



FLOREAT PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHANDLER AVENUE, FLOREAT, WESTERN AUSTRALIA 6014

Telephone (08) 9387 1548 Facsimile (08) 9383 7701

Email: floreatpark.ps@education.wa.edu.au

Website: floreatparkps.wa.edu.au

HEAD LICE – BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Identification of children with head lice is essential to prevent person-to-person spread of head lice. Head lice are spread from direct head-to-head contact with another person who has head lice. They are unable to jump or fly.

Exclusion

Under Section 27 of the School Education Act 1999, a principal may exclude a child with head lice from school until treatment has commenced. Students must be treated with sensitivity if head lice are found. The Department of Health advises that students do not necessarily need to be excluded from class activities until the end of the school day. Students may be given tasks which do not involve close group work and remain at school for the remainder of the day. The principal, however, does have authority to exercise discretion and withdraw a student from school programs at any time.

Examining Students' Heads for Head Lice

Under Part 3, Division 2, r 29, of the Education Regulations 2000, *Head lice Inspections*, the principal of a government (public) school may authorise a member of the teaching staff or another officer at the school to examine the head of any student for the purpose of ascertaining whether head lice are present. Community Health staff (school nurses) are also authorised to undertake examinations.

~~If it is agreed by the school community that members of the parent community are to examine the head of students at school to ascertain whether head lice are present, all members of the parent community must be informed of this strategy. Parents must also be informed of their right to not give permission for another parent to examine their child's head. In these circumstances the principal or an authorised member of staff may perform an examination as required.~~

Responding to an Outbreak of Head Lice

If head lice are found, then the parents of all students in the class should be informed and requested to examine and treat their children if required. Parents must be advised that head lice elimination requires at least 10 days of follow up treatment with daily removal of head lice. The Department of Health advises that a few remaining eggs are not a reason for continued exclusion. However, parents should be advised that treatment must continue until all eggs and hatchlings have been removed.

Policy Requirements

The Student Health Care policy requires that the principal and staff, in consultation with the school community, develop agreed management, communication and education procedures for reducing the frequency and impact of head lice infestation. School procedures may include:

- providing parents with information about head lice including prevention, transmission, detection and effective treatment strategies as described by the Department of Health;
- informing the school community about the processes the school will use to monitor and respond to outbreaks of head lice;
- establishing protocols for informing parents about the presence of head lice in their child's hair and the action they will be asked to take at home;
- identifying agreed strategies that will be adopted by the school to manage those students who have been found to have head lice in their hair between the time of identification and the end of the school day;
- advising parents of the information they will need to provide to the school in order to demonstrate the action that has been taken at home prior to re-entry and participation in school programs;
- establishing a hierarchy of management strategies that are available to the principal for responding to ongoing occurrences of head lice; and
- identifying the circumstances in which the principal may exercise discretion in the development of individualised management processes for students in response to repeated infestations of head lice.

For further information from the Department of Health see: www.health.wa.gov.au/headlice