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22nd March 2019

Dear Parents/Carers

Whilst it is fairly normal for some younger children to have head lice from time to time, we have noticed recently that some of our children are becoming infested frequently. We are always vigilant at school for head lice, but there may be times when we do not know that some children have head lice issues. We hope and expect that parents will take the time to regularly check and treat their children's hair. All it takes is one child to have them and then children who have been treated previously may become infested again. As per the guidelines below, if your child does have head lice, the child is not to be kept away from school as this would be classed as an unauthorised absence.

The following advice is from: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-lice-and-nits/>

Head lice and nits

Head lice and nits are very common in young children and their families. They don't have anything to do with dirty hair and are picked up by head-to-head contact.

Check if it's head lice

Head lice eggs (nits) are brown or white (empty shells) and attached to the hair

Head lice can make your head feel:

- itchy
- like something is moving in your hair

The only way to be sure someone has head lice is by finding live lice.

You can do this by combing their hair with a special fine-toothed comb (detection comb). You can buy these online or at pharmacies.

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How to get rid of head lice

Important

You can treat head lice without seeing a GP.

Treat head lice as soon as you spot them.

You should check everyone in the house and start treating anyone who has head lice on the same day.

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice.

Wet combing

Lice and nits can be removed by wet combing. You should try this method first.

You can buy a special fine-toothed comb (detection comb) online or from pharmacies to remove head lice and nits.

There may be instructions on the pack, but usually you:

- wash hair with ordinary shampoo
- apply lots of conditioner (any conditioner will do)
- comb the whole head of hair, from the roots to the ends

It usually takes about 10 minutes to comb short hair, and 20 to 30 minutes for long, frizzy or curly hair.

Do wet combing on days 1, 5, 9 and 13 to catch any newly hatched head lice. Check again that everyone's hair is free of lice on day 17.

For more information about wet combing, see the [Community Hygiene Concern website](#).

Medicated lotions and sprays

Ask your pharmacist for advice if you have tried wet combing for 17 days, but your child still has live head lice.

They may recommend using medicated lotions and sprays. These kill head lice in all types of hair, and you can buy them from pharmacies, supermarkets or online.

Head lice should die within a day. Some lotions and sprays come with a comb to remove dead lice and eggs.

Some treatments need to be repeated after a week to kill any newly hatched lice.

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Check the pack to see if they're OK for you or your child and how to use them.

If lotions or sprays don't work, speak to your pharmacist about other treatments.

Some treatments aren't recommended because they're unlikely to work.

For example:

- products containing permethrin
- head lice "repellents"
- electric combs for head lice
- tree and plant oil treatments, such as tea tree oil, eucalyptus oil and lavender oil herbal remedies

You can't prevent head lice

There's nothing you can do to prevent head lice.

You can help stop them spreading by wet or dry combing regularly to catch them early.

Do not use medicated lotions and sprays to prevent head lice. They can irritate the scalp.

There's no need for children to stay off school or to wash laundry on a hot wash.

Kind regards

Mr R Chipperfield

Head of School

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