

HEAD LICE

Information sheet for parents and carers

A case of head lice has been have been reported to us in your child's year group. In order to prevent the distress caused by this small but incredibly persistent insect, it is essential that every child is checked regularly (each day is ideal) and treated if necessary.

ONLY in this way will you prevent your child from being infected or from infecting others!

The facts:

- Head lice do not fly - they are passed on by prolonged and close head to head contact.
- Empty louse eggs are white, shiny, stick to the hair and are difficult to remove. They are harmless.
- An immature head louse (under a week old) is unable to move from one head to another. Small white egg cases cannot be transferred from head to head either.
- A mature head louse can be transferred from one head to another and this is the most infectious stage. Mature head lice can live for up to 40 days.

Signs and symptoms:

- Itching
- Small white egg cases attached to the hair
- Black powdery deposits on pillows and clothes
- Live lice may be seen
- Red rash/spots at the nape of the neck/behind the ears

Treatment:

There are two types of treatment for head lice. Whichever method is chosen, it is important that it is carried out systematically. The two types of treatment are:

- Chemical treatments using lotions or rinses which aim to kill the lice and eggs
- Combing method which aims to physically remove the lice and eggs from the hair. This involves combing the hair using conditioner and a fine toothed comb every couple of days for two weeks.

With thanks for your support.