



Administrative Procedure: Head Lice (Pediculosis)

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1.0 Definitions

- 1.1 Head Lice are tiny insects that infest the scalp and hair of the human head.
- 1.2 Pediculosis is an infestation with head lice; usually involves less than ten live lice.
- 1.3 Nit is the egg of a louse.

2.0 Guidelines

- 2.1 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.

- 2.2 Students who attend the Superior North Catholic schools will be sent home or excluded from school because of the detection of active head lice or nits. Though head lice is a nuisance, they don't cause serious illness or carry any serious or infectious disease.
- 2.3 Upon the return of the child, if in the opinion of the 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.***
- 2.4 It is essential to handle the situation sensitively and to minimize any embarrassment to the child.

3.0 Responsibilities

3.1 Principal

- 3.1.1 Review this policy with staff at the first staff meeting of the year.
- 3.1.2 Communication with parents and/or guardians 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.
- 3.1.3 Inform the parent and/or guardian of a student **immediately** when that student is suspected of having head lice and recommend that treatments occur as soon as possible.
- 3.1.4 Inform school staff that a letter informing parents and/or guardian of a case of head lice will be going home. The identity of the student(s) shall be protected.
- 3.1.5 Send a note home to all parents and/or guardians immediately after lice is detected in the school, informing them of a suspected or confirmed outbreak of head lice in the school (Appendix 1). The identity of the student(s) shall be protected.
- 3.1.6 Direct parents and/or guardians to the Thunder Bay District Health Unit for further information.

- 3.1.7 Ensure that each year teachers provide at least one (1) age-appropriate lesson on the identification, transmission and treatment of head lice.

3.2 Classroom Teacher/Student Support Person

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

3.3 Early Childhood Educator and Educational Assistant

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

3.4 Parents and/or Guardians

- 3.4.1 Become educated about head lice (eg. Thunder Bay District Health Unit - Once a Week Take a Peek).
- 3.4.2 Be aware of the symptoms that indicate the presence of head lice.
- 3.4.3 Check their child's hair for head lice on a regular basis.
- 3.4.4 If head lice is detected the following steps will be followed:
 - a. Check the heads of everyone in the household.

- b. Notify the school when the presence of head lice is detected.
- c. Notify people at any place where the child could have been in head-to-head contact with others (daycare, friends, sporting events, etc.).
- d. 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.]
- e. Inform the school Principal that full and proper treatment has occurred.
- f. Accompany the child to school for head lice check prior to the child returning to school and inform the school Principal or designate about treatment used.
- g. Actively discourage head-to-head contact among students when an outbreak is confirmed. This can include discouraging sharing hats, headbands, hair accessories, helmets, etc.
- h. Any suspected or confirmed case of pediculosis will be dealt with in a sensitive and respectful manner.

4.0 Action Plan

4.1 Head Lice Found at School

- 4.1.1 Staff member identifies that a student has lice by noticing symptoms of lice.
- 4.1.2 Staff member informs the Principal of a suspected case of lice.
- 4.1.3 Principal contact the student's parents and/or guardians alerting them to the situation.
- 4.1.4 The parent and/or guardian is provided the option of picking the child up or having him/her remain at school until the end of the day.
- 4.1.5 If the child remains at school, arrangements will be made so the student

will avoid head-to-head contact with other students/staff.

- 4.1.6 The Principal will inform all staff immediately after lice is detected.
- 4.1.7 The 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.
- 4.1.8 Parent and/or guardian will then follow the steps in 4.2 “Head Lice Found at Home” of this procedure below.

4.2 **Head Lice Found at Home**

- 4.2.1 Parent and/or guardian informs Principal that his/her child has head lice and what is being done.
- 4.2.2 Parent and/or guardian gives the child head lice treatment following product instructions.
 - 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.
- 4.2.3 Child returns to school and will be checked for lice before returning to the classroom (preferably with a parent and/or guardian present).
 - d. Lice Found: student returns home.
 - e. Nits Found: student returns home.
 - f. No Lice Found: student returns to school.

Appendix A

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

Appendix B

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