



St Anne's Primary School

*PO Box 493
27 Young Street
HARVEY WA 6220*

St Anne's School – Head Lice Management Policy

1. RATIONALE

St Anne's Catholic Primary School has developed this Head Lice Management Policy to ensure a consistent, coordinated, and cooperative approach to managing head lice within the school community.

Head lice are spread through direct head-to-head contact and cannot jump or fly. Identifying and treating head lice promptly is essential to prevent further spread and minimize inconvenience for parents and students.

2. SCOPE

All members of the school community play a role in preventing and managing head lice. Compliance with this policy helps to:

- Control head lice infestations
- Reduce the cost and distress for families
- Minimize disruption to learning

3. BACKGROUND

For further information, parents and staff can access:

- The Department of Health's Head Lice Fact Sheet (available online)
- Additional appendices provided with this policy

4. DEFINITIONS

Head lice (Pediculosis Capitis): Tiny, wingless insects that live on human hair and feed on blood from the scalp.

- Head lice do not spread disease.
- Having head lice is not a sign of poor hygiene.
- Their bites may cause itching and mild skin irritation.
- They are a communicable condition, but easily treated.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Responsibilities of Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Learning about head lice using the Department of Health's Head Lice Fact Sheet.
- Regularly checking their child's hair for lice.
- Treating head lice immediately if found, following recommended guidelines.
- Notifying the school and close contacts if their child has head lice and confirming that treatment has begun.
- Following the school's head lice policy to prevent reinfestation.

5.2 Responsibilities of the Community (School) Nurse

The school nurse is responsible for:

- Providing information and advice on head lice management.
- Supporting families with persistent head lice infestations.

5.3 Responsibilities of the School

The school is responsible for:

- Developing, implementing, and maintaining a head lice management policy.
- Ensuring parents and staff are aware of the policy.
- Providing the Department of Health's Head Lice Fact Sheet to families at enrolment and upon request.

6. HOW HEAD LICE INFORMATION IS SHARED

The school provides up-to-date head lice treatment advice through:

- Student enrolment packages (includes the Head Lice Fact Sheet)
- School office display (extra copies available for parents)
- Letters home when a case is identified in a class
- Regular reminders in the school newsletter

6.1 Classroom Education

Where appropriate, head lice education is integrated into lessons such as:

- Personal development (how to identify and remove lice)
- Science (life cycle of head lice)
- Drama (short, humorous plays to educate students)

If parents have persistent difficulty treating head lice, they can seek advice from:

- The Community (School) Nurse
- The Department of Health (phone: 9388 4999)

7. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHILD HAS HEAD LICE?

Day 1:

- The child receives a brief, age-appropriate explanation about head lice.
- Parents are contacted to collect their child. If unreachable, a notification letter is sent home.
- Parents must begin treatment before the child returns to school.
- A class notification letter is sent to encourage all parents to check their children's hair.

Day 2:

- The child returns to school with confirmation that treatment has started.
- If no confirmation is provided, the teacher notifies the Principal.
- The Principal contacts parents to ensure treatment has begun and offers support if needed.

Day 3:

- If treatment has still not started, the Principal follows up with a second letter.
- The Community (School) Nurse may call or visit the family to provide assistance.

Day 4:

- If there is still no evidence of treatment, the Principal contacts parents again.
- The child is excluded from school until treatment begins.
- Homework will be provided.

Day 5 – Ongoing:

- If the student remains absent without reason, the school will follow its Attendance Policy.
- In extreme cases, referral to the Department of Child Protection may be considered if a child is experiencing distress or untreated sores.

8. ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES

8.1 Hairstyles

- Students with long hair must keep it tied back, braided, or pinned to reduce the risk of lice spreading.

8.2 Recommended Treatments

- Parents should follow the 10-Day Hair Conditioner Treatment (Department of Health's preferred method).
- Insecticide treatments are allowed but should be used with caution and in accordance with guidelines.

8.3 Checking for Head Lice

- Whole-class head checks are not conducted by staff or the nurse, as lice move quickly and may be missed.
- Parents are responsible for checking their own child's hair regularly.
- Teachers may inspect a student's hair if lice or eggs are visible, or if excessive scratching is observed.
- A Letter to Parents will be sent home, even if lice are not confirmed.

8.4 Exclusion from School

- Under the School Education Act 1999, students may be excluded until treatment has started.
- Once treatment has begun, students may return to school the next day (even if some eggs remain).
- Students will normally be sent home at the end of the school day unless the Principal decides otherwise.

9. EVALUATION AND REVIEW HISTORY

This policy will be reviewed every three years or as required.

Next Review Year Responsible Sub-Committee

2026 Staff & Administration