



# Herne Hill Primary School

**Policy Title: HEAD LICE POLICY**

**Date Approved: February 2017**

**Review Date: February 2018**

## **Purpose:**

This policy gives direction for the management of head lice infestation within school communities. It has been developed by the Head Lice Working Party and is a joint statewide policy agreed between DoE and DHHS.

Although the head louse (*Pediculus capitis*) can cause significant irritation, it has not been known to transmit disease. Head lice have been common in the community throughout history and will spread anywhere that a number of people work, play or live together. School communities, by their nature, are therefore vulnerable to infestations.

## **Detection**

Parents have prime responsibility to check their children for head lice on a regular basis. Family & Child Health nurses are available as a resource.

## **Treatment**

Parents have responsibility for the purchase and application of treatment.

Detailed information about appropriate treatment of lice and nits (eggs) will be supplied by DHHS through the Family, Child and Youth Health Service. The information will include the current recommended treatment/s.

## **Return to school**

Students may return to school following one application of a recommended product.

## **Roles**

### **Parent**

Parents have prime responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice. The removal of eggs in the hair is desirable. Parents have a responsibility to seek education and support when required. The Family and Child Health Nurse will provide education and individual support when required.

Parents must notify the Principal when head lice (or nits) have been detected so the Principal can request that other parents check their children.

## **Principals/Teachers**

Principals and teachers do not need to be involved in checking heads of children for head lice. When notified that a child has head lice (or nits), the Principal is responsible for sending relevant information to the parent of that child and as well to the parents of the children who are likely to be contacts so they can be checked by their parents.

If a teacher by chance sees head lice (or nits) in a child's hair, the parents should be notified as soon as possible and appropriate support material (supplied by DHHS) will be provided to them. If a teacher suspects a child may have head lice, the Principal should be informed and the parent should be requested to check the child as soon as possible and treat any headlice present. The Family and Child Health Nurse is a resource for use in difficult cases.

## **Family and Child Health Nurses**

Family and Child Health Nurses do not have responsibility for mass screening for head lice. They will be available to parents and teachers as advisors on detection and treatment. Family and Child Health Nurses may be used as resource persons in difficult cases in cases of re-infestation in situations where students are absent from school because of head lice for extended periods.

## **Information/Education**

1. It will be the responsibility of the Department of Health and Human Services to provide education programs and material for the school and the community. Schools are responsible for duplication of materials when necessary and for distribution.
2. Family and Child Health Nurses will run programs in schools for teachers and parents when requested to ensure understanding of the management of head lice infestations.
3. Information regarding this policy will be conveyed to service providers, eg. general practitioners, hairdressers, pharmacists.

## **Monitoring and control**

This policy will remain under continual review. Changes will be made by the Working Party as necessary.