore, they 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, and by the sharing of personal items such as combs, brushes and head gear such as hats.

### Aims

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

### Implementation

- While teachers and other staff members may believe that a child is infested with head lice, they are not permitted or qualified to search a child's hair, inspect for head lice, or diagnose a case of head lice.
- Parents/guardians permission will be obtained before a child's hair is inspected for head lice. (See appendix A). Teachers or staff members suspecting that a child has head lice are to report their concerns to the First Aid staff who will carry out the necessary inspections.
- Upon positive identification of head lice, the Principal will ensure that the parents/guardians of any infected child are contacted as soon as possible and informed that their child is to be excluded from attending school in accordance with the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1990 until the child has been treated.
- The Principal will ensure all parents/guardians of children in the same class as the infected child will be informed so they can monitor their own child/ren. (See Appendix C)
- Parent/guardian assistance from home is imperative to keep head lice to a minimum.
- The Principal will also provide parents/guardians of infected children with information about head lice treatment and prevention
- On the child's return to school, the classroom teacher should then send the child to the First Aid staff who will check the child's head to ensure the treatment has been successful
- The Principal will ensure that information relating to the prevention and eradication of head lice appears throughout the year in the College newsletter, particularly at times of heavy outbreaks.
- If permission is NOT given by the parents/guardians and the child is suspected of having head lice, the matter will be referred to the relevant AP or Principal and the parents/guardians will be phoned to collect child

### Review cycle and evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed as part of the College's four year review cycle