

### Headlice Advice

Headlice are tiny grey/brown wingless insects which live by sucking blood from the scalp. This letter is intended to advise parents on how best to treat and prevent reinfestation of headlice.

Headlice is a normal part of growing up and the good news is there are lots of very effective ways of dealing with them.

Headlice are transferred by close head to head contact. They cannot jump, fly or swim, but walk from one head to another. It is important to teach your child not to share hats, brushes, combs, hair ties etc.

It is a misconception that that headlice infestation is as a result of poor hygiene or dirty hair they like both long or short hair. It is best **not** to wash your child's hair too frequently. The greasier the hair is the harder it is for lice to walk up the hair shaft.

### Top Tips:

If you or your children have headlice you should check the rest of the family and alert close friends and your school. By not alerting your school your child is at risk of reinfestation from other infected untreated heads.

Peak times for infestation actually occur around holiday or break periods where we all "let our guard down"

and allow children to have hair loose, we do not check as frequently, we do not use repellants as much either.

Regular checks of your child's hair are essential

The life cycle of a louse egg is hatching on the 3rd, 7th and 10th day so those are the days to pay particular attention after treatment. Do not use medicated rinses "just in case" they should only be used if lice are found (eggs just need to be combed out)

Once lice have been found the normal advice is to treat once and repeat 7 days later remembering to pay close attention for new hatching on days 3, 7, and 10. There is no need to wash clothing or treat bedding as any lice found away from the scalp are likely to be damaged, dead or dying.

An effective way of checking the head is : **Conditioner and comb**, which involves combing conditioner through the hair and dunking all eggs in it to remove then rinse in hot water. If live lice are found there are many lotions available to kill them. The key is to use enough.