

BRIDGETOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL
STUDENT HEALTH CARE: COMMUNICABLE DISEASES
HEAD LICE POLICY



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.

The Department of Education's Student Health Care Policy clearly outlines steps that may be taken by schools in an effort to prevent the spread of communicable diseases, including HEAD LICE (PEDICULOUS).

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.

Under Section 27 of the School Education Act 1999, the principal has the discretion to exclude a child with head lice from school until parents/guardians confirm that a recommended treatment has been undertaken and all head lice have been removed.

Responding to an Outbreak of Head Lice

If on examination of a student's head, head lice are found, the following procedure will be followed.

- A parent/guardian of the student will be contacted and informed their child needs to be collected from school and treated for head lice.
- Parents will be advised that head lice elimination requires at least 10 days of follow up treatment with daily removal of head lice.
- Parents will be advised that treatment must continue until all eggs and hatchlings have been removed.
- Parent/guardian will be advised that their child must report to the Deputies' Office to have their hair checked, prior to re entry to their classroom.
- The school will provide parents with information about head lice including prevention, transmission, detection and effective treatment strategies as described by the Department of Health;
- The school will send home a note with all students in the class requesting parents/guardians to examine and treat their child/ren if required.

In the event of repeated infestations of head lice in a particular class the Principal will authorise staff to conduct a whole class head check of all students within that class. Prior to class check occurring parents/guardians of students in that class will receive written communication informing them of the day this will happen. Any student absent on the set date will be checked on return to school.

In certain circumstances the Principal may exercise discretion in the development of individualised management processes for students in response to repeated infestations of head lice, including requesting involvement of the school nurse.

Strategies to Support Prevention of Head Lice Infestation

School:

- ALL students with shoulder length hair or longer are required to have their hair tied back or up.
Any student with their hair down will be provided with a hair elastic and requested to tie their back.
- No sharing of hats at school.
- Remind students to avoid head to head contact with other children
- Notes to parents/guardians informing them of presence of head lice in their child's class.

Parents/Guardians:

- Ensure their child's hair is tied up if shoulder length or longer when attending school.
- Ensure their child has a suitable hat to wear at school.
- Regularly check their child's hair for head lice and eggs (nits).
- Consider applying hair gel or mousse to help keep stray hair strands from contact with other heads.

Head Lice is not a serious problem if appropriately treated.

We seek support from all families in detection and treatment, to minimise cross infection, anxiety to families and lost school time for students.