Head lice continues to cause concern and frustration for some parents/guardians/carers, teachers and children. Head lice do not transmit infectious diseases – they are transmitted by having head to head contact with someone who has head lice. Whilst parents have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, the control and management of head lice infections is a shared responsibility amongst a number of agencies, including the DEECD Department of Human Services schools and parents. The DEECD is responsible for providing advice and support to schools regarding head lice management. Timboon P-12 School is committed to managing head lice in a sensitive and confidential manner. We are committed to the above responsibilities.

**Aim**

To define the role of the school and home in the treatment of head lice by stating the:

- Responsibilities of both the school and the parent/guardian/carer
- Importance of an all inclusive health approach, to ensure an appropriate and efficient solution to the problem of head lice.

**Implementation**

**Parent/Guardian/Carer** - responsibilities include:

- Regularly (preferably once a week) inspecting their child’s hair to look for lice or lice eggs and regularly inspecting all household members and then treating them if necessary
- Taking part in the “headlice action long weekend” inspections
- Ensuring their child does not attend school with untreated head lice
- Using safe treatment practices which do not place their child’s health at risk
- Notifying the school if their child is affected and advising the school when the treatment has started.
- Notifying parents or carers of your child’s friends so they too have the opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary.

**School** - responsibilities include:

- Distributing policies and information on the detection, treatment and control of head lice to parents/guardians/carers and staff and having accessible clear protocols for the inspection program that the school implements
- Obtaining written parental consent to conduct head lice inspections, upon the enrolment of a student to cover the duration of their schooling
- Encouraging those persons authorised by the school principal, e.g. teacher, to visually check a student’s hair, i.e. with no physical contact with the child, if the presence of head lice is suspected
- Encouraging parents/guardians/carers to continue to regularly (preferably once per week) check their child for head lice and providing a sympathetic attitude and practical advice to those parents experiencing difficulty with the control measures
- Administer the tracking of families participation in the “headlice action weekends”
- Encouraging students to learn about head lice so as to help remove any stigma or ‘bullying’ associated with the issue
- Being aware that the responsibility to exclude a child from a school rests with the principal or person in charge of the school that exclusion only refers to those children who have live head lice and does not refer to head lice eggs and that the Department of Human Services recommends that students who are suspected of having live head lice should be excluded from school at the conclusion of the school day when the student should be provided with a note to take home to inform the parent that their child may have head lice.
- Being aware that there is no requirement in the *Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001* for a child treated for head lice to obtain a clearance certificate to be issued either by a general practitioner or a municipal council, on return to school.

Reviewed Oct 2010  Approved by School Council Oct 14th Oct
Head lice

- Where appropriate, and at the principal’s discretion, providing an alert notice to the school community, when head lice have been detected in the school.

**Samples:**

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**Dear Parents,**

**Head lice:**

“30% of children at school can have head lice at any one time”. This is the findings of a recent study.

**Nobody likes head lice:**

- Children scratch continuously
- Parents treat them regularly
- Teachers also catch them and spend the day looking at eggs and lice in children’s hair.
- Head lice are a community problem. They spread through families, schools, social groups and cost a small fortune to get rid of.

**What does the school do about it?**

- We have used parent helpers to detect lice in previous years but this does not guarantee that proper treatment occurs at home. The number of people volunteering has diminished.
- We send notes home as soon as we are informed of the presence of lice in a classroom.

**Our United Approach.**

We would like families to unite in the fight against head lice over the coming long weekend: check, treat and inform the school of the action you have taken.

Each family will be asked to return a form, to the youngest child’s teacher, indicating that they have taken part in the program. Those families who have not returned a form will be contacted by a fellow up letter to find out what course of action has been taken.

Department of Human Services regulations require that any student who has contracted head lice not attend school until treatment has commenced. Solutions for treatment are available from any pharmacy, supermarket, hairdresser or alternatively by implementing the repeated conditioner and combing treatment.

A head lice brochure has been sent out to assist you with the detection and treatment of head lice.

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**Return to School (The youngest child’s classroom teacher) on Tuesday 9th March.**

Family Name:……………………………

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name Of Child</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Eggs (E) lice (L) nothing (N) detected</th>
<th>Treated (If L or E found)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Parents Signature:…………………………………………………………  Date:……………….
TIMBOON P-12 SCHOOL

CONSENT FORM TO CONDUCT HEAD LICE INSPECTIONS

Permission to cover the duration of the student’s schooling at Timboon P-12 School.

Throughout your child’s schooling, the school may arrange head lice inspections of students.

The management of head lice infection works best when all children are involved in our screening program.

The school is aware that this can be a sensitive issue and is committed to maintaining student confidentiality and avoiding stigmatisation.

The inspections of students will be conducted by a trained person approved by the principal and school council.

Before any inspections are conducted the person conducting the inspections will explain to all students what is being done and why and it will be emphasised to students that the presence of head lice in their hair does not mean that their hair is less clean or well kept than anyone else’s. It will also be pointed out that head lice can be itchy and annoying and if you know you have got them, you can do something about it.

The person conducting the inspections will check the hair of each student whose parent/guardian has provided written consent, to see if any lice or eggs are present.

Person’s authorised by the school principal may also visually check your child’s hair for the presence of head lice, when it is suspected that head lice may be present. They do not physically touch the child’s head during a visual check. Parental consent is not required for the school to conduct a visual check.

In cases where head lice are found, the person inspecting the student will inform the student’s teacher and the assistant principal. The school will make appropriate contact with the parents/guardians/carers.

Please note that health regulations require that where a child has live head lice, that child should not return to school until appropriate treatment has commenced. This exclusion from attending school does not apply to a child who has head lice eggs (nits). The school may request the completion of an ‘action taken form’, which requires parents/guardians/carers to nominate if and when the treatment has started.

PLEASE RETURN THE FORM BELOW TO YOUR CHILD’S TEACHER

Name of child attending the school: .............................................................. Class: ..............

I hereby GIVE / DO NOT GIVE my consent for the above named child to participate in the school’s head lice inspection program for the duration of their schooling at this school.

Signature of parent/guardian/carer: ........................................ Date....................

Parent’s/guardian’s/carer’s full name: ..............................................................

Please inform the school if guardianship/custody changes for your child, as this form will need to be re-signed to reflect these changes. Please also inform the school in writing if you no longer wish to provide consent for the school to undertake head lice inspections for your child.

Please tick this box if you are interested in assisting with head lice inspections after undertaking appropriate training.

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