



Head Lice Policy & Consent Form

PURPOSE

To prevent and control the transmission of head lice and ensure the whole community is aware of and understands this policy.

SCOPE

Control of head lice in schools

Schools control the spread of head lice in 2 ways:

1. exclusion from school
2. visual head lice checks in schools

DEFINITION

Head lice

Pediculosis or 'head lice' are small, wingless insects that live, breed and feed on the human scalp. They cannot transmit any infectious diseases. Direct contact is required for transmission from person to person, where head lice crawl from head to head.

POLICY

Primary responsibility for the control of head lice lies with individuals, families and public health experts. However, schools can assist with controlling and preventing head lice.

When a student is identified with live head lice, schools must provide the student with a [note to take home](#) to inform their parent/carer that their child has head lice and exclude the student from school until after treatment has commenced.

Principals must [alert parents or carers of an infestation](#) and use discretion to avoid identifying individuals when informing the school community.

Schools are not required to conduct visual head lice checks but in the event that they decide to, parental consent is required if the student is physically examined.

Exclusion from school

When a student is identified with **live head lice** schools must:

- at the end of the school day, provide the student with a [note to take home](#) to inform their parent/carer that their child may have head lice
- exclude the student from school until the day after treatment has commenced, as set out in the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019, school exclusion table – refer to the health.vic website: [School exclusion table](#).

Note 1: the principal has the overall responsibility to exclude a student from school.

Note 2: the presence of eggs in the hair is not a cause for exclusion (only live head lice).

Note 3: there is no requirement for a general practitioner or local council to issue a clearance certificate in order for the child to return to school.



MYRRHEE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Principals must:

- alert parents or carers of an infestation (DOCX), particularly the parents of other students in the same class as the affected child or children
- use discretion to avoid identifying individuals when informing the school community about an infestation.

Note: the Department of Health indicates there are likely to be cases of head lice in most schools at any given time, so it is not advocated that the principal informs the whole school community each time head lice are detected.

Visual head lice checks in schools

There is no requirement for schools to undertake head lice inspection programs. However, if schools wish to do so, they can conduct checks via visual checks only without physical contact which:

- do not require parent or carer consent
- are made by people authorised by the principal, for example, staff members

Head lice inspections involving the physical examination of a student:

- are made by people authorised by the principal for example, staff member
- require written parent consent usually obtained at enrolment.

Parent or carer consent:

- should be obtained prior to commencing any physical examination of a student
- should be provided to parents/carers for completion as part of enrolment
- must be updated when guardianship or custody arrangements change for the student
- must be updated if parents/carers no longer wish to consent to inspections.

Prevention of head lice in schools

Although the responsibility for detecting and treating head lice rests with parents, it is important that practical advice and support be available.

Myrrhee PS will:

- work collaboratively with parents and the broader school community to implement practices and procedures to prevent and minimise the impact of head lice outbreaks.
- take a whole school approach for the prevention of head lice, based on evidence-based information from the Department of Health.
- ensure the whole school community is aware of and understands this policy.

Healthy physical environment

Head lice do not live or breed on furniture, carpets, clothes or soft toys and cannot be spread through sharing items of clothing, for example, hats. However, it is best practice for a parent/carer to tie their child's hair back if it is long and learning activities will minimise head-to-head contact during head lice outbreaks.

Healthy culture

Myrrhee Primary School will exercise sensitivity towards this issue, maintain student confidentiality and help reduce stigma by providing a letter to all students involved in inspections, not just those found to have head lice. We will maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising or blaming families who are finding it hard to control head lice.



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Parent or carer detection and treatment responsibilities

Parents and carers have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice.

Responsibilities include:

- not sending their children to school with untreated head lice
- using safe treatment practices which do not place their child's health at risk
- regularly checking for lice or eggs in the hair of their child and other household members
- notifying the school if their child is affected and when treatment commenced.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):

- Head Lice Policy
- Infectious Diseases - [Infectious Disease Information - Department of Health](#)
- Public Health & Wellbeing Regulations 2019 (Vic) - [Public Health & Wellbeing Regulations 2019](#)

Myrrhee Primary School policies and documents can be found at <https://www.myrrheeps.vic.edu.au>

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	January 2025
Approved by	The Department of Education
Next scheduled review date	Monitor for any updates as required



Head Lice Inspection CONSENT FORM

(A form must be completed for every individual student)

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. This will be a member of the Myrrhee PS staff.

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

Person's 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. They do not physically touch the child's head during a visual check.

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

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

Your consent

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

Name of student: _____

Name of parent/carer: _____

Signature: _____

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.