GEMBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Head Lice Policy

**Rationale:**
- Whilst parents have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice our school community will work in a cooperative and collaborative manner to assist all families to manage head lice effectively.
- This school policy draws on information obtained from the Department of Health Victoria.

**Aims:**
- To minimise the spread of head lice infection and provide school families with information about headlice, outbreaks and management.

**Implementation:**
*It is the expectation of parents/carers and families attending this school that:*
- Children’s hair will be checked for head lice on a weekly basis, at home, using the recommended conditioner/combing detection method, and all household members will be regularly inspected and treated if necessary.
- That your child does not attend school with untreated head lice. (in accordance with Health Infectious Diseases Regulations 2001)
- Parents/carers will notify the school if their child is found to have live lice and advise when appropriate treatment was commenced (in accordance with Health Infectious Disease Regulations 2001)
- Children with long hair will be encouraged to attend school with hair tied back.
- Use only safe and recommended practices to treat head lice.
- Notify the parents or carers of your child’s friends so they have an early opportunity to detect and treat their children if necessary.
- Maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures.
- Act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community especially around issues of head lice.

**To support parents/carers and the broader school community to achieve a consistent, collaborative approach to head lice management the school will undertake to:**
- Distribute up to date and accurate information on the detection, treatment and control of head lice to parents and staff at the beginning of the year or more frequently if required.
- Include information about head lice management in orientation and transition programs for new families/staff attending the school;
- Include information and updates regularly in school newsletters.
- The school will ensure that they have information that can be distributed to families in the form of letters, pamphlets or brochures.
- Include annual head lice updates for staff in-service programs.
- Provide practical advice and maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures.
- Access community educational resources and support, such as primary school nurses, community health centres and local government, and to make this knowledge available to the wider school community by organising parent information sessions as required.
- Abide by the recommendations of the School Exclusion Policy of the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001 in that the responsibility to exclude a child from the school rests with the principal or person in charge, and
- Only exclude children from school with live insects.
- Accept the advice of parents that appropriate treatment has commenced;
- Encourage children to learn about head lice so as to help remove any stigma or ‘bullying’ associated with the issue.
- Be aware of real difficulties some parents may encounter and seek extra support if required.
- When Students are observed to have headlice, the school will contact the family and ask that the student be removed from school until the hair is treated (in accordance with Health Infectious Diseases Regulations 2001)
- Participate in a Head Lice Local Area Network to work with other schools, childcare centres, health services and pharmacists in our Local Government Area to achieve consistent management and policy across sectors.
- Act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community especially around issues of Head lice.
- Continue to seek opportunities to increase our collective understanding of and response to managing head lice.
- Inform parents of lice outbreak so parents can be vigilant and prevent further spread of lice.

**Evaluation:** Headlice infection is minimised and families are provided with information about headlice, outbreaks and management.

Ratified in 2014