

Foster Primary School

School Head Lice Policy



Purpose:

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 coordinated manner.

Aims:

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.**

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

Implementation:

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.
- Your child does not attend school with untreated head lice (in accordance with Health Infectious Diseases Regulations 2001).
- Families 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 Diseases Regulations 2001). Information about appropriate treatment can be found at the school office, on the school website or on the internet.
- Children with long hair are encouraged to tie their hair back whilst at school
- Head scarves are not part of our school uniform and make it difficult to monitor head lice and eggs. Exceptions due to religious requirements are at the discretion of the Principal.
- Only safe and recommended practices are used to treat head lice;
- The parents or carers of your child's friends are notified so they have an early opportunity to detect and treat their child if necessary.
- A sympathetic attitude is maintained to avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures.
- They act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community especially around issues of head lice.
- An agreement is signed accepting the terms of the School Head Lice Policy.

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;
- 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 Excluding 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.
- Request that all families attending this school sign an 'agreement' to accept the conditions of the school's head lice policy.
- The school will only inspect the heads of children whose parents have given prior consent on their enrolment form and will respect the wishes of parents/families who elect not to participate in a school head lice check.
- Be aware of real difficulties some parents may encounter and seek extra support if required.
- Review the head lice policy annually 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.
- 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.
- To help reduce the stigma and maintain confidentiality when conducting head lice inspections, a letter will be given to all students involved in a class where head lice inspections have taken place.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in Feb 2015