

## Headlice Policy

### **Rationale:**

- Head lice (pediculosis) are tiny insects that live on the human scalp where they feed and breed. Probably between 2-3% of primary school children are infested at any one time. While they do not carry or transmit disease, they are the most common cause of head itch and scratching, which may lead to infection and swollen lymph glands; therefore, they need to be eradicated.

### **Aims:**

- To respond to reports of head lice as quickly and as effectively as we can given our resources available.
- That parents/guardians are required to give, appropriately trained people who have been designated by School Council, permission to check children's hair as required throughout the year.
- To ensure that an effective process for treating head lice is well known and consistently followed.
- To ensure that parents and guardians are well informed about head lice treatment.
- To treat the headlice issue in a sensitive manner

### **Implementation:**

- Anyone can catch head lice. Head lice cannot fly, hop or jump. They spread from person to person by head to head contact, and by the sharing of personal items such as combs, brushes and head gear such as hats. Educating and informing both students and parents of these facts will occur both in classroom and through the newsletters.
- While teachers and other staff members may believe that a child is infested with head lice, the staff at Altona Green Primary School are not permitted or qualified to search a child's hair, inspect for head lice, or diagnose a case of head lice.
- Teachers or staff members suspecting that a child has head lice are to report their concerns to the Principal/Assistant Principal/Admin support staff.
- A note advising parents of a head lice concern in the grade will be sent home.
- If parents discover that their child is infested with head lice, they need to begin treatment and advise the school that head lice has been detected and treated.
- If further reports of head lice are received Admin staff will organise the authorised officers (registered general nurses employed by Hobsons Bay Council) to carry out the necessary inspections.

- Each family will be given a 'Headlice Permission Form' to allow their child to be checked by a registered nurse, employed by Hobsons Bay Council. This will occur on enrolment at Altona Green PS
- Only children who have returned a signed note of approval for headlice checks will be inspected.
- These checks will occur as sensitively as possible with children's self esteem being valued.
- Upon positive identification of head lice, the principal or delegates will ensure that the parents of any infected child are contacted as soon as possible and informed that their child is to be excluded from attending school in accordance with the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1990 until the children have been treated.
- The principal or delegates will also provide parents of infected children with information about head lice treatment and prevention.
- Parents however need to inform the school that they have commenced treatment.
- The principal will ensure that information relating to the prevention and eradication of headlice appears throughout the year in the school newsletter, particularly at times of heavy outbreaks.
- Headlice lotion will be available at school for purchase.

**Evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle.

Endorsed by School Council: November 2009

Review date: 2012

**Headlice Checks Permission**

- *For those children who have not returned a Headlice permission note: If a class has been checked and there are headlice issues in that class, then those children who have not been checked will be required to be collected from school and will need to provide a clearance from a medical centre that they have been checked.*

**I give permission for my child/ren to participate in Headlice checks whilst they are at Altona Green Primary School.**

Name of child/ren:	
Parent/Guardian signature:	Date: