



# MALVERN VALLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

## HEAD LICE POLICY

### HEALTH

#### RATIONALE

Head lice cause concern and frustration for some parents, teachers and children. Head lice do not transmit infectious diseases – they are transmitted by having head to head contact with someone who has head lice. Whilst parents have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, the control and management of head lice infections is a shared responsibility.

#### AIMS

- To ensure that the school community is provided with information regarding head lice and the school's management of head lice
- To ensure clear understanding of the responsibilities of parents and the school
- To provide clarity about the process for inspection of head lice
- To ensure there is an effective procedure of communication and action for the detection of a child With head lice.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

##### 1. Provision Of Information To The School Community

- 1.1 The school will annually distribute information to the school community about head lice and the school's approach to managing head lice. This will include a copy of the pamphlet *Treating and Controlling Head Lice* and the school's Head Lice Policy.
- 1.2 The school will publish information about head lice to parents when necessary.

##### 2. Management Agreement

- 2.1 The school will present all families enrolling at Malvern Valley Primary School with the Head Lice Management Agreement. This agreement clearly states the responsibilities of parents and the school.
- 2.2 Children with shoulder length hair or longer are required to tie back their hair.

##### 3. Inspection Process

- 3.1 School staff will conduct inspections for head lice where there is cause for concern in a safe, respectful and confidential manner. Only students who have Parent Consent are to be inspected.

##### 4. Incident Procedure

- 4.1 Any student who is detected with head lice will have parents immediately contacted about the detection.
- 4.2 It is preferred that parents immediately collect their child if head lice are detected.
- 4.3 Student exclusion from school programs is ultimately the Principal's discretion.
- 4.4 A note of Notify Detection and Action Taken will be sent home on the day of detection with students identified as having head lice.
- 4.5 A note of Head Lice Alert will be sent home with students in the same class as a student detected with head lice.
- 4.6 Parents of a student detected with head lice must submit the Action Taken form to the Principal on the day the student returns to school for the student to be able to return to class, outlining what appropriate treatment has been administered and when it commenced. Students are able to return to school the following day as long as the necessary treatments have been given.
- 4.7 The presence of eggs in a child's hair is not a cause for exclusion however if a child re-attends school with live head lice, the principal may exclude the student until the live insects have been removed.

##### 5. At Home Management

- 5.1 Parents are encouraged to complete regular inspections of their children's hair and other family members for lice or lice eggs using a head lice comb for an effective inspection.

5.2 Upon detection of head lice, parents should notify the school and advise what treatment has been administered and when it commenced.

## APPENDICIES

- Appendix 1 Head Lice – General Information (to be circulated in Term 1 each year)
- Appendix 2 *Treating and Controlling Head Lice* pamphlet (to be circulated in Term 1 each year and made available at the school office and on the school website)
- Appendix 3 Head Lice Management Agreement between Schools and Parents/Guardians/Carers & Parent Consent Form (to be presented to families at enrolment)
- Appendix 4 Head Lice – Notify Detection & Action Taken Form (to be presented to parents/guardians/carers of students detected with head lice)
- Appendix 5 Head Lice – Class Alert Note (to be presented to parents/guardians/carers of students in the same class as students detected with head lice)

## REFERENCES

DET Head lice Guidance

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/health/headlice/default.htm>

### **Evaluation:**

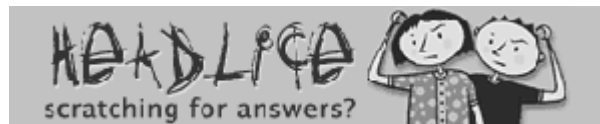
This policy will be reviewed with whole staff, student, parent and community input as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

**RATIFIED BY SCHOOL COUNCIL: 2015**

**TO BE REVIEWED: 2018**

# APPENDIX 1

## Head Lice – General Information



### *You Never Know When .....*

Dear Parents/Guardians/Carers,

At some time during your child's schooling they may get head lice. Attached to this note is a copy of the pamphlet *Treating and Controlling Head Lice* (available on the school website). I ask you to keep this pamphlet in a safe and accessible place for you to refer to if your child is detected with head lice. Also attached is the school's Head Lice policy.

Head lice do not transmit infectious diseases – they are transmitted by having head to head contact with someone who has head lice. You may be reassured to know that head lice are commonly found in places other than at school. Head lice are common in school-aged children and are the most adaptable of creatures. They have survived living solely on humans for 10,000 years!!!!

#### What can you do if head lice are detected?

Check your child's hair and in those instances where head lice or eggs are found, treating your child's hair.

Please refer to the pamphlet *Treating and Controlling Head Lice* from the Department of Human Services. This pamphlet has informative guidelines regarding detecting and treating head lice and eggs.

