

Procedure Title	Pediculosis (Head Lice)		
Date of Issue	October 13, 1999	Related Policy	
Revision Dates	November 25, 2009; March 8, 2023	Related Forms	
Review Date	March 1, 2028	Originator	Administrative Council
References			
Canadian Paediatric Society; Grey Bruce Public Health (https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Child-and-Family-Health/Preschool-and-School-Aged-Children/Head-Lice)			

1.0 RATIONALE

- 1.1 Most outbreaks of pediculosis humanus capitis (otherwise known as head lice) occur in school children, particularly those of elementary school age. Head lice is not a health or education issue but is a nuisance.
- 1.2 While control of head lice is ultimately a family responsibility, schools have a role in encouraging families to take responsibility for head lice control and in partnership with the Grey Bruce Health Unit, in educating families in prevention and control. Schools also have a role in preventing spread of head lice by following precautions at school which help to minimize spread in the schools.

2.0 PROCEDURE

2.1 Summary of Responsibilities in Management of Pediculosis (Head Lice)

2.1.1 Schools are responsible for:

- i. promoting appropriate prevention measures in the control of head lice in the school environment;
- ii. being aware of symptoms indicating an infestation of head lice;
- iii. notifying all parent(s)/guardian(s) of students in a classroom where a new infestation has been identified;
- iv. distributing to parent(s)/guardian(s) appropriate literature relating to de-infestation and control of head lice;
- v. referring a parent/guardian requesting further information on head lice to their family pharmacy or family doctor;
- vi. encouraging parent(s)/guardian(s) of students with identified infestation to follow the recommended treatment program.

2.1.2 Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are responsible for:

- i. being aware of symptoms which indicate an infestation;
- ii. examining a student's head for possible infestations at regular intervals;
- iii. notifying the school of any infestations;
- iv. screening all siblings during an infestation;
- v. ensuring that both proper and full de-infestation, and that any other environmental control measures in the home, takes place within a reasonable length of time;

- vi. consulting with the family doctor or pharmacist in specific situations where control and/or treatment has become difficult; and
- vii. indicating to the principal that a complete de-infestation has occurred.

While school staff may assist parents in a supportive role, by providing information, ultimately it is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to detect and eliminate head lice.

2.2 Communication

- 2.2.1 Upon report or discovery of the presence of head lice, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student involved will be notified.

- 2.2.1.1 The school will provide the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student with suspected/confirmed head lice with a notification letter (see Appendix A for a sample letter) that lists possible resources (see section 2.3 and resources noted on letter).

- 2.2.2 The school will also provide the parent(s)/guardian(s) of all other students in the class with a letter alerting them of the need to check their children for head lice (see Appendix B for sample letter).

2.3 Resources

Grey Bruce Public Health has developed resources regarding the management of head lice:

[Grey Bruce Public Health – Head Lice](#)

**APPENDIX A – SAMPLE NOTIFICATION LETTER
CONFIRMED PEDICULOSIS (HEAD LICE)
(place on school letter head)**

{DATE OF LETTER}

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Please be advised that your child has a confirmed or suspected case of pediculosis (head lice). Students with head lice should be treated immediately. Family members should be examined and treated at the same time if infested. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated as we work together to contain this nuisance and prevent it from spreading.

How to Check for Head Lice

Stand by a window or strong light and check your child's **entire** scalp, especially the back of the neck and around the ears. Nits look like dandruff but are firmly attached to the hair. They are easier to see than lice. If nits are found, all house-hold members should be checked. Daily head checks are important when there is a known infestation in the school. We ask that you check your child's head daily for the next few weeks.

Knowing the following facts may also help:

- Short hair will not eliminate or prevent head lice
- Cleanliness does not prevent head lice
- Lice are spread by head-to-head contact or sharing personal items i.e., hats, scarves, bedding, brushes, combs, headphones, and stuffed animals
- Lice are very small (about 1/16") oval, and grayish to dark brown
- Head lice live on the head, use blood for food, and lay eggs
- Lice eggs (nits) are grayish-white, or brown oval-shaped and stick to the single hair strands
- Live nits are commonly found near the scalp
- Regular shampoo will not kill lice
- Head lice treatment on someone who does not have head lice will not prevent an infestation

If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school or Grey Bruce Public Health at 519-376-9420. For more information on getting rid of head lice, please visit the following site:

[Grey Bruce Public Health – Head Lice](https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Child-and-Family-Health/Preschool-and-School-Aged-Children/Head-Lice)

[\(https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Child-and-Family-Health/Preschool-and-School-Aged-Children/Head-Lice\)](https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Child-and-Family-Health/Preschool-and-School-Aged-Children/Head-Lice)

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

{Name of Principal}
Principal

**APPENDIX B - SAMPLE NOTIFICATION LETTER
CLASSROOM NOTIFICATION – POSSIBILITY OF PEDICULOSIS (HEAD LICE)
(place on school letter head)**

{DATE OF LETTER}

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Please be advised that there is a possibility of pediculosis (head lice) in your child's class. We are asking that you check your child's head for head lice and please inform the school if any evidence of head lice is found. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated as we work together to contain this nuisance and prevent it from spreading.

How to Check for Head Lice

Stand by a window or strong light and check your child's entire scalp, especially the back of the neck and around the ears. Nits look like dandruff but are firmly attached to the hair. They are easier to see than lice. If nits are found, all house-hold members should be checked. Daily head checks are important when there is a known infestation in the school. We ask that you check your child's head daily for the next few weeks.

Knowing the following facts may also help:

- Short hair will not eliminate or prevent head lice
- Cleanliness does not prevent head lice
- Lice are spread by head-to-head contact or sharing personal items i.e., hats, scarves, bedding, brushes, combs, headphones, and stuffed animals
- Lice are very small (about 1/16"), oval, and grayish to dark brown
- Head lice live on the head, use blood for food, and lay eggs
- Lice eggs (nits) are grayish-white or brown, oval-shaped, and stick to the single hair strands
- Live nits are commonly found near the scalp
- Regular shampoo will not kill lice
- Head lice treatment on someone who does not have head lice will not prevent an infestation

If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school or Grey Bruce Public Health at 519-376-9420.

For more information, please visit the following sites:

[Grey Bruce Public Health – Head Lice \(https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Child-and-Family-Health/Preschool-and-School-Aged-Children/Head-Lice\)](https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Child-and-Family-Health/Preschool-and-School-Aged-Children/Head-Lice)

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

{Name of Principal}
Principal