



# Administrative Procedure: Head Lice

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## Definitions

**Head Lice:** Insects that infest the scalp and hair of the human head.

**Pediculosis:** An infestation with head lice; usually involves less than ten live lice.

**Nit:** The egg of a louse.

## Guidelines

The Superior North Catholic District School Board's practices are based on recommendations from the Thunder Bay District Health Unit and the Canadian Paediatric Society.

Students who attend Superior North Catholic schools will not be sent home or excluded from school because of the detection of active head lice or nits, as long as effective treatment steps are being taken at home to remove the pediculosis.

If in the opinion of the Principal/Vice-Principal, in consultation with the Superintendent, a parent has not taken effective treatment steps to remove the pediculosis, a student may be excluded from attendance at school as stated in the Education Act, S.265 (1) (m): **It is the duty of a principal, subject to an appeal to the board, to refuse to admit to the school or classroom a person whose presence in the school or classroom would in the principal's judgment be detrimental to the physical or mental well-being of the pupil.**

## Responsibilities

### Principal/Vice-Principal

- Review this policy with staff at the annual September staff meeting.
- Communication with parents by sending information home, regarding head lice, that correspond with seasonal peaks for head lice (early September, early January and following March Break). Current information can be obtained from the Thunder Bay District Health Unit.

- Inform the parent **immediately** when a student is suspected of having head lice and recommend that treatments occur as soon as possible.
- **Send note home to all parents immediately after lice is detected in the school**, informing them of a suspected or confirmed outbreak of head lice in the school (Appendix 1).
- Direct parents to the Thunder Bay District Health Unit for further information.
- Ensure that each year teachers provide at least one (1) age-appropriate lesson on the identification, transmission and treatment of head lice.

### Classroom Teacher/Student Support Person

- Review this policy each year.
- Be aware of the symptoms that indicate the presence of head lice.
- Inform the Principal/Vice-Principal if a case of head lice is suspected or confirmed.
- Actively discourage head-to-head contact among students when an outbreak is confirmed. This can include discouraging sharing hats, headbands, hair accessories, helmets, etc.
- Provide at least one (1) age-appropriate lesson on the identification, transmission and treatment of head lice each year.

### ECE and EA

- Review this policy each year.
- Be aware of the symptoms that indicate the presence of head lice.
- Inform the Principal/Vice-Principal if a case of head lice is suspected or confirmed.
- Actively discourage head-to-head contact among students when an outbreak is confirmed. This can include discouraging sharing hats, headbands, hair accessories, helmets, etc.

### Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

- Become educated about head lice (eg. Thunder Bay District Health Unit - Once a Week Take a Peek).
- Be aware of the symptoms that indicate the presence of head lice.
- Check their child's hair for head lice on a regular basis.
- Head lice detected:
  - Check the heads of everyone in the household.

- Notify the school when the presence of head lice is detected.
- Notify people at any place where the child could have been in head-to-head contact with others (daycare, friends, sporting events, etc.).
- Provide full and proper treatment for the elimination of head lice. [Advised to consult with their healthcare provider or pharmacist prior to starting any treatment for the removal of head lice.]
- Inform the school Principal/Vice-Principal that full and proper treatment has occurred.
- Accompany child to school for head lice check prior to the child returning to school and inform staff about treatment used.
- Actively discourage head-to-head contact among students when an outbreak is confirmed. This can include discouraging sharing hats, headbands, hair accessories, helmets, etc.
- Any suspected or confirmed case of pediculosis will be dealt with in a sensitive and respectful manner.

## Action Plan

### Found at School

1. Staff member identifies that a student has lice by noticing symptoms of lice.
2. Staff member informs the Principal/Vice-Principal of a suspected case of lice.
3. Principal/Vice-Principal contact the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) alerting them to the situation.
4. The parent is provided the option of picking the child up or having him/her remain at school until the end of the day.
5. If the child remains at school, arrangements will be made so the student will avoid head-to-head contact with other students/staff.
6. The Principal/Vice-Principal will send a note home with all students immediately after lice is detected in the school, indicating lice is apparent in the school and will advise families to check for head lice.
7. Parent/guardian will then follow "home" steps 3, 4 and 5 below.

### Found at Home

1. Parent/guardian informs Principal/Vice-Principal that his/her child has head lice and what is being done.
2. Parent/guardian gives the child head lice treatment following product instructions.

3. Parent
  - a. Removes all lice and works on removing nits.
  - b. Checks and treats all members of the household.
  - c. Thoroughly cleans house, towels, bedding, clothes, stuffed animals, etc.
4. Child returns to school and will be checked for lice before returning to school (preferably with a parent/guardian present).
  - a. Lice Found: student returns home.
  - b. Nits Found: student returns home.
  - c. No Lice Found: student returns to school.

## Additional Resources

Information regarding the identification, transmission, and treatment of head lice, is available on the following websites:

[Thunder Bay District Health Unit](#)

[Canadian Pediatric Society](#)

## Appendix 1

### SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS

Date:

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Unfortunately, head lice (pediculosis) has been found in the school. We are notifying all families in our school so that you are aware and we can be proactive in minimizing the spread. Head lice are spread by direct head-to-head contact. You can also check your child's hair for lice (pediculosis) and eggs (nits). An attached information sheet explains what you would be looking for.

Head lice are not a reflection on the state of one's cleanliness. Anyone can get head lice. Please refer to the attached information sheet from the Public Health Unit for the steps to take if your child has head lice.

If you have any questions that have not been answered in the attached information sheet, please call the local health unit.

Sincerely,

Principal/Vice-Principal

## Appendix 2

[How to Check for Head Lice - Once a Week, Take a Peek \(PDF Brochure\).](#)