



COBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL



HEADLICE

POLICY - 2015

Rationale:

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

Whilst parents have the primary 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.

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

- Children's hair will be checked for head lice, at home, using the recommended conditioner/combing detection method.
- That your child does not attend school with live and untreated head lice.
- Parents/Carers will notify the school if their child is found to have live lice and advise when appropriate treatment was commenced.
- Children with long hair will attend school with their hair tied back as also stated in the uniform policy.
- Use only safe and recommended practices to treat head lice.
- Notify the parents or carers of your child's friends so they have an early opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary.
- Maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures.
- Act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community especially around issues of head lice.

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

- Distribute up to date and accurate information on the detection, treatment and control of head lice to parents and staff as 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 as required.
- Include annual head lice updates for staff as required.
- Provide practical advice and maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures.
- Access community educational resources and support, such as primary school nurses, community health centres and local government.
- Abide by the recommendations of the School Exclusion Policy of the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001 in that the responsibility to exclude a child from the school rests with the principal or person in charge, and
- Only exclude children 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 seek extra support if required.
- Participate in a Head Lice Local Area Network to work with other schools, childcare centres, health services and pharmacists in our Local Government Area to achieve consistent management and policy across sectors.
- Review the head lice policy every three years and seek endorsement from the School Council.

- Act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community especially around issues of Head Lice.
- Continue to seek opportunities to increase our collective understanding of and response to managing head lice.

There is no requirement for any school to undertake 'head-lice inspection' programs however those that do, need to consider the following as additions to a school head lice policy:

- Ensure that any person employed by the school, or volunteering, to undertake 'head lice inspections' will adhere to the school policy.
- and latest Department of Human Services information and Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001;
- Only inspect the heads of children whose parents have given prior consent.
- Develop a generic/blanket consent form which parents sign at commencement of school year.
- Respect the wishes of parents/families who elect not to participate in a school head lice check.
- To help reduce the stigma and maintain confidentiality when conducting head lice inspections a letter should be given to all the children involved.
- Include teachers and school staff in the inspections when available.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood has guidelines that are published for all Government schools.

Schools, classroom teachers and school staff under Principal authorisation are encouraged to visually check each student's hair for the presence of head lice, when it is suspected that head lice may be present. Staff observe, without physically touching a student's head.

If head lice is found, a call to the parent/carer is made and a Headlice Letter is issued. A Headlice Alert notice is issued if a parent/carer does not complete and return to the Headlice Letter to school on the first day of a student return to school. Refer to the attached letters included with this policy.



Coburn Primary School Head Lice Letter

Dear Parents/Guardians/Carers,

Head lice has been detected on your child and it is very important that treatment occurs as soon as possible, using safe treatment methods. Coburn Primary School seeks your cooperation in treating your child's hair.

Please see the attached pamphlet *Treating and Controlling Head Lice*, from the Department of Human Services. This pamphlet has informative guidelines regarding detecting and treating head lice and eggs.

It is important to note that head lice do not transmit infectious diseases – they are transmitted by having head to head contact with someone who has head lice. You may be reassured to know that head lice are commonly found in places other than at Coburn Primary School. Head lice are common in school-aged children.

How do I treat my child for head lice?

The attached pamphlet (as noted above) has informative guidelines regarding detecting and treating head lice and eggs.

If head lice or eggs are found on your child's hair you need to inform:

- the school and advise when the treatment has started.
- parents or carers of your child's friends so they too have the opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary.

When can my child return to school?

Health regulations requires that where a child has head lice, that child should not return to school until the day after appropriate treatment has started. Please note, this refers only to those children who have live head lice and does not refer to head lice eggs.

Coburn Primary School is aware that head lice can be a sensitive issue and is committed to maintaining your confidentiality.

Please complete the form below and provide this on the day of your child's return to the school.

Students Full Name: _____

Room Number: _____

- I understand that my child should not attend school with untreated head lice.
- I understand that as the parent, it is my responsibility to appropriately treat the head lice
- Treatment commenced: / /
- I used the following treatment for head lice or eggs for my child



Coburn Primary School Head Lice Alert Notice

Dear Parents/Guardians/Carers,

Head lice has been detected on your child and it is very important that treatment occurs as soon as possible, using safe treatment methods. Coburn Primary School seeks your cooperation in treating your child's hair.

It has come to our attention that treatment has not been successful and your child is still presenting with head lice. Please note that we may notify Department of Human Services if we form a belief that there are protective concerns in accordance with legislation.

Coburn Primary School is aware that head lice can be a sensitive issue and is committed to maintaining your confidentiality.

Please complete the form below and provide this on the day of your child's return to the school.

Students Full Name: _____

Room Number: _____

- I understand that my child should not attend school with untreated head lice.
- I understand that as the parent, it is my responsibility to appropriately treat the head lice
- Treatment commenced: / /
- I used the following treatment for head lice or eggs for my child

Yours Sincerely,

Vicki Minton

Principal