



ASHTON INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

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EXCELLENCE BELONGS TO THE ZEALOUS

Dear Parents

POLICY ON HEAD LICE AND NITS

The recurrence of this infection is becoming more frequent in all schools and unless the proper care is constantly taken, the problem could reach epidemic proportions. Parents are kindly requested to check their children's hair at least once a week. Head lice are spread through direct contact and also sharing items such as hair brushes, ribbons, head phones and towels. Every member of your family should be checked. Cats and dogs, however, do not carry head lice.

Lice are small parasites, 2mm and 3mm long. Their eggs (nits) are about the size of a grain of sugar, silvery in colour and attach themselves to the hair shafts. Within a 12 hour period, these parasites can multiply three times.

Should a teacher become aware of a pupil with head lice, the following will be the procedure:

- . all pupils within that class will be checked by the teacher
- . all relevant parents will be contacted telephonically
- . pupils will be sent up to the office to wait for parents to fetch them

Please follow the steps below and the problem will be easily cleared.

1. Check every member of your family by looking for nits on hair shafts closest to the scalp, especially behind the ears and at the nape of the neck. Adult head lice are difficult to detect as they are sensitive to light and move away quickly when the hair is parted. They, however, look something like the fruit fly.
2. You can obtain head lice treatment from your local pharmacy. Gambex and Quelida shampoos, in particular, are effective as is a spray called "Para". If this infection persists, perhaps you would like to try an old wives remedy. (1 cup cooking oil; 1 cup paraffin; 1 cup vinegar - mix together in an empty 2l bottle). Douse the hair liberally with the mixture and leave for approximately 15 - 20 minutes. Thereafter, rub the head with fingers, massaging the mixture into the hair. Shampoo as usual.
3. Comb out all the nits using a special nit removal comb. Should this not work, grasp the nit between your nails and pull gently from the hair shaft.

Boys with long hair should have their hair cut short. If nits are found on the cut hair, that hair should be burnt.

In addition:

- a) Wash all bedding, towels and personal clothing that may harbour lice, in hot water, and, if possible, tumble dry at a high temperature
- b) Items that cannot be washed, such as fluffy toys, should be dry cleaned or sealed in plastic bags for +/- 2 weeks



WHEN MAY A CHILD AFFECTED BY HEAD LICE RETURN TO SCHOOL?

According to the regulations promulgated in terms of the Health Act, 1977, children whose heads are infested with lice should be temporary exempted from attending school and may only return to school once they have been deloused, the nits removed, AND a clearance certificate obtained from the Health Department. A doctor's note will suffice. Please hand this in at the Main Office on return to school.

G. TESTA (Mrs)
Principal

M. BROWN
Principal and Director