



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: Pediculosis (Head Lice)

Schools can play an important role in providing educational programs, which will help students, staff and the public to better understand and control pediculosis. It is hoped that by increasing individual and community awareness about identification, transmission and treatment of head lice, much of the stigma and emotion attached to the problem will be alleviated.

Head lice are a nuisance but not a health hazard and do not spread disease. LKDSB procedures support early identification and treatment while minimizing disruption to learning and preserving student dignity. Students generally remain in class to the end of the school day and may return once treatment is initiated.

PRINCIPAL

1. Implements programs on the elimination and control of head lice emphasizing social implications, medical facts, prevention and treatment, and dispelling the social stigma associated with contracting the pest.
2. Ensures teachers have appropriate resource materials and treatment assistance. Staff can access head lice resources on the Lambton Public Health website (<https://lambtonpublichealth.ca/education-professionals/administrators>) or contact the Chatham-Kent Public Health Unit for treatment assistance.
3. Reviews annually, with the school council, school procedures for pediculosis prevention and control.
4. Sends notification to parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year and again in the Spring regarding the prevention and control of pediculosis (see Appendix 1).
5. When live head lice are identified, the principal or designate will notify the parent/guardian privately and sensitively, provide information regarding treatment and next steps (see Appendix 2), and ensure that student dignity and confidentiality are maintained.

6. The principal or designate will ensure that a neutral, non-stigmatizing notice is shared with parents/guardians of students in the affected classroom only (see Appendix 3).
7. Enhanced cleaning or chemical treatments are not required in response to cases of head lice, and routine custodial cleaning practices will continue. The principal may recommend that families clean personal items that come into contact with hair (e.g., hats, combs, brushes) at home, in accordance with public health guidance.
8. Where concerns persist despite appropriate treatment, or where a family requires additional support, the principal will collaborate with the parent/guardian and may consult local public health for advice and guidance.
9. In rare circumstances, where a student's presence is, in the principal's judgment, detrimental to the well-being of pupils, the principal may consider actions in accordance with the Education Act and Board procedures, including consultation with the Superintendent.

PARENTS

Parents play a major role in assisting with the control of pediculosis in the following ways:

10. Check children's heads regularly for pediculosis.
11. Report cases of head lice immediately to the school.
12. Administer appropriate treatment when live head lice are found and follow product instructions or advice from a pharmacist or health care provider.
13. Daily combing between treatments is encouraged. Removal of all nits is not required for school attendance.
14. Provide the school with the completed return portion of Appendix 2, confirming that treatment has been initiated and that the recommended follow-up steps will be completed.
15. Ensure that children are back to school as soon as possible so that there is as little disruption as possible to their educational program.

SCHOOL STAFF

School staff can play a major role in the prevention of head lice in the following ways:

16. Encourage students to put their hats and scarves inside their coats while coats are hanging or inside backpacks.
17. Eliminate the use of dress-up clothes in classrooms where head lice have been found until the problem is solved.
18. Discourage sharing combs, brushes, hats and scarves amongst students.

19. Direct families to their pharmacist, primary health care provider, or trusted community health resources for treatment advice.

Procedure

The following action will be taken when staff suspect cases of head lice:

A. Staff notification to office

When a staff member suspects or identifies live head lice, they will notify the principal or designate immediately and avoid public discussion to protect student dignity. The student may remain to the end of the school day and go home with treatment instructions. Isolation spaces are not used.

B. Principal actions

The principal or designate will:

- i. Notify the parent/guardian privately and provide Appendix 2 (treatment and return).
- ii. Ensure a neutral, non-stigmatizing classroom notice is shared with families in the affected classroom only and provide Appendix 3.
- iii. Record the date of parent contact and the classroom notice in the school log.
- iv. Collect and file the completed Appendix 2 return form.
- v. Ensure communications and any checks are handled confidentially.

Implementation Date: December 14, 1998
Revised: June 15, 2026

APPENDIX 1

COMMUNITY INFORMATION – PEDICULOIS (HEAD LICE)

A notice similar to the one below should be included in the school newsletter or sent home as a separate letter early in September and again in the spring.

