

28<sup>th</sup> September 2023

To all parents/carers

### **Head Lice in School**

We are having a significant issue with head lice in school at the moment. We are sending more and more messages home to alert families of head lice in their children and in their classes. This will only stop if every family works together to eradicate the problem.

Some children are becoming infected with head lice within days of being treated as a result of other children in the class not getting treated sufficiently before coming into school.

### **The School's Safeguarding Duty**

There have been some cases where, despite parents being informed, children have not been treated and have returned to school with live head lice in their hair. The school consider this to be a safeguarding issue in the same way any untreated illness would be. Families who ignore the issue and fail to treat head lice after the school has informed them will fall under our safeguarding duty of care and may be referred to children's services.

### **How to Treat Head Lice**

If one person in your house has head lice it is important to thoroughly check every single person who lives in the house for lice and eggs. Just treating one child will not get rid of the problem. Here are the NHS's recommendations for treating head lice:

#### **Wet combing**

Lice and nits can be removed by wet combing with a nit comb.

You can buy a special fine-toothed comb (detection comb) online or from pharmacies to remove head lice and nits.

There may be instructions on the pack, but usually you:

- wash hair with ordinary shampoo
- apply lots of conditioner (any conditioner will do)
- leave the conditioner on the hair for around 20 minutes
- comb the whole head of hair, from the roots to the ends
- rinse off the conditioner

It usually takes about 10 minutes to comb short hair, and 20 to 30 minutes for long, frizzy or curly hair.

Wet comb on days 1, 5, 9 and 13 to catch any newly hatched head lice. Check again that everyone in the household's hair is free of lice on day 17.

## **Medicated Lotions and Sprays**

Ask a pharmacist for advice if you have tried wet combing for 17 days, but your child still has live head lice.

They may recommend using medicated lotions and sprays. These kill head lice in all types of hair, and you can buy them from pharmacies, supermarkets or online.

Head lice should die within a day. Some lotions and sprays come with a comb to remove dead lice and eggs.

Some treatments need to be repeated after a week to kill any newly hatched lice. Check the pack to see if they're OK for you or your child and how to use them. If lotions or sprays do not work, speak to a pharmacist about other treatments.



**All treatments will require you to comb through your child's hair every day for a week, looking for eggs and lice that evaded the treatment.**

It is important to remember that having head lice is not a sign of being unclean. Head lice are not interested in hair, they simply hide in the hair in order to feed on human blood that they get from biting through the skin.



Thank you for understanding this issue. If you have any questions, please contact the school office.

Yours sincerely,



Mr K Ola