#### If head lice or eggs are found on your child's hair you need to inform:

- the school and advise when the treatment has started, via a *Action Taken* form. This may have been sent home, however if not, a copy can be downloaded from the school website.
- parents or carers of your child's friends so they too have the opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary.

#### When can my child return to school?

Health regulations requires that where a child has head lice, that child not return to school until **the day after** appropriate treatment has started. ***Please note, this refers only to those children who have live head lice and does not refer to head lice eggs.***

Malvern Valley Primary School is aware that head lice can be a sensitive issue and is committed to maintaining your confidentiality.

# APPENDIX 2

## Treating and controlling headlice

## health

While children are at school many families will have contact with head lice. The information contained here will help you treat and control head lice.

### Catching head lice

Head lice have been around for many thousands of years. Anyone can get head lice.

Head lice are small, wingless, blood sucking insects. Their colour varies from whitish-brown to reddish-brown. Head lice only survive on humans. If isolated from the head they die very quickly (usually within 24 hours).

People get head lice from direct hair to hair contact with another person who has head lice. This can happen when people play, cuddle or work closely together.

Head lice do not have wings or jumping legs so they cannot fly or jump from head to head. They can only crawl.

### Finding head lice

Many lice do not cause an itch, so you have to look carefully to find them.

Head lice are found on the hair itself and move to the scalp to feed. They have six legs which end in a claw and they rarely fall from the head. Louse eggs (also called nits) are laid within 1.5 cm of the scalp and are firmly attached to the hair. They resemble dandruff, but can't be brushed off. Lice can crawl and hide. The easiest and most effective way to find them is to follow these steps:

- Step 1** Comb any type of hair conditioner on to dry, brushed (detangled) hair. This stuns the lice and makes it difficult for them to grip the hair or crawl around.
- Step 2** Comb sections of the hair with a fine tooth, head lice comb.
- Step 3** Wipe the conditioner from the comb onto a paper towel or tissue.
- Step 4** Look on the tissue and on the comb for lice and eggs.
- Step 5** Repeat the combing for every part of the head at least four or five times.

If lice or eggs are found, the hair should be treated. If the person has been treated recently and you only find empty hatched eggs, you may not have to treat, as the empty eggs could be from a previous episode.

### Treating head lice

Treating head lice involves removing lice and eggs from the hair. There are two ways you can do this:

1. Buying and using a head lice lotion or shampoo, following the instructions on the product.
2. Using the conditioner and comb method (described under 'finding head lice') every second day until there have been no live lice found for ten days.

If you choose to use a head lice product always read and follow the instructions provided with the product carefully. The following points may also be helpful:

- Head lice products must be applied to all parts of the hair and scalp.
- No treatment kills all of the eggs so treatment must involve two applications, seven days apart. The first treatment kills all lice; the second treatment kills the lice that may have hatched from eggs not killed by the first treatment.
- Cover the person's eyes while the treatments being applied. A towel is a good way to do this.
- If you are using a lotion, apply the product to dry hair.
- If you are using a shampoo, wet the hair, but use the least amount of water possible.
- Apply the treatment near the scalp, using an ordinary comb to cover the hair from root to tip. Repeat this several times until all the hair is covered.

There is no need to treat the whole family - unless they also have head lice.

Concentrate on the head - there is no need to clean the house or the classroom.

Only the pillowcase requires washing - either by hand, in hot water (at least 50°C) or dry it using a clothes dryer on the hot or warm setting.

A Victorian Government Initiative

Department of Health

### Testing resistance

Head lice products belong in one of the following categories depending on the active compound they contain:

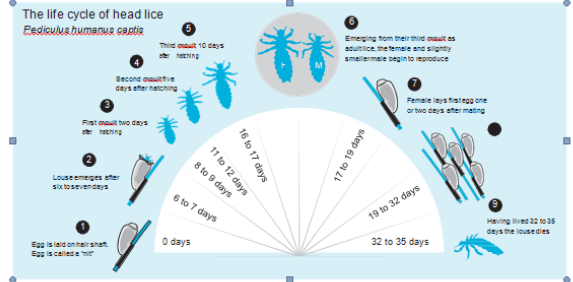
- pyrethrins
- synthetic pyrethroids (permethrin, deltamethrin)
- organophosphates (malathion or malathion)
- herbal (with or without natural (non-chemical) pyrethrins).

Insecticide resistance is common, so you should test if lice are dead. If they are, treat again in seven days using the same product. If the lice are not dead, the treatment has not worked and the lice may be resistant to the product and all products containing the same active compound. Wash off the product and treat as soon as possible using a product containing a different active compound. If the insecticide has worked, the lice will be dead within 20 minutes.

