



## SHERBOURNE PRIMARY SCHOOL HEADLICE POLICY

### RATIONALE

To minimise outbreaks of head lice.

DET requires schools to:

- develop an accurate and consistent policy to managing head lice, that is approved by the school council
- obtain informed written consent of parents/guardians prior to students being inspected for head lice
- exclude infected students until the day after treatment has commenced.

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### Visual headlice checks

Head lice have been found in most schools, Checks for head lice occur via:

- visual checks without physical contact:
  - do not require parent/guardian consent
  - are made by people authorised by the principal, e.g. classroom teachers.
- head lice inspections involving the examination of a student:
  - require written parental consent, usually obtained at enrolment
  - are made by people authorised by the principal and school council e.g. school nurse or parent volunteer.

#### Exclusion of students

Students identified with live head lice should be:

- provided with a note to take home to inform the parent/carer that their child may have head lice at the conclusion of the school day.
- excluded from school until the day after treatment has commenced, as set out in the *Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001, School Exclusion Table*.

**Note 1:** Principal has the overall responsibility to exclude a student from school.

**Note 2:** The presence of eggs in the hair is not a cause for exclusion. There is no requirement for a general practitioner or local council to issue a clearance certificate in order for the child to return to school.

## Detection and treatment responsibilities

Responsibilities for managing head lice are shared between: parents/guardians, schools and principals.

Parents/guardians have primary responsibility for detection and treatment of head lice. Parents/guardians should:

- regularly, preferably once a week, check for lice or eggs in the hair of:
  - their child
  - all household members
- notify the school:
  - if their child is affected
  - when treatment commenced
- not send their children to school with untreated head lice.

Schools must:

- exercise sensitivity towards students and families with head lice
- maintain student confidentiality to avoid stigmatisation
- support and provide practical treatment advice to parents/guardians.

Principals must:

- alert parents/guardians of an infestation, particularly the parents of other students in the same class as the affected child/children
- use discretion about informing the school community about an infestation.

**Note:** The Department of Human Services indicates at any one time there are likely to be cases of head lice in most schools, so it is not advocated that the principal informs the whole school community each time head lice are detected.

This policy was endorsed by School Council	September 2018
Due for review:	September 2021