



KOORANA PRIMARY SCHOOL HEAD LICE POLICY AND ACTION PLAN

PREAMBLE

Koorana Primary School has developed the following head lice policy in consultation with the parent body, teachers, the Community (School) Nurse and the Department of Health. The aim of this policy is to ensure a consistent, coordinated and cooperative approach to head lice management for the school community.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The parent's responsibility is:

- to learn about head lice infestation and management by reading the Department of Health's Head Lice Fact Sheet.
- 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 contacts) if their child has a head lice infestation and to confirm that treatment has commenced.
- to understand and to follow the school's head lice policy.
- to check their child's hair for head lice infestation regularly.

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 assistance for families experiencing persistent head lice infestation.

The School's role is:

- to develop, implement and maintain a current head lice management policy.
- to ensure that all parents and staff are aware of the school's head lice policy and that they are provided with a copy of the Department of Health Head Lice Fact Sheet at enrolment and on request.

HOW HEAD LICE INFORMATION WILL BE DISSEMINATED

The School will undertake the following steps to ensure dissemination of accurate up-to-date head lice treatment advice within the school community.

The Department of Health's Head Lice Fact Sheet will be:

- included in the enrolment package.
- Copies available in the School Office waiting area and displayed in the Community Parent Room, with copies provided for parents to take.
- sent home to parents via the school newsletter at the beginning of the school year.
- promoted consistently in the fortnightly school newsletter.

Other head lice education strategies:

- head lice information will be included in class activities where appropriate, e.g. personal development (identify head lice and how to comb out), science (life cycle of the head louse) and drama.
- head lice management sessions will be provided to individual parents/caregivers.

Parents who need further advice or who experience difficulty with treatment may be referred to the Community (School) Nurse for assistance.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN A CHILD IS FOUND TO HAVE HEAD LICE

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

- Where a student at school is found to have head lice the student will be given a brief age-appropriate explanation about the head lice. The school will endeavour to contact parents or emergency contact to take student home for treatment. If no contact is made the student will be taken back to class asked to wear a hat and be isolated within the classroom.
- A *“Letter to Parents”* will be sent home with the student *at the end of the day*. The letter will inform the parents that their child has head lice and advise that the child must commence head lice treatment before returning to school.
- Parents of the other students in the class will receive a letter on the same day asking them to check their child’s hair for head lice.
- The student can return to school once hair is treated even if it’s the same day.
- **Hair check by Executive upon returning to school with parent/guardian in attendance. If clear of head lice a clearance note is given to the student to give to class teacher. If lice found parent needs to take child home for retreatment.**
- Where a child returns to school without successful treatment and parent has not attended with the child, the Principal or delegate may follow the procedure of contacting the parent/caregiver to assess the situation. The purpose of this is to help identify any undisclosed difficulty and to assist and advise the parents with the head lice treatment.
- Where a student continues to be absent from school without due reason, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the school’s Absenteeism Policy. Head Lice infestation is easily treated and is not a disease. Once treatment has commenced, it is not a valid reason for absence from school.

ADDITIONAL KEY POINTS:

- Under the *School Education Act 2000*, students found to have head lice may be excluded from school at the discretion of the Principal until treatment has begun and all live head lice are being removed, in accordance with the Department of Health treatment advice. In practice, this means students can return to school immediately after treatment has commenced, provided that effective treatment is completed consistently over the following 10 days. A few remaining eggs are not a reason for exclusion.
- The School advises that parents should use the Department of Health’s recommended treatment as described in the Head Lice Fact Sheet.
- Students with long hair must wear it tied back and/or braided and pinned up.
- The School Executive/Nurse will examine a student’s hair **where there is reason to believe the child may have head lice, i.e. where eggs (nits) or crawling head lice have been sighted or where a child is scratching the head excessively.**
- Each term a team of trained parent volunteers will check all students hair for head lice. This provides valuable data regarding the effectiveness of the school’s Headlice Action Plan