Rationale

* Responsibilities for managing head lice are shared between parents/carers, schools and Principals.
* Schools must develop an accurate and consistent policy to managing head lice that is approved by the School Council.
* The written consent of parents/carers prior to students being inspected for head lice must be obtained.
* Infected students must be excluded until the day after treatment has commenced.
* Head lice is not an infectious disease but an infestation.
* The Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) has indicated that at any one time there are likely to be cases of head lice in most schools, so it is not advocated that the Principal informs the whole school community each time head lice are detected.

Purpose

* To respond appropriately to outbreaks of head lice.
* To ensure Charles La Trobe College complies with DET policy and the requirements of the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001.

**Definitions**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Definition** | | **Authorised Persons** | **Parent Consent** |
| **Head Lice Inspections** | Examinations of a student’s head for the presence of head lice. | Persons authorised by the school principal and school council, e.g. school nurse, parent volunteer. | Parental consent is required (obtained upon child’s enrolment at a school). |
| **Visual Checks** | Observations without physically touching a student’s head. | Persons authorised by the school principal e.g. classroom teacher. | No parental consent required. |

Implementation

The College Council has developed a Head Lice Management Policy as follows:

1. Parents/carers have primary responsibility for detection and treatment of head lice and must notify the school if their child is affected and when treatment commenced. Parents/carers should:

* regularly, preferably once a week, check for lice or eggs in the hair of their child and all household members and
* notify the school if their child is affected, when treatment commenced.

1. Parents must not send their children to school with untreated head lice.
2. Head lice inspections without physical contact do not require parental consent and will be made by people authorised by the Principal e.g. classroom teachers.
3. Head lice inspections involving the physical examination of a student require written consent and will be made by people authorised by the Principal e.g. school nurse or first aid officer.
4. A pro forma consent form that obtains parent/carer consent to head lice inspections will be provided to parent/carers for completion as part of the enrolment of primary age students.
5. Students identified with live head lice will be provided with a note to take home to inform the parent/carer that their child may have head lice at the conclusion of the school day.
6. Students with live head lice will be excluded from school until the day after treatment has commenced as set out in the Health (infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001, School Exclusion Table.
7. The Principal has overall responsibility to exclude a student from school.
8. Parents/carers of children in the same class will be advised of an infestation.
9. Through school newsletters or other communications, parents/carers will be encouraged regularly, and preferably once a week, to check for lice or eggs in the hair of all household members and notify the school if their child is affected, when treatment commenced.
10. The school will exercise sensitivity towards students and families with head lice, maintain student confidentiality to avoid stigmatisation and support and provide practical treatment advice to parents/carers.
11. For information and support, the school will utilise the Head Lice Management Toolkit which supports the development of school policy and contains the circulars below:

* 010/2003 Head Lice, providing possible content for the school policy
* 017/2005 Head Lice Management, providing a pro forma consent form for parents/guardians to consent to head lice inspections.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s review cycle or if guidelines change (latest DET update early July 2017).

Ratification

This policy was ratified by College Council on 15th February, 2018.

Reference

[www.education.vic/gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/headlice.aspx](http://www.education.vic/gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/headlice.aspx)