



HEAD LICE – ADVICE FOR PARENTS

Please read the following information carefully

An incident of head lice has been reported in your child's class at school. As a precaution we ask you to check your child's hair carefully for signs of head lice or eggs.

FACTS ABOUT HEAD LICE

- Head lice are small insects that live very close to the scalp
- Nits are not the same as lice. Nits are the empty egg cases which stick to the hair
- You only have head lice if you find a living, moving louse (not a nit)
- Anybody can get head lice – adults and children
- Head lice don't care if hair is dirty or clean, short or long
- A lot of infections are caught from close family and friends, not at school
- Head lice can walk from one head to another if the heads are pressed together for some time. They do not fly, jump or swim.
- Regular hair care may help to spot lice early.
- The best way to stop infection is for families to check their heads regularly using detection combing.

REMEMBER – It doesn't matter how many nits you have or how itchy your scalp is – if you can't find a living, moving louse, you don't have lice.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who catches head lice?

Anyone can catch head lice but preschool children, primary school children and their families are most at risk

How do you catch head lice?

Head lice are transmitted through direct head to head contact with an infected person. This is especially common during play or sport at school and with close contact at home

How serious are head lice?

Head lice are not a serious health problem. They rarely cause anything more than an itchy scalp

Can you prevent head lice?

The best way to stop infection is to learn how to check your head for lice. The most effective way to do this is through regular detection combing.

How do you treat head lice?

A diagnosis of head lice can only be made if a living, moving louse is found. Contact your GP or local pharmacy/chemist for advice on which treatment to use.

Should a child with head lice be kept off school?

NO. There is no need for a child who has lice to stay away from school. Staying away from school will not ensure the elimination of the infection and if a child does have lice, he or she are likely to have had them at school for several weeks before diagnosis.

REMEMBER - Having head lice is not a reason for **authorised** absence. Children are expected to return to school after being treated.

Please do not hesitate to contact school if you require any further information or support.

Mrs H Adair
Head Teacher