



CHAPMAN VALLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL HEAD LICE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Chapman Valley Primary School has developed the following head lice policy. The aim of this Policy is to ensure a consistent, coordinated and cooperative approach to managing head lice in the school community.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Parents' responsibilities are:

- to learn about head lice infestation and management by reading the Department of Health's [Head Lice Fact Sheet](#)
- to regularly check their child's hair for head lice infestation;
- to treat their child's hair immediately if the child has head lice, using the advice in the [Head Lice Fact Sheet](#);
- to inform the school and other close contacts if their child has a head lice infestation, and to confirm that treatment of their child's hair has commenced.
- to be aware of and follow the school's head lice management policy

The Community (School) Nurse's role is:

- to provide information, advice and education to parents and the school community about head lice management;
- to provide additional advice for families experiencing persistent head lice infestation;
- to provide additional education about head lice management to the Principal and staff as requested.

The School's responsibility is:

- to develop, implement and maintain a head lice management policy;
- to ensure that parents and staff are aware of the school's head lice policy, and that parents are provided with a copy of the Department of Health's [Head Lice Fact Sheet](#) when their child is enrolled and on request.

HOW HEAD LICE INFORMATION IS DISSEMINATED

The School takes the following steps to ensure that accurate up-to-date head lice treatment advice is provided to the school community:

The Department of Health's [Head Lice Fact Sheet](#):

- is included in the student enrolment package
- is displayed on the school notice board, with extra copies available for parents at the office
- is sent home to the parents of a child with head lice, and to the parents of the other children in the same class, accompanied by an explanatory letter

- is regularly promoted in the school newsletter and through other appropriate channels

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHILD IS FOUND TO HAVE HEAD LICE?

The School undertakes the following steps to ensure that a clearly defined process is followed when a child is found to have head lice:

Day 1:

- The student is given a brief, age-appropriate explanation about the head lice.
- A *Letter to Parents of a Child Found to have Head Lice* is sent home with the student at the end of the day. The *Letter* informs the parents that their child has head lice and advises them that, as required by the *School Education Act 1999*, the child must commence head lice treatment before returning to school. A copy of the Department of Health's [Head Lice Fact Sheet](#) is included with the letter.
- Parents of the other students in the class are sent an information letter on the same day, asking them to check their child's hair for head lice and advising them how to do this more effectively, using the Department of Health recommended hair conditioner method.

Day 2:

- Once treatment has commenced, the parents of the child with head lice should send the child back to school with the completed *Confirmation of Treatment* tear-off section of the [Letter to Parents](#). Parents are reminded that treatment must be completed over the 10-day period, as recommended by the Department of Health.
- If the *Letter to Parents* and the [Head Lice Fact Sheet](#) have been received but no treatment has started, then the parents are asked if they are experiencing any difficulty. Appropriate assistance is offered if parents are experiencing difficulty, e.g. serious financial hardship, or literacy or language difficulty.
- If the parents have no particular difficulty, then they are reminded of their responsibility to the child and to the school community. The parents are advised that the child must not return to school until treatment has begun. Parents must return a note to school with the child.

Day 3:

- Where a student again returns to school without treatment having commenced, the Principal contacts the parents by phone or email. The Principal may contact the Community Nurse, who represents the Department of Health in the school to undertake a phone call or home visit with the parent. The purpose of this is to help identify any undisclosed difficulty, and to assist and advise the parents with the head lice treatment.

Day 4:

- Where a student yet again returns to school without evidence of treatment, the Principal or delegate will contact the parents and advise that the student is immediately excluded from school, until treatment has commenced and the school notified. The parents will again be offered assistance by the school or the Community (School) Nurse.

Day 5 – ongoing:

- Where a student continues to be absent from school without due reason, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Attendance Policy. Head Lice infestation is easily treated and is not a disease. Where all parents are supported and information

has been provided, and there is no remaining barrier to treatment, failure to treat is not a valid reason for absence from school

ADDITIONAL KEY POINTS:

Hairstyles

- Students with long hair are encouraged to wear it tied back, braided and/or pinned

Recommended treatments

- The School advises parents to read the Department of Health's [Head Lice Fact Sheet](#), available free from the school office. The 10-Day Hair Conditioner Treatment is the Department's preferred treatment. However, parents who wish to use insecticide treatment should do so according to the Department's instructions in the [Head Lice Fact Sheet](#), as labelling on some head lice products may be unclear or even inaccurate.

As a last resort only – where considered appropriate by the Principal and Community (School) Nurse, the family may be referred to Child Protection and Family Services e.g. where a child is experiencing ongoing psychological distress, or if infected sores result from untreated head lice infestation and the sores remain untreated. Informing parents of this decision prior to referral is at the discretion of the Principal.

Thank you for taking the time to read the school's Head Lice Management Policy. We hope you will find it informative and helpful. Compliance with the Policy helps the whole school community to keep head lice infestation under control and so minimise inconvenience, expense and distress for parents and students.

For further information about head lice, go to www.health.wa.gov.au/headlice

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