



Star of the Sea School

Head Lice Policy

Control and prevention of the spread of head lice is a community responsibility; checking and treating for head lice is, by law, a parental responsibility.

At Star of the Sea school we are committed to head lice control through our curriculum health program. We aim for early identification of suspected cases and advise parents/caregivers immediately.

Schools do not give children head lice. At school children come in close contact with others and may catch head lice. The most common way to be infected is through head-to-head contact, eg hugging, playing closely, resting heads together etc. Other less direct ways of contracting head lice would be, through sharing hats or ribbons, resting heads on seat covers, practically anyway or any place. Lice and eggs can be dislodged from a head and attach to another. It is not known exactly how long they can live off a head. Head lice have several requirements for their continued survival: temperature, food supply and humidity are a few.

We believe the key to prevention and control is a planned strategy with a united effort between school and home.

School Practice

All lessons, discussions and dealings regarding head lice will be conducted in an environment of understanding and compassion.

If a teacher notices a child scratching their head or the child comments on being itchy, students will be sent to the office and if deemed necessary, parents will be contacted by phone and asked to collect the child from school. This practice ensures that treatment can begin immediately. The rest of the class will receive a note to encourage parents to check their child's hair.

Teachers are not required to do regular or periodic hair checks. **Whole class or school head lice checks are no longer permitted.**

As a matter of courtesy, we ask that you inform the class teacher if your child has head lice. This can prevent class outbreaks. Once you have confirmed your child has head lice you must treat their hair, hats, brushes, bedding, etc with recognized products. Only then may they return to school.

If your child is continually infected with head lice despite correct insecticide use, medical advice should be sought on alternative methods of treatment.

What to look for

- small red dots (head lice bites) behind ears and on the nape of the neck
- pillows appear dirtier than usual
- eggs glued to the hair shaft close to the scalp
- live lice

How to check for Head Lice

- use a bright light
- a magnifying glass may be helpful
- part hair into sections, do one section at a time
- check scalp, especially at the front and nape of neck, behind ears, under the fringe and at the base of plaits and ponytails
- wet combing technique-wet the hair with conditioner to stun the head lice then comb through with lice comb

Break the Head Lice Cycle

- Re-treat after seven to 10 days as lice in unhatched eggs may not be killed by the first treatment.
- Combs and brushes should be cleaned with detergent and hot water.
- Bed linen should be washed in hot water (60°C or more), or dried in a clothes dryer on the hot setting for at least 20 minutes
- check all family member's hair each week
- check daily after live lice are found and treated
- comb daily until ALL eggs are removed
- keep long hair plaited
- cover hair with conditioner and comb with a fine-tooth comb weekly
- follow product direction thoroughly
- tea tree-based hair products are a good preventative
- explain to children the importance of not sharing hats to prevent spreading lice to others

Products

Always consult with a chemist about the latest treatments available. Head lice seem to become immune to products at an alarming rate.

More Information

Parent Helpline-1300 364 100