Any head lice product could cause a reaction and should be used with care by women who are pregnant or breastfeeding, children less than 12 months old and people with allergies, asthma or open wounds on the scalp. If you are unsure, please check with your pharmacist or doctor.

### Head lice combs

Combs with long, rounded stainless steel teeth positioned very close together have been shown to be the most effective, however, any head lice comb can be used.



The information in this pamphlet is based on the research conducted and written by Associate Professor Rick Spang, and the team of researchers at School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, James Cook University.

### Head lice eggs

Head lice eggs are small (the size of a pinhead) and oval. A live egg will 'pop' when squashed between fingernails.



Dead eggs have crumpled sides and hatched eggs look like tiny boiled eggs with their tops cut off.

### Regulations

According to the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009, children with head lice can be readmitted to school or children's service **again** after treatment has commenced.

The department recommends a child with head lice can be treated one evening and return to school or children's service **again** the next day, even if there are still some eggs present. There is no need to miss school or child care because of head lice.

### Preventing head lice

Check your child's head regularly with comb and conditioner. There is no research to prove that chemical or herbal therapies can prevent head lice.

### Further information

The following website offers further information:  
[www.health.vic.gov.au/headlice](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/headlice)

Treating and controlling head lice

# APPENDIX 3

**HEAD LICE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS/CARERS**

Malvern Valley Primary School

Head lice continues to cause concern and frustration for some parents/guardians/carers, teachers and children. Head lice do not transmit infectious diseases – they are transmitted by having head to head contact with someone who has head lice. Whilst parents have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, the control and management of head lice infections is a shared responsibility amongst a number of agencies, including the Department of Education and Training, Department of Human Services, schools and parents. The Department of Education and Training is responsible for providing advice and support to schools regarding head lice management.

This agreement outlines the:

- Responsibilities of both the school and the parent/guardian/carer;
- Importance of an all inclusive health approach, to ensure an appropriate and efficient solution to the problem of head lice.

**Responsibilities**

**Parent/Guardian/Carer** - responsibilities include:

- Regularly (preferably once a week) inspecting their child's hair to look for lice or lice eggs and regularly inspecting all household members and then treating them if necessary;
- Ensuring students with hair shoulder length or longer have their hair tied back;
- Ensuring their child does not attend school with untreated head lice;
- Using safe treatment practices which do not place their child's health at risk (see the attached *Treating and Controlling Head Lice* pamphlet);
- Notifying the school if their child is affected;
- Providing the school with the *Action Taken* form upon your child's return to school outline the course of treatment taken;
- Notifying parents or carers of your child's friends so they too have the opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary.

I have read and agree to the above responsibilities:

Signature of parent/carer/guardian: ..... Date:.....

Signature of parent/carer/guardian: ..... Date:.....

**School** - responsibilities include:

- Distributing policies and information on the detection, treatment and control of head lice to parents/guardians/carers and staff and having accessible clear protocols for the inspection program that the school implements;
- Developing a school policy on head lice which reinforces an accurate, consistent approach to the management of head lice, which is approved by the school council;
- Obtaining written parental consent to conduct head lice inspections with physical contact, upon the enrolment of a student to cover the duration of their schooling at a particular school and to nominate a trained person/s to conduct the head lice inspections, who is approved by the Principal and school council;
- Encouraging those person/s authorised by the school principal, e.g. teacher, to visually check a student's hair, i.e. with no physical contact with the child, if the presence of head lice is suspected;
- Being aware that the responsibility to exclude a child from a school rests with the principal or person in charge of the school and being aware that exclusion only refers to those children who have live head lice and does not refer to head lice eggs; and being aware of the recommendation that students should be excluded from school at the conclusion of the school day where the student should be provided with a note to take home to inform the parent that their child may have head lice.
- Where appropriate, and at the principal's discretion, providing an alert notice to the school community, when head lice has been detected in the school;
- Asking parents/guardians/carers to identify treatment used and the commencement date, via an *Action Taken* form.

Malvern Valley Primary School is committed to managing head lice in a sensitive and confidential manner. We are committed to the above responsibilities.

School Principal - Gaylene Fehlberg Date - February 2013

**PLEASE READ AND SIGN THE HEAD LICE INSPECTION CONSENT FORM ON THE REVERSE SIDE**

**CONSENT FORM TO CONDUCT HEAD LICE INSPECTIONS**

Permission to cover the duration of the student's schooling at:

**MALVERN VALLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Throughout your child's schooling, the school will be arranging head lice inspections of students.

The management of head lice infection works best when all children are involved in our screening program.

The school is aware that this can be a sensitive issue and is committed to maintaining student confidentiality and avoiding stigmatisation.

The inspections of students will be conducted by a trained person approved by the principal and school council.

