



2 November 2016

Dear Parents

There have recently been a number of cases of Head lice in your child's class. Below you will find information about checking your child for head lice as well as treatment information if your child does have a head lice infestation. Do not treat your child for Head lice using a medicated product unless you see nits (eggs) or head lice. This is because Head lice are building up resistance to products.

What to look for:

- Adult lice are small (about the size of a sesame seed).
- Eggs (nits) are usually found firmly attached to the base of the hair shaft.
- Lice stay near the scalp, often behind the ears, near the neckline, and back of the head.
- Head lice hold tightly to the hair. They move by crawling. They cannot hop or fly (they do not have wings), but do move quickly making it difficult to find in a child's hair.
- Signs of a head lice infestation include: itchy scalp, tickling sensation in a person's hair. Head lice are most active in the dark.

If your child is found to have head lice, it is important to treat your child. Please begin treatment as soon as possible. Your prompt action is requested so that we can try to ensure that Head lice are not spread around the school. We receive many concerns from parents about the number of times that they have to treat their child and so please be sure to check your child's head regularly. We need your support with this to try and reduce the instances of Head lice in the school.

Tips for combing out head lice and nits:

- Use a fine-toothed louse or nit comb. These combs may be included within packages of medicated head lice treatment or you may buy one from most chemists. Combs with metal teeth spaced close together seem to work best. The PTA also sell a "Nitty Gritty" comb which some parents have found to be very effective.
- Sit behind your child, and use a bright light (and magnification if needed), to inspect and comb through the hair, one small section at a time.
- Repeat combing until no more active lice are observed.
- Comb daily until no live lice are discovered for two weeks. It may take several hours each night for several nights to tackle the problem. An entertaining video may help keep the child occupied during this time.
- Adult female lice cement eggs to the base of a hair shaft near the skin. As the hair grows, eggs are moved away from the scalp. Eggs more than 5mm from the scalp are nearly always hatched and do not mean live lice are present.
- Combing is sometimes painful to the child or it may be impractical for other reasons. In these cases, consider using anti-lice products.

Tips for prescription or over-the-counter head lice treatment:

- Whether using an over-the-counter head lice product or a prescribed treatment, it is very important that you read and follow all directions on the product's label.
- Do not use medicated products as a prevention method to avoid lice. The best method for prevention is regular checking and combing.
- Do not use a cream rinse, combination shampoo/conditioner, or conditioner on the hair before using the lice medicine.
- Be cautious not to use more than one head lice medication at time.
- 8-12 hours after treatment, examine your child's head again. If you see a few lice still around, but they are moving more slowly than before, do not re-treat. Comb the dead lice and any remaining live lice out of the hair using a fine-toothed nit/lice comb.
- To comb through the hair, sit in a well lit area. Part the hair into small sections and comb through one section at a time. Be patient and thorough, it can take a lot of time.
- 8-12 hours after treatment, if no dead lice are found and lice appear to be as active as before, the medicine may not be working. Speak to the pharmacist who may recommend using a different lice treatment.
- Re-treatment is generally recommended for most lice medicines after 9-10 days. This should kill any newly hatched lice before they produce new eggs. Be sure to follow the instructions for the product you are using.
- It is important to check the hair and comb through it with a nit comb every 2-3 days. This will help to remove nits and lice and can decrease the chance of self re-infestation. Do this for 2-3 weeks to be sure all lice and nits are gone.
- Wash combs, brushes, hats and other hair accessories of the affected person in hot water.

Please note that many products will state that you only need one treatment. However, there are no fool proof products and regular combing and checking is essential. Another useful source of information is the website "Once A Week Take a Peek" www.onceaweektakeapeek.com

Thank you for your support with helping us to be a "Nit Free" school.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs C Dyer
Headteacher