



Head Lice Policy

Signed:

Date: June 2022

Review Date: June 2025

Review Period: Every 3 years
(By Local Governing Body)

Aim of this policy

Brotherton & Byram Community Primary Academy is aware of the national problem of head lice and how it can sometimes affect children of a primary school age at home and in school. This policy aims to set out the duties and responsibilities of parents, the school and the Health Authorities in dealing with head lice and to provide guidance on the detection, treatment and prevention of head lice infestations. It sets out what school can and cannot do legally as well as providing some practical advice as to how to tackle head lice.

Objectives

- To inform parents, carers and relevant professional staff on the detection, treatment and prevention of head lice infestations.
- To encourage parental or self-inspection of hair for early identification of infestation.
- To minimise the social stigma associated with infestations.
- To ensure that accurate and consistent information and advice is available.

Background information (from NHS Direct)

Head louse infection is not primarily a problem of schools but one of the wider community. It cannot be solved by school, but the school can help the local community to deal with it.

Head lice are transmitted by direct, still, prolonged head-to-head contact.

Transmission of lice within a classroom is relatively rare. When it does occur, it is usually from a 'best friend'.

Head lice will not be eradicated in the foreseeable future, but a sensible, informed approach, based on fact not mythology, will help to limit the problem.

At any one time, most schools will have a few children who have active infection with head lice. This is often between 0% and 5%, rarely more. The perception by parents/carers however, is often that there is a serious 'outbreak' with many children infected. This is hardly ever the case.

Parents'/Carers Responsibilities

As the carer of a child you should:

- Undertake regular weekly and where appropriate daily checks to ensure that your child/family is not affected. This should be done with a detector comb as noted in the advice in the attached parent leaflet on head lice. All family members should be checked.
- Hair should be checked on the same day if the school have contacted you to inform you there is a case of head lice in school.

- Hair should be checked on the same day if the school have contacted you to inform you that they have seen eggs the child's hair.
- If live head lice are found, prompt treatment should be given.
- Treat child's hair as soon as possible if live head lice are seen in the child's hair in school. Children do not have to stay off school and should be treated and brought back to school as soon as possible after the treatment.
- Inform all contacts of the family / friends who may have come in to head to head contact in the last month if head lice or nits (eggs) are found.
- Seek advice from a medical practitioner (Pharmacist/ Health Visitor/ Doctor) about using an approved lotion and treat using this method in the recommended way.

School will undertake to:

- Provide information about head lice on an annual basis and more regularly if many cases arise.
- Encourage parents to seek advice from the professionals if they find head lice to be a persistent problem.
- Maintain a visual check on pupils (although staff will not check children's hair).
- Alert parents (class/year group) via a BLOOMZ and on the website if an outbreak is noted or school is notified by a parent that a pupil has head lice.
- Encourage parents to return their child to school immediately after treatment - there is no need to keep a child off school for the day.
- School staff will be encouraged to check their own hair regularly.

The school by law cannot:

- Carry out physical checks on pupils for head lice.
- Tell parents to keep children away from school because of head lice.
- Exclude a child from school because of head lice.

Facts, Detection and Treatment

For facts, detection and treatment advice, please see the attached leaflet or look online: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-lice-and-nits/>