



Aberdare Park Primary School Head Lice Policy





Head Lice Policy



'Once A Week - Take A Peek!'

Within most schools at any one time, there will be a small number of children infected with head lice. Infection levels remain fairly constant so we need your help to combat the bugs!

Head lice are tiny insects about the size of a sesame seed. They move from one person to another by head-to-head (hair-to-hair) contact. They cannot jump to another person's head. Head lice lay eggs which hatch after 7-10 days. It takes about 10 days for a recently hatched louse to grow into an adult and start to lay eggs.

Nits are the empty white egg shells which are left when the lice hatch. Nits look like dandruff but stick strongly to hair. Unlike dandruff, you cannot easily brush out nits.

Children who get head lice may feel embarrassed or ashamed, but they shouldn't. Anyone can get head lice. It has nothing to do with being dirty or clean and lice do not spread disease or illness.

Parents' Responsibilities

'Take a peek -once a week!' Mass screening of all pupils in a classroom and/or school does not take place or control the spread of head lice. **Rather, the spread of head lice can be minimized with routine inspection by all parents for head lice and full treatment of those pupils with live head lice.**

We would like you to check your child for head lice once a week, using a nit comb available from any chemists. Head lice and nits do not always cause an itchy scalp - so many children will be unaware that they are infected.

Parents and carers are responsible for:

Knowing head lice signs and symptoms.

Routinely checking their child's head for head lice once a week. **'Take a peek - once a week!'**

Telling their child's school, close friends, etc., when their child has head lice in order that other parents can check and treat their children if necessary.

Ensuring that full, proper treatment has been completed and their child is head lice free.

School is responsible for:

- Publishing this policy, and advice on detection, prevention and treatment on the school website and regularly remind parents to check their child's head.
- Promptly notifying parents of active head lice infestations in their child's year group, referring parents to this policy on the website.
- Providing parents with the advice and support to effectively detect and treat cases of head lice affecting their own children.
- Treating any child with confirmed head lice with sensitivity - anybody, even teachers and Headteachers, can get them from time to time!
- School will NOT send out 'Alert letters'. Most schools are likely to have a few pupils with head lice at any one time. On that basis, 'alert' letters could potentially be required every day of the school year. 'Alert' letters also frequently lead parents to attempt to treat their children preventatively, which is neither effective nor advised. Head lice infection cannot be prevented, and over-use of insecticide treatments may lead to resistance.

Head Lice and Absence from School

Having head lice is not a reason for school absence as treatment can be administered quickly. However, should live head lice be noticed by a member of staff, a call will be made to the parent, carer, guardian who will be asked to treat their child. A thorough comb through or chemical treatment done quickly at home will enable the child to be back at school the following day.

Children who have head lice and have started treatment will not be excluded from lessons. The reason for this is that although head lice are unpleasant, having head lice is not classed as an infectious disease, which warrants keeping a pupil away from school.

Please refer to 'NHS Wales Head Lice Fact Sheet' on our website for advice re detection, treatment and prevention of head lice.

Thank you for your support and trying to make our school a 'Bug Free Zone!'

Appendix

'NHS Wales Head Lice Fact Sheet'