MOTHER TERESA CATHOLIC SCHOOL
HEAD LICE POLICY

Developed: 2014

INTRODUCTION

Mother Teresa Catholic School has developed the following Head Lice Policy in consultation with the parent association, teachers, the Community (School) Nurse and the Department of Health. The aim of this Policy is to ensure a consistent, co-ordinated and co-operative approach to managing head lice in the school community.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Parents’ responsibilities are:

- To learn about head lice infestation and management by reading the Department of Health’s Head Lice Fact Sheet.
- To regularly check their child’s hair for head lice infestation.
- To treat their child’s hair immediately if the child has head lice, using the advice in the Head Lice Fact Sheet.
- To inform the school and other close contacts if their child has a head lice infestation, and to confirm that treatment of their child’s hair has commenced.
- To be aware of and follow the school’s head lice management policy.

The Community (School) Nurse’s role is:

- To provide information, advice and education to parents and the school community about head lice management.
- To provide additional advice for families experiencing persistent head lice infestation.
- To provide additional education about head lice management to Head Lice Resource Parents as requested.

The School’s responsibility is:

- To develop, implement and maintain a head lice management policy.
- To ensure that parents and staff are aware of the school’s Head Lice Policy, and that parents are provided with a copy of the Department of Health’s Head Lice Fact Sheet when their child is enrolled and on request.

The Head Lice Resource Parent’s role is:

- To support and advise parents who have ongoing difficulty in managing their child’s head lice infestation.

HOW HEAD LICE INFORMATION IS DISSEMINATED

The school takes the following steps to ensure that accurate up-to-date head lice treatment advice is provided to the school community.
The Department of Health’s *Head Lice Fact Sheet*:
- Is included in the student enrolment package.
- Is displayed in the school office waiting area, with extra copies available for parents.
- Is sent home to the parents on a regular basis and upon request.
- Is regularly promoted through appropriate channels.

Other head lice education and management strategies:
- **Head Lice Co-ordinator**
  - The school has nominated a Head Lice Co-ordinator, Administrative Officer, as the contact person for staff and parents for dealing with head lice issues. She is responsible for organizing dissemination of head lice information, arranging head lice education and management activities, and following up head lice *Letters to Parents*. Parents who require information, or who would like to become involved in supporting the school’s Head Lice Management Programme, should contact the co-ordinator via the school office.

- **Head lice management information sessions**
  - Head lice information sessions are provided annually for staff and parents by the Community (School) Nurse or Head Lice Resource Parent, to ensure the school community is well informed.

- **Whole school or class-by-class ‘Synchronised Weekend Head Lice Check’**
  - Synchronised weekend head lice checks at home by parents are promoted at least twice yearly, and more often if necessary. Information about this promotion is provided well in advance via the newsletter and a note home to parents. A short class head lice education session is also undertaken prior to the promotion weekend (the Head Lice Co-ordinator should negotiate this with the class teacher, Resource Parent or Community (School) Nurse).

- **Class Head Lice education**
  - Head lice information is included in class activities where appropriate, for example –
    - Personal development – how to identify head lice and comb them out.
    - Science – life cycle of the head louse.
    - Drama – short, humorous play.

- **Head Lice Resource Parent**
  - The school currently has one Head Lice Resource Parent, who is available to support parents.
  - Head Lice Resource Parents are volunteers who have successfully dealt with the frustrations of treating head lice in their own children and who have attended the Department of Health’s or Community (School) Nurse’s head lice education sessions. Resource Parents are willing to be available to parents, via the school office, to provide problem-solving support for other parents who have carefully followed the Department of Health’s *Head Lice Fact Sheet* advice, but who are having persistent difficulty removing the head lice. Resource Parents are also available to assist parents who may have difficulty reading or understanding the *Head Lice Fact Sheet*.
  - Resource Parents can arrange an interpreter service through the school, and may also be able to arrange assistance for parents experiencing genuine financial hardship.
  - Resource Parents **do not** undertake ongoing head lice treatment – that action remains the responsibility of the parents of a child with head lice.
  - Note: Parents who may be interested in becoming a Resource Parent should contact the Head Lice Co-ordinator for further information. (The co-ordinator should arrange Resource Parent education by booking the parent into a