Before any inspections are conducted the person conducting the inspections will explain to all students what is being done and why and it will be emphasised to students that the presence of head lice in their hair does not mean that their hair is less clean or well kept than anyone else's. It will also be pointed out that head lice can be itchy and annoying and if you know you have got them, you can do something about it.

The person conducting the inspections will physically check through each student's hair to see if any lice or eggs are present.

People authorised by the school principal may also visually check your child's hair for the presence of head lice, when it is suspected that head lice may be present. There is no physical inspection during a visual check.

In cases where head lice are found, the person inspecting the student will inform the student's teacher. The school will make appropriate contact with the parents/guardians/carers.

Please note that health regulations requires that where a child has head lice, that child not return to school until appropriate treatment has commenced. The school requests the completion of an 'Action Taken' form, which requires parents/guardians/carers to nominate if and when the treatment has started.

Parent's/guardian's/carer's full name: .....

Parent's/guardian's/carer's full name: .....

Address:..... Post code:.....

Name of child attending the school:.....

I hereby give my consent for the above named child to participate in the school's head lice inspection program for the duration of their schooling at this school.

Signature of parent/guardian/carer: ..... Date:.....

Signature of parent/guardian/carer: ..... Date:.....

*Please inform the school if guardianship/custody changes for your child, as this form will need to be re-signed to reflect these changes. Please also inform the school in writing if you no longer wish to provide consent for the school to undertake head lice inspections for your child.*

# APPENDIX 4



## Malvern Valley Primary School

Abbotsford Avenue  
Malvern East 3145  
Phone: 9569 5820  
Fax: 9568 4663

[malvern.valley.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:malvern.valley.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au)  
Principal: Gaylene Fehlberg

Dear Parent/Guardian/Carer,

Head lice or eggs are suspected to have been detected on your child and it is very important for you to treat your child as soon as possible, using safe treatment practices. Please see the attached pamphlet, *Treating and Controlling Head Lice*, from the Department of Human Services. This pamphlet has informative guidelines regarding detecting and treating head lice and eggs.

Copies of the pamphlet are available from the school office and the school website ([www.mvps.vic.edu.au](http://www.mvps.vic.edu.au)).

It is very important for you to notify the school and to advise when appropriate treatment has commenced.

It is important to note, that health regulations require that where a child has head lice, that child should **not return to school until the day after appropriate treatment has started**. Please note that this refers only to those children who have live head lice and does not refer to head lice eggs.

Please complete the below form and provide this to Gaylene Fehlberg on the return of your child to school.



**PLEASE RETURN SLIP IN SEALED ENVELOPE ADDRESSED TO THE PRINCIPAL**

**Action Taken – Student Head Lice  
Parent/Guardian/Carer Response Form**

To: The Principal,

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Student's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Year Level: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that my child should not attend school with untreated head lice.

I used the following recommended treatment for head lice or eggs for my child

\_\_\_\_\_ (treatment used).

Treatment commenced on (insert date) \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Signature of parent/carer/guardian: .....

Date.....



## APPENDIX 5



# Malvern Valley Primary School

Abbotsford Avenue  
Malvern East 3145  
Phone: 9569 5820  
Fax: 9568 4663

[malvern.valley.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:malvern.valley.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au)

## **Head Lice – Class Alert**

Dear Parents/Guardians/Carers,

It has come to the school's attention that students in your child's class have head lice and we seek your co-operation in checking your child's hair tonight and for the following week.

Head lice do not transmit infectious diseases – they are transmitted by having head to head contact with someone who has head lice. You may be reassured to know that head lice are commonly found in places other than at Malvern Valley. Head lice are common in school-aged children and are the most adaptable of creatures. They have survived living solely on humans for 10,000 years!!!!

### What can you do?

We seek your cooperation in checking your child's hair and in those instances where head lice or eggs are found, treating your child's hair.

Please refer to the pamphlet *Treating and Controlling Head Lice* that was sent home in Term 1, from the Department of Human Services. This pamphlet has informative guidelines regarding detecting and treating head lice and eggs. Copies of the pamphlet are available from the school office and the school website ([www.mvps.vic.edu.au](http://www.mvps.vic.edu.au)).

### How do I treat my child for head lice?

The pamphlet has informative guidelines regarding detecting and treating head lice and eggs.

### If head lice or eggs are found on your child's hair you need to inform:

- the school and advise when the treatment has started, via the *Action Taken Form*. This may have been sent home, however if not, a copy can be downloaded from the school website.
- parents or carers of your child's friends so they too have the opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary.

### When can my child return to school?

Health regulations requires that where a child has head lice, that child not return to school until **the day after** appropriate treatment has started. **Please note, this refers only to those children who have live head lice and does not refer to head lice eggs.**

Malvern Valley Primary School is aware that head lice can be a sensitive issue and is committed to maintaining your confidentiality.