

## **Tollgate Primary School**

### **Head Lice Guidance for Parents**

#### PURPOSE

**At Tollgate Primary School our guidance and procedures surrounding Head Lice follow NHS guidelines. We aim to work with all members of our learning community to promote a co-ordinated approach to the prevention, detection and effective treatment of Head Lice.**

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

**(taken from NHS notes and guidance for Headteachers)**

**Head Louse infection is not primarily a problem of schools but one of the wider community. It cannot be solved by school, but the school can help the local community to deal with it.**

Head Lice are transmitted by direct, still, prolonged head to head contact. Transmission of lice within the classroom is relatively rare. When it does occur, it is usually from a 'best friend'. Head lice will not be eradicated in the foreseeable future, but a sensible, informed approach, based on fact not mythology, will help to limit the problem. At any one time, most schools will have a few children who have active infection with head lice. This is often between 0% and 5%, rarely more. The perception by parent/carers however, is often that there is a serious 'outbreak' with many children infected. This is hardly ever the case.

#### CONTROL OF HEAD LICE

**(taken from NHS Head lice guidelines introduction)**

Head lice are a community problem and are not restricted to children. The main source of infection is in the community. Adults as well as children can be infected, and adults may become long-term carriers, as they become de-sensitised to head lice over time. Consequently adults may unknowingly infect children during prolonged head to head contact. The children then carry the infection into school or other communal areas. Control of head lice is based on detection of infection among cases and close contacts, and effective treatment with an insecticidal lotion or liquid. **Detecting head lice is the responsibility of parents/carers, and parents/carers need to have clear information on the detection and treatment of head lice.**

#### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

##### **PARENT/CARER:-**

- Comb their own hair and their children's routinely, twice a day to spot lice early.
- Inspect hair for lice regularly i.e. once weekly, for signs of infection.
- Inspect hair for lice, especially if head to head contact with an infected person has occurred, or members of the household have been named as contacts.
- Promptly treat members of the household who have head lice infection.
- Ensure children's hair is tied back for school.
- **ONLY** use insecticides as treatment when an infection is present – **NOT** as a preventative measure.
- Inform all contacts, both adult and children, to be vigilant for signs of infection and to inspect hair using a detection comb. Head lice if living are to be treated with lotion.
- Contact the school nurse/health visitor/ GP or pharmacist if advice and support is required.

### **SCHOOL NURSE:-**

- Provide education for the children and their households, emphasising that head lice control is the responsibility of the parent/carer.
- Advice on treatment for head lice.

### **SCHOOL:-**

- Have a written protocol on the management of head lice.
- Should ask parent/carer to assess their child as soon as practicable if a diagnosis of head lice is suspected.
- Advise parent/carer to contact the school nurse or pharmacist for advice and support on treatment and prevention of head lice.
- Keep individual reports of head lice confidential and encourage all staff to do likewise.

### **TOLLGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL HEAD LICE PROTOCOL/PROCEDURES (taken from NHS notes and guidance for Headteachers)**

- Liaise with school nurse to and provide regular reliable information on head lice detection, prevention and treatment.
- Staff member to advise parent if child is suspected to have head lice and ask parent to assess their child as soon as practicable to confirm diagnosis.
- Advise concerned parent/carers to seek professional advice from school nurse, GP or local chemist and treat head lice.
- Send out general text to all parents making them aware that possible head lice had been reported and reminding families to check and treat family members if necessary.
- School cannot exclude learners with head lice

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