

# Stanbridge Lower School



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Dear Parents

From time to time a case of lice occurs amongst children attending our school. This is not surprising; we have a pleasant group of children whose hair is washed regularly and lice love clean hair. The discovery of a case in the school indicates that there may well be others, because head lice cannot live on just one head. Lice cannot jump or fly, but change heads several times a day by moving from one to the other when heads touch. Short hair is certainly no protection.

A recent case of head lice infection has been found in your child's class. These guidelines will help you to prevent, detect and treat.

Treatment is simple and effective but we must all be on the look out for these little insects, which are so good at hiding that a case can go undetected for several months. The Community School Nurse does not carry out regular inspections as this has shown to be ineffective in controlling head lice. A much more effective method is for everyone to work together to keep lice at bay and the ways you can help are:

## PREVENT

Brush and comb your child's hair thoroughly from root to tip at least twice a day and particularly at bedtime. This injures any lice that may have transferred to his/her head during the day.

## DETECT

Inspect your child's hair each week, preferably when wet, with a special detection comb. An ordinary plastic comb is insufficient for this purpose. You should check more frequently if there has been contact with an infected person. Look for both the head lice themselves and then the tiny white eggs (often called nits). Black dots on a pillow are an indication of head lice.

## TREAT

Treatment of choice is wet combing - Hair should be washed first, then plenty of conditioner applied.

Without washing off the conditioner, comb the hair from root to tip with a detection comb. Continue combing until the comb comes through lice free. This may take 10 minutes (longer and thicker hair may take longer time). This treatment should be repeated every 3 or 4 days for 2 weeks in order to remove newly hatched lice. Detection of adult lice at this time would mean re-infestation and presence of small lice would indicate newly hatched lice from eggs. If lice are found, continue wet combing every 3 or 4 days for another 2 weeks. Wet combing should be continued weekly to detest re-infestation. This method should be used for all family members and close contacts to detect head lice, and where necessary, to treat. Detection combs are available from chemists. They also stock "bug busting kits" with clear instructions on how to use the wet combing method effectively.

For further advice refer to the NHS website.

Head lice does not cause disease in this country. Therefore, missing education because of infestation is not recommended. The Health Authority & Education Authorities in Bedfordshire do not support exclusion.

Yours sincerely

Rosemary Godwin  
Headteacher



**"We Believe in our Children"**



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