



HEADLICE

When a case of head lice is discovered, we will handle the situation carefully and safely. The child concerned will not be isolated from other children or excluded from activities. When the child is collected, a member of staff will inform the parent in a sensitive manner. We do not inform other parents but if requested we will give written advice and guidance on treating head lice.

General Information

Head lice is not just a problem for schools but one that exists in the wider community

Head lice are small insects with 6 legs, that live on or very close to the scalp.

It feeds by biting the scalp and sucking the blood.

It is only able to move by crawling – it cannot jump, fly or swim!

The head louse is difficult to see as it is only about 3mm long as an adult and is flesh coloured. It only darkens in colour once it feeds.

The female lays 5-8 eggs each day which are glued to the base of the hair shaft.

Empty egg cases are called nits. They are white and shiny and makes them easier to see than the adult louse. Nits move further away from the scalp as hair grows

It takes 7-10 days for eggs to hatch after they have been laid and are fully developed into adults about 10 days later. Total life cycle of a head louse is 17-20 days.

The only way to spread lice is via head to head contact

Nit Combing

This method should always be used to detect and successfully clear head lice. It does not require the use of any lotions or special treatments:

1. Use your normal shampoo to wash the hair and then condition it well. For curly hair use oil as wet lice find it difficult to hang on to hair that is slippery from conditioner or oil.
2. While the hair is still dripping slot a fine tooth comb into the hair at the roots. Hold the comb tight to the scalp and then run down the full length of the hair.
3. Clear the comb of head lice between each stroke to avoid combing them back into the hair. Repeat this all over the hair.
4. It is also advisable to wash and change bed linen, particularly pillow cases, during treatment and do not share towels and other headwear

You must nit comb every 3 days for 2 weeks in order to clear newly hatched lice and to stop more eggs being laid.

Lotions –

There are several brands of lotion available from chemists or by prescription from your doctor. These are made to kill the lice and their eggs quickly and safely, but for those who suffer from asthma or eczema you will need to ask advice on the best lotion to use. Ask your pharmacist which lotion is currently being recommended as they are rotated to prevent lice becoming immune. Always follow the instructions included and note that repeated use is not recommended

Alternative - Essential Oil Treatments (Tea Tree Oil)

Make up a solution of 5 drops of tea tree oil to 5mls of shampoo (e.g. put 50 drops of tea tree oil in a 50ml bottle of shampoo). Wash the hair with the solution and wrap the hair in clingfilm. Leave for 10-15 minutes. While the hair is still It comb through with a fine tooth comb to remove the lice. Repeat this procedure every other day until all signs of lice have been removed.

This policy was adopted on	Date reviewed	Date for review
<i>1st September 2015</i>	December 2016	<i>3rd January 2018</i>