

MARLFIELDS PRIMARY ACADEMY

Head Lice Policy

Policy Author	Mrs S Isherwood
Responsible Governor's Committee	Resources
Date discussed at SLT Meeting	
Date discussed at Staff Consultation meeting	
Date reviewed and approved by Committee	13 March 2024
Full Governors Meeting	27 March 2024
Chair of Governors	Mrs. M. Gartside
Frequency of Review	Review in the light of changes to legislation or operating experiences Or within three years of approved date from Governors
Review Month/Year	February 2027
School Website	Yes

Introduction

Head lice continue to cause concern and frustration for some parents, teachers and children. 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 co-ordinated manner.

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

This school policy draws on information obtained from the information pamphlet and Management Guidelines 'Scratching for Answers?'.¹

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

- Children's hair will be checked for head lice on a weekly basis, at home, using the recommended conditioner/combing detection method
- Parents and carers will treat headlice outside of school hours, as soon as they are detected, and send the child to school. Treatments are available for overnight administration.
- Regularly inspect all household members and then treat them if necessary
- Parents/carers will notify the school if their child is found to have live lice and advise when appropriate treatment was commenced (in accordance with Health Infectious Disease Regulations 2001)
- Children with long hair will attend school with hair tied back
- 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
- Sign an agreement accepting the terms of the School Head Lice Policy.

¹ www.health.vic.gov.au/headlice

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 at the beginning of the year or more frequently if required
- Offer an appointment with the School Nurse for recurring headlice problems

School will make personal contact with parents and carers of children where headlice is allowed to go untreated. This can be regarded as a form of neglect.

- 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 in-service programs
- 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
- 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 or more frequently if required and seek endorsement from the School Council/community

- 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.

Class Teacher

If an outbreak of head lice occurs in the class, Class Teachers will follow this procedure:

1. Ask the office to issue head lice letters to the whole class.
2. Class Teachers will make personal contact with Parents and carers of children where head lice is allowed to go untreated.
3. Admin will log the conversation on the child's file.
4. After a week, if any child remains untreated then a referral to the Learning Mentor will be made.
5. The Learning Mentor will make an appointment to see the Parents/Carers in school to discuss the matter further.

Links

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-lice-and-nits/>