



## ASCOT VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL HEAD LICE POLICY

Approved by School Council 20 March 2018

### **Rationale:**

Head Lice can cause concern and frustration for parents, teachers and children. However, head lice are common and the Department of Education and Training Head Lice Management Guidelines indicate that most schools will have students with head lice at any one time. This school policy is intended to outline roles, responsibilities and expectations of the school community to assist with treating and controlling head lice in a consistent and coordinated manner.

Whilst parents have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, our school also has a role in the management of head lice infections and in providing support for parents/guardians and students.

It is not advocated that the Principal team inform the whole school community each time head lice are detected. This could be onerous and may lead to complacency on behalf of the school community.

### **Managing Head Lice at AVPS**

#### ***AVPS staff will:***

- Distribute up-to-date information on the detection, treatment and control of head lice to parents/carers and staff at the beginning of every year and more frequently if required (available from website <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/headlice/>)
- Contact parents/carers immediately to collect their child when head lice are deemed to be present.
- Require that parents/carers refrain from sending their children to school with untreated head lice.
- Alert parents/carers of a particular unit when head lice infestation is known.
- Have a commitment to help reduce stigma and maintain confidentiality following students who have been found to have live head lice.
- Provide a head lice resource/support person (the Assistant Principal) whom parents/carers can contact at the school at nominated times with any queries.

#### ***Advice to families / what you can do at home:***

- Parents/carers should regularly, preferably once a week, check for lice or eggs in the hair of children and all household members. Using conditioner and a head lice comb is the most effective method.
- In accordance with Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001, School Exclusion Table; do not send children to school with untreated head lice.
- Notify the school if lice are detected and when treatment commenced. It should be noted that students may be treated one evening and return to school the next day and that the

presence of eggs in the hair is not cause for exclusion. One treatment however is not sufficient to manage the problem. If a student re-attends school with live head lice the school may again exclude the student until the live insects have been removed.

- Children with long hair should attend school with hair tied back.
- Use only safe and recommended practices to treat head lice.
- Notify the parents/carers of your child's friends so they have an early opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary.
- Maintain a respectful and sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures.

***This policy is to be reviewed every three years. Next review is due March 2021***

- Reference: Department of Education and Training Head lice Management  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/Pages/headlice.aspx>
- Further resources:
  - a) For schools - More information about head lice management for schools and Departmental staff can be found by referring to [Circular 017/2005 Head Lice Management](#) (secure site, edumail password).
  - b) For schools and parents - The Department of Health (DH) website provides useful resources for schools and parents regarding head lice. Information found in the *Scratching for Answers* information kits, including the *Treating and Controlling Head Lice* pamphlet can be obtained from the DH website [Head Lice](#).