



Head Lice Policy - ALERT

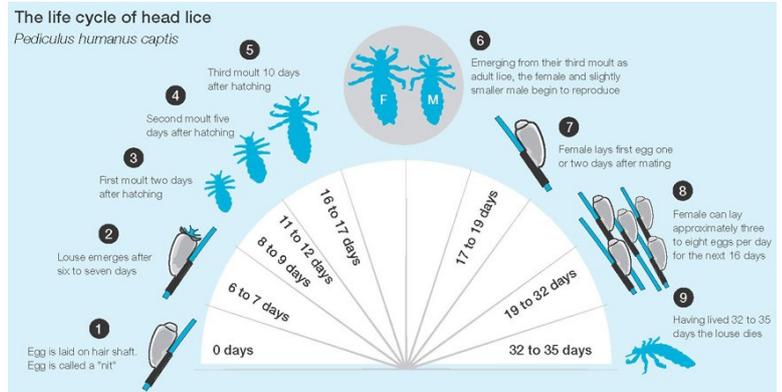
Dear Parent/Guardian,

There has been a case of head lice presented in Room Teacher Please read the following policy.

Head lice are social pests and rarely pose a threat to health. Outbreaks can be controlled if parents regularly check their children's hair for head lice/eggs and follow the recommended treatment methods.

Head Lice Facts

- Head lice can only live on human heads.
- Head lice can live in clean or dirty hair.
- Head lice are transferred mainly by direct head-to-head contact; sometimes by brushes, combs, ribbons, hats etc.
- Head lice do not carry disease, but bacterial infections can occur from scratching the scalp.
- Head lice treatments often don't kill 100% of the nits (eggs).
- Successful treatment does not protect the person from getting more head lice later.



Head Lice

- Are small insects (2-4mm long and about 1mm wide) with a flat body and six clawed legs, and are pale to dark brown in colour. Feed on blood, piercing the scalp several times a day.
- Crawl and do not fly, jump or hop.
- Head lice take about a week to reach maturity, and live for another 2-3 weeks – each mature female can lay up to eight eggs a day.



Nits (eggs)

- Are tiny, hard, yellow to white in colour and are attached firmly to the shaft of the hair close to the scalp.
- Hatch as nymphs after 7-10 days.
- May have 'sandy' or 'gritty' feel when running fingers through the hair.
- Are easier to see than head lice but can be confused with dandruff which is flaky and easy to remove.



PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to check their children's hair for head lice and to treat for head lice if they are present. Parents/guardians will be notified if a staff member believes a child has head lice. All family members should be checked and treatment completed before the child returns to school. Parents must regularly check and ensure no eggs are present.

Checking for head lice and nits

- Check everyone in the household every week. During head lice outbreaks check every day.
- The wet combing technique has been shown to be more reliable than just checking dry hair.
- Symptoms may include excessive itching of the scalp especially at the front, nape of neck, behind the ears, under the fringe, and at the base of plaits and ponytails.
- Note: Not all people with head lice will itch.

The two most common head lice treatment methods are 'wet combing' and 'chemical' treatment:

- 'Wet combing' involves wetting the hair and scalp liberally with hair conditioner to stun the head lice, then combing the head lice and nits out.
- 'Chemical' treatment uses 'pediculicides' which kill the head lice.

Other treatments such as electric combs, herbal/essential oils and enzyme treatments may also remove head lice, but follow the manufacturer's instructions for best results. **If there is any adverse reaction to a treatment, seek medical advice.**

Preventing the spread

- Avoid head-to-head contact.
- Avoid sharing brushes, combs, ribbons, hats, helmets.
- Consider cleaning brushes, combs, towels, pillow cases with hot water and detergent (60°C for 30 seconds).
- Discourage children from playing with each other's hair.
- Keep long hair firmly plaited, or at least tied back – slick down stray hairs with hairspray or gel.
- Brush hair and check for head lice regularly.



Reviewed: February 2017