



Peterborough Community Preschool
and Rural Care Services
76-80 Victoria Street Peterborough SA 5422
Ph: (08) 8651 2550 Fax: (08) 8651 3456
dl.6649.leaders@schools.sa.edu.au

Head Lice Procedure

Rationale: Evidence shows that we cannot eradicate head lice but we can reduce the number of cases if all preschool community members and families work together in a coordinated manner.

How the policy will be implemented:

- * Distribute up to date and accurate information on the detection, treatment and control of head lice to children, staff and their families at the beginning of the year or more frequently if required.
- * Include information and updates in preschool newsletters.
- * Provide practical advice, maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulties with control measures.
- * Access community educational resources and support, such as community health centres and local government.
- * Accept the advice of parents/caregivers that appropriate treatment has commenced.
- * Encourage children to learn about head lice so as to help remove any stigma or other negative experiences associated with the issue.
- * Be aware of real difficulties, such as treatment failure, that some parent/caregivers may encounter and seek extra support from community health centres and local government.
- * Review the preschool/Rural Care Head lice policy annually and seek endorsement from the Governing Council.
- * Continue to seek opportunities to increase our collective understanding of the response managing head lice.
- * If staff member notices head lice in a child's hair they should inform the Director.

Blanket head inspections or head lice screening by preschool/rural care staff are strongly discouraged. There are many reasons for this, including the fact that such programmes:

- * Take away from child curriculum time
- * Are potentially intrusive of child privacy
- * Take over family rights and responsibilities
- * Convey the message that head lice management is a preschool, household and wider community responsibility

There is no requirement for any preschool/rural care to undertake head lice screening, however those that wish to, need to consider the following as additions to preschool policy:

If staff were to undertake such a programme, they would need to ensure:

- * written, active, informed consent of the parents
- * Active, informed verbal consent, at the time, of each child
- * Respect for privacy and confidentiality
- * Understanding by all parties of the limited potential success and impact of the programme (i.e. not all causes are guaranteed to be identified successfully and preschool-based screening alone cannot be considered an adequate community response)
- * Staff member present all times.

References and useful websites:

You've got what? 2009

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Chairperson Governing Council 20.....	Director Peterborough Community Preschool and Rural Care Service.
Adopted: August, 2010 Review Date 20.....	