

HEAD LICE POLICY

Rationale:

- Head lice (pediculosis) are tiny insects that live on the human scalp where they feed and breed. It's probable that between 2-3% of primary school children are infested at any one time due to the build up of resistance to lotions used to eradicate head lice.

While they do not carry or transmit disease, they are the most common cause of head itch and scratching, which may lead to infection and swollen lymph glands; therefore, they need to be controlled, and where possible eradicated.

- Anyone can catch head lice. They are spread from person to person by head to head contact, and by the sharing of personal items such as combs, brushes and hats.

Policy:

- Parents and guardians have the responsibility to monitor, control and treat head lice when they occur in their children.
- Parents and guardians are obligated to report all cases of head lice to the Student Wellbeing Manager in accordance with the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1990.
- The College will help parents and guardians to control head lice by organizing head lice inspections at the beginning of terms, or at such times when the number of reports show evidence of a heavy outbreak, and notify them promptly in cases of positive identification.

Implementation:

- All head lice inspections will be conducted by authorized officers, such as Mrs Pauline Kelly and Mrs Cath McDonald – Community Health Nurses, who can be contacted at the Edenhope Hospital on 5585 9800, and who may be assisted by Dr Licenia Ihuaquai – General Medical Practitioner. They will physically search through each student's hair to see if any lice or eggs are present.
- Students will only be inspected if parents have provided written consent prior to the inspection.
- Upon positive identification of head lice, the Student Wellbeing Manager will ensure that a letter is sent home to parents or guardians of any infected student as soon as possible, and informed that their child is to be excluded from attending school in accordance with the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1990 until the child has been treated.
- Once the child has been treated and re-inspected by one of the authorized officers, he or she may return to school. Re-inspections can also be conducted by Mrs Jennifer Ackland – Community Health Nurse, who can be contacted at the West Wimmera Shire Office on 5585 9900.
- The Student Wellbeing Manager will provide parents and guardians of infected children with information about head lice treatment and prevention, or direct them to the information in the Family Handbook, which will be up dated annually to provide the latest information regarding control and prevention.
- The Student Wellbeing Manager will also ensure that information relating to the prevention and control of head lice appears throughout the year in *Whytalla*, and that parents and guardians are notified via the newsletter when reported cases indicate a cluster or heavier outbreak is occurring.

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the College's annual three year review cycle.

Reviewed and endorsed by College Council: **May 2005.**