NOTE: The following examples are suggestions. Principals should tailor their procedures and community notification in consultation with their school councils in order to meet the needs of their community.

Sample Newsletter Item:

Head lice (pediculosis) are a common occurrence among school-aged children, particularly in the fall and spring. Head lice are **not a health concern** and do not spread disease, but they do require prompt treatment when live lice are found.

Families are encouraged to check their child's hair weekly as part of regular home routines. If live head lice are found, please notify the school and begin treatment as soon as possible.

Students who are identified with live head lice may remain at school until the end of the school day and may return to school once treatment has begun. Families may consult their pharmacist, primary health care provider, or trusted community health resources for treatment advice.

The school is committed to maintaining student privacy and dignity. Classroom-level notices may be shared, using neutral, non-identifying language, to support awareness and early detection.

By working together, families and schools can reduce the spread of head lice while keeping students learning.

APPENDIX 1 (Continued)

Sample Letter to Parents/Guardians:

Date:

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Head lice (pediculosis) are a common issue in the community and occasionally occur in schools. While head lice are an unpleasant nuisance, they are **not a health hazard** and do not spread disease.

Families play an important role in checking for and treating head lice at home, and schools support families through education, clear communication, and access to public health resources.

The Board has procedures in place to manage head lice in a way that:

- supports early identification and treatment,
- minimizes disruption to learning,
- and respects student privacy and dignity.

At _____ **School**, the procedure includes:

1. Age-appropriate information for students about head lice as part of health education.
2. Families may consult their pharmacist, primary health care provider, or trusted community health resources for treatment advice.
3. When live head lice are identified at school, parents/guardians are contacted privately. Students may remain in school for the day and may return once treatment has begun.
4. In rare situations where concerns persist despite appropriate treatment and support, school administrators may consult public health and follow Board procedures under the Education Act.

The school works collaboratively with families to manage head lice in a calm, respectful, and supportive way.

Sincerely,

Principal

APPENDIX 2

NOTICE TO PARENT/GUARDIAN – HEAD LICE IDENTIFIED

Date:

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

Your child is exhibiting symptoms of pediculosis (also known as head lice). Having head lice is not a health threatening problem, but it does require that treatment be given immediately. Your child's right to privacy, dignity, and cultural sensitivity was respected during this process. A recommended treatment such as Nyda, Nix, R&C Shampoo, Resultz, etc. should be used, as soon as possible, before your child returns to school.

Families may consult their pharmacist, primary health care provider, or trusted community health resources for treatment advice. If you are unable to access the recommended treatments, please contact the school for further information on available resources.

Remember, when head lice are found it is not a serious problem. We must all trust each other and work together to stop the spread. Please notify your school if head lice or nits are found. Treatment is not recommended unless there is evidence of head lice.

Please read and complete the Treatment Plan Checklist below to the best of your ability as of today. If you are unable to check 'yes' to any of the items, please contact the school administrator to discuss how the school can help to support you. Your child may attend school while treatment for head lice is underway. Please return the Treatment Plan Checklist on the day your child returns to school.

Sincerely,

Principal

Treatment Plan Checklist

- I have read the information provided. ☐ Yes
- I have used a recommended lice treatment and there is no evidence of live lice. ☐ Yes
- I have checked all family members, including adults, and treated if necessary. ☐ Yes
- I will doing a daily head check for the next 10 days. ☐ Yes
- I have planned a repeat treatment after 7-10 days, to kill any newly hatched lice. ☐ Yes

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

APPENDIX 3

NOTICE TO PARENTS REGARDING HEAD LICE IN CLASSROOM

Date:

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

There has been an incidence of head lice in your child's classroom.

Having head lice is not a health threatening problem, but it does require that treatment be given immediately. Please check your child's head daily for two weeks and then weekly thereafter. If nits are found, check all family members. Treat only infested family members immediately, following manufacturer's instructions.

Families may consult their pharmacist, primary health care provider, or trusted community health resources for treatment advice.

Remember, when head lice are found it is not a serious problem. We must all trust each other and work together to stop the spread. Please notify your school if head lice or nits are found. Treatment is not recommended unless there is evidence of head lice.

Sincerely,

Principal