

Head Lice Policy

1. Policy statement

Values

This kindergarten is committed to:

- As far as practicable, providing a safe and healthy environment for all children, staff, and any other persons participating in the program.
- Providing up-to-date information for parents/guardians and staff regarding the protection of all children from head lice infection.
- Complying with the exclusion requirements for infectious diseases set out in the DHS Communicable Diseases Exclusion Table (refer to Infectious Diseases Policy, Appendix 2).

Purpose

Whilst parents/guardians have primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, the kindergarten also has a role in the management of head lice infections and in providing support for the parents and guardians. This policy will clearly define:

- Procedures to be followed if a child becomes infected with head lice.
- Responsibilities of staff, parents/guardians and committee/board.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the committee/board, staff, parents/guardians, children, volunteers and students involved with the kindergarten.

3. Background and legislation

- *Children's Services Act 1996*
- Children's Service's Regulations 2009
- Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001.
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000.*

4. Definitions

Exclusion: Unable to attend or participate in the program.

5. Procedures

The committee/board is responsible for:

- Approving any changes to this policy
- Responding to any questions/concerns that arise in relation to any aspect of the policy.

The staff is responsible for:

- Distributing up to date information on the detection, treatment and control of head lice at the beginning of every year and more frequently if required.
- Provision of comprehensive advice about the use of safe treatment practices which do not place children's health at risk.
- Providing clear protocols for any inspection programs, including obtaining written parental permission for all inspections including those by local government personnel.
- Organising inspection programs as required

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- Distributing letters to parents/guardians of those children found to have head lice. Letters may include a detachable slip, asking parents to return that indicates the treatment used and when it commenced.
 - Reducing the stigma and maintain confidentiality. Actions to do this may include:
 - Distributing letters to all children, not just those found to be infected
 - Include staff in the inspections
 - Undertake classroom activities to give students an understanding of the habits and life cycles of head lice
 - Ensure they undertake sufficient training in the detection and management of head lice.

The kindergarten recommends that parents/guardians:

- Do not allow their child to attend kindergarten with untreated head lice (in accordance with the Health Infectious Disease Regulations 2001)
- Check children's hair on a weekly basis at home using the recommended conditioner combing method
- Regularly inspect all household members and treat them if necessary
- Upon detection of head lice, notify the kindergarten and advise when treatment commenced, advise the parents or carers of your child's friends to enable early detection and treatment
- Maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulties with control measures
- Agree for their child to participate in inspections undertaken at the kindergarten.
- Ensure that children with long hair wear it tied back while attending kindergarten.

6. Related documents / websites

- www.health.vic.gov.au/headlice/
- http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/Suggestions_for_the_development_of_a_school_head_lice_policy.doc

Kindergarten policies

- Complaints
- Privacy

7. Authorisation

This policy was adopted by the Parkdale Preschool Committee at the committee meeting on 14 October 2009.

8. Review date

This policy will be reviewed on availability of a new KPV policy and then reviewed as necessary, and the committee/board will within 28 days of making any change, notify the parents/guardians of the children attending, of that change.

9. Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes the committee/board will:

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- Assess whether a satisfactory resolution has been achieved in relation to issues relating to head lice infection.
 - Take into account feedback on the policy from the staff and kindergarten community.