



HILL WEST
Primary

FOUR OAKS

**HEAD LICE
POLICY**

Hill West Primary School is a member of the Arthur Terry Learning Partnership

HILL WEST PRIMARY SCHOOL

ACE: Ambitious, Curious and Ever-Respectful

HEAD LICE POLICY

Managing Head Lice in School – Head Lice Policy

Head lice are tiny insects about the size of a sesame seed. They move from one person to another by head-to-head (hair-to-hair) contact. They cannot jump to another person's head. Head lice lay eggs which hatch after 7-10 days. It takes about 10 days for a recently hatched louse to grow into an adult and start to lay eggs.

Nits are the empty white egg shells which are left when the lice hatch. Nits look like dandruff but stick strongly to hair. Unlike dandruff, you cannot easily brush out nits.

Parents' Responsibilities

Mass screening of all pupils in a classroom and/or school does not control the spread of head lice. Rather, the spread of head lice can be minimized with routine inspection for live head lice and nits by all parents and full treatment of those pupils with live head lice.

Parents and guardians are responsible for:

- Knowing head lice signs and symptoms.
- Routinely checking their child's head for head lice once a week.
- Telling their child's school, close friends, etc., that their child has head lice.
- Ensuring that full, proper treatment has been completed before the pupil returns to school.

Advice to Parents

How to Find Head Lice (See Appendix 1)

- Severe itching is the most common sign of head lice.
- Look for head lice and tiny white or grey coloured eggs called nits. Nits look like tiny water drops and are stuck on the hair. They are hard to remove. While nits might signal a live infestation, they don't necessarily mean that live head lice are present; the eggs may have already hatched.
- Check your own head and the heads of everyone who lives in the home.
- Advise school that your child has head lice, also tell the parents of your child's friends to check their child for head lice.

How to treat Head Lice (See Appendix 2)

- Information about special medicated treatments is available from the pharmacist or doctor.
- Only use medicated treatments on your child's head if you find live, moving head lice. Follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully.
- Do not use medicated treatments if you just find eggs or nits.
- After treating your child's hair, make sure there are no live head lice. If you still find head lice that are moving, go back to the pharmacist or doctor for help.
- You can choose to remove nits from the hair by pulling them off with your fingernails or a special lice comb, but this is not necessary.

After the first treatment parents should:

- Check the child's head to make sure the treatment was successful. It was successful if no live lice are found.
- Speak to a pharmacist about another chemical treatment if you still find live lice.
- Continue to check the child's head every day for 10 days. This is important as eggs that you are unlikely to have seen will continue to hatch.
- Do a second treatment 7 to 10 days after the first successful treatment. Chemical treatments do not completely kill eggs. The second treatment will kill lice that hatch after the first treatment.

After the second treatment parents should:

- Visually inspect the child's head to make sure the treatment was successful.
- Parents can remove any nits if they choose.
- Inspect the child's head every two days for 10 consecutive days.
- After 10 days of inspecting without detecting more live head lice, return to checking the child's head once a week for nits and lice.

How to Prevent Head Lice

Knowledge is one of the most important steps to both prevention and treatment. Parents and school staff both play key roles in preventing head lice. It is important that parents regularly check their child's head (see 'Advice to Parents' above) and encourage their child to follow the advice below -

- Do not share personal items, such as combs, hats and scarves.
- Keep hats and scarves in a coat sleeve or pocket instead of in a spot with other hats and scarves.
- Tie long hair back.
- Check your child's head every week for head lice. *School will –*
- Publish this policy on the school website and regularly remind parents to check their child's head.
- Promptly notify parents of active head lice infestations in their child's year group, referring parents to this policy on the website with particular attention to the 'Head Lice Detection Map' Appendix 1.

Head Lice and Absence from School

Having head lice is not a reason for school absence as treatment can be administered quickly. However, should live head lice be noticed by a member of staff, a call will be made to the parent who will be asked to collect the child from school immediately. A thorough comb through or chemical treatment done quickly at home will enable the child to be back at school on the same day (unless of course parents are notified late in the afternoon). If the infestation continues for more than three weeks, the Headteacher will call the parents to discuss what is being done to eradicate the head lice and if necessary will make a referral to the school nurse.

Head Lice Detection Map

If your child has been in contact with a confirmed case of head lice, check your child's head for lice / nits every two days for ten days.

Fast Facts about Head Lice

- Head lice have been a common problem for thousands of years.
- Head lice do not cause illness or disease.
- Head lice have 6 strong claws that hold tightly to a hair shaft.
- Head lice can only survive on human heads, not pets or other animals. Head lice or nits are not likely to survive off the head for more than 3 days.
- Head lice do not fly or jump, they crawl from one person to another by close head-to-head contact
- Anyone can get head lice.

Check your child's head once a week for live lice or nits using one of the following detection methods.

Visual

1. Have your child sit in a chair under a bright source of light
2. Look very closely through your child's hair, especially in the areas behind the ears, nape of the neck and crown of the head

No nits or live lice found – check your child's head once a week.

Comb Out

1. Have your child sit in a chair under a bright source of light (sunshine works best).
2. Part your child's hair into sections and comb through each section.
3. Inspect each section for nits and live lice.

Nits found in your child's hair...

Check your child's head every two days for ten days for live lice. Removing nits is at your discretion. If after ten days you do not find live lice in their hair, continue to check your child's head once a week, every week.

Conditioner Comb Through

1. Apply with conditioner to dry hair, covering root to tip.
2. Comb conditioner through hair with an ordinary comb and divide into sections.
3. Use a lice comb to comb through every section of hair
4. Wipe the lice comb onto a white paper towel each time and look for lice and nits.

Live lice found in your child's hair.

TREAT right away

1. Refer to the Effective Treatment of Head Lice
2. Notify school and child's friends.

REMEMBER:

- If live head lice are found start using the 'Effective Treatment of Head Lice' resource sheet.
- Check every family member's head if you find live head lice. Treat only if live head lice are found.
- Inform school and the class teacher.

Effective Treatment of Head Lice

Check your child's head for live lice and nits (Use Head Lice Detection Map)

Scenario One

1. Live, moving lice found in your child's hair. **Treatment is required.**
2. Ask pharmacist about the best treatment for head lice.
3. Apply the first treatment on your child's hair. Follow the instructions carefully.
4. Rinse the treatment from your child's hair as directed (using the sink not the shower or bath, in order to minimise contact with skin). Check for dead lice.
5. If you still find live, moving lice in your child's hair, the treatment is ineffective. Consult with a pharmacist for a different treatment. Read instructions carefully before applying a second treatment.
6. If you find dead lice, the treatment is effective. Continue to follow treatment instructions.
7. Apply the second treatment to your child's hair anywhere between Day 7 and Day 10. Removing nits is optional as nits do not spread from head to head.

Scenario Two

1. Nits found in your child's hair.
2. Do not treat. Check your child's head every two days for ten days. If live lice are found within those ten days treat. If no live lice are found within those ten days, go back to checking once a week for nits and or lice. Removing nits is optional.
3. If you find dead lice, the treatment is effective. Continue to follow treatment instructions.

Check your child's hair every two days for the next ten days, using the Head Lice Detection Map. If no live lice or nits are found over those ten days, return to checking your child's hair once a week, every week, using the Head Lice Detection Map.