



## EASTBOURNE PRIMARY SCHOOL Headlice Policy

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. This policy is based on the DE&T and Department of Health guidelines. This school policy also draws on information obtained from the Information Pamphlet and Management Guidelines 'Scratching for Answers?'

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.

### **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 Department Regulations 2005);
- Regularly inspect all household members and then treat them if necessary;
- Children with long hair will attend school with their hair tied back;
- Parents/Carers will use only safe and recommended practices to treat head lice;
- Notification by the school to the parents or carers of the children in a class where head lice has been detected, so they have an early opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary;
- The school community maintains a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures;
- The school community acts responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community especially around issues of head lice;

### **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 (available from [www.health.vic.gov.au/headlice/](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/headlice/));

- 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;
- 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 Exclusion Policy of the Health Regulations 2005 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 head lice;
- 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;
- Be aware of real difficulties some parents may encounter and seek extra support if required;
- Participate in a Head Lice Local Area Network to work with other schools, childcare centres, health services and pharmacists in our Local Government Area to achieve consistent management and policy across sectors;
- 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.

**This policy was last ratified by School Council in March 2015**