

Poringland Primary School and Nursery



Headlice Policy

Date of Policy: Summer 2020
Review Date: Summer 2023

Members of staff responsible: Senior Leadership Team

Headlice Policy

Name of school:	Poringland Primary School and Nursery
Date of Policy:	Summer 2020
Date of Review:	Summer 2023
Members of staff Responsible:	Senior Leadership Team

1. Statement of intent

- 1.1 This policy is designed to assist the school community with treatment and prevention of head lice.
- 1.2 This policy aims to:
 - Ensure the effective management of head lice outbreaks at Poringland Primary School and Nursery.
 - Inform pupils, parents and staff members about head lice, their prevention and treatment.
 - Ensure members of the school community are aware of their respective roles and responsibilities with regard to head lice.
 - Raise awareness and understanding about head lice.
 - Ensure that all members of the school community have access to accurate and thorough information and advice regarding head lice.

2. Introduction and facts

- 2.1 Head lice are tiny insects, which live in human hair and feed off their host by biting the scalp and sucking blood.
- 2.2 The female louse lays eggs close to the scalp where they are better insulated. These eggs are more commonly known as nits, and are small whitish-grey eggs, which range in size from a pinhead, when first hatched, to around the size of a sesame seed, once fully grown.
- 2.3 Once nits hatch, they can spread to other people's heads through head-to-head contact, whereby they simply crawl from one head to the other.
- 2.4 Lice cannot swim, fly or jump, and so must be transferred through direct contact or shared items such as hairbrushes. Other shared items, such as coats, headphones and soft toys etc., cannot spread lice, as lice which involuntarily fall from the hair, are usually dying, and, therefore, harmless.

3. Symptoms

- 3.1 The most common symptom of head lice is itching. This is caused by an allergic reaction of the scalp to the lice, rather than the lice biting. Not every child is allergic

to head lice, however, so some children may not experience this symptom. Another symptom is a rash, which can develop on the back of the child's neck. This can be caused through a reaction to lice droppings, or excessive itching. Note that, regardless of the symptoms, it is possible for these to have developed weeks or even months after the child first catches lice. Detection, treatment and prevention

4. Detection

- 4.1 Head lice can generally be detected by combing wet, well-conditioned hair with a fine-tooth comb (i.e. tooth spacing of 0.2-0.3mm). This will often dislodge nits and lice from the hair and these will be visible on the comb following brushing.
- 4.2 Lice and nits are generally found close to the scalp, including the nape of the neck. These areas should therefore be concentrated on when brushing.
- 4.3 If hair is only damp, or completely dry, lice are able to move away from the disturbance of a comb, and therefore, may remain undetected.
- 4.4 To confirm an active lice infestation, a head louse must be found. The presence of 'nits' alone is generally insufficient to determine that the child's hair is infected. This is because empty eggs often look similar to unhatched eggs, and can remain stuck to hairs for a long time after the infestation has been successfully treated.

5. Treatment

- 5.1 There are generally two methods used to treat head lice: wet combing and lotion based treatment.

5.1.1 Wet combing:

- Wash and thoroughly condition the hair, without rinsing.
- Use a wide-tooth comb to untangle the hair. Once this moves freely through the hair without dragging, begin using the louse detection comb.
- Using a special, fine-tooth comb (with a tooth spacing of 0.2-0.3mm), slot the comb's teeth into the hair at the roots, the bevel-edge of the teeth should be touching the scalp but not with sufficient pressure to cause pain.
- Draw the comb to the ends of the hair with each stroke, checking the comb for lice after each stroke and removing any lice or nits by wiping or rinsing the comb.
- Repeat the process, working methodically through the hair, section by section.
- Rinse out the conditioner and then repeat the procedure.
- This should be repeated every 3 days for at least 15 days. By doing so, you ensure young lice are detected before they reach maturity and lay eggs of their own.
- It is very important that the process is done thoroughly. Leaving even a single louse can lead to a new infection.

5.1.2 **Lotions and sprays:**

- Like wet combing, this method needs to be used thoroughly and correctly in order to be effective at treating head lice.
- Lotions and sprays are more effective for treating living head lice, so are recommended instead of crème rinses and shampoos.
- Enough lotion/spray should be purchased to treat every member of the household affected by lice.
- Follow the instructions with the product.
- Infants, pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers and anyone with asthma, eczema or other allergies should use these treatments with caution.
- Generally, treatment must be repeated every 10-12 days.

6. Prevention

- 6.1 Parents should be aware of and able to access this policy.
- 6.2 If an outbreak of lice occurs, Poringland Primary School and Nursery will inform the parents of children in that class, through a standard letter, informing them of the issue and including relevant information from this policy regarding treatment. This correspondence should request that all parents are vigilant about checking and treating their children's head lice.
- 6.3 Teachers and other school staff should avoid direct head-to-head contact with pupils to prevent themselves becoming infected.
- 6.4 Pupils should be reminded not to share hairbrushes, including on school photograph days.
- 6.5 It is not necessary for pupils to take time off school because they have head lice (unless other medical complications arise). However, should parents discover their child has head lice, the school should be informed, either by telling the child's teacher or another appropriate member of staff. This means that reminders can be given in class about the importance of avoiding head-to-head contact and standard letters can be sent out to all parents, if this is considered necessary. No pupils will be named either in class or these letters.

PORINGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

The Footpath
Poringland, Norwich
NR14 7RF
Tel: 01508 492530
Fax: 01508 494736
Email: office@poringland.norfolk.sch.uk

Head Teacher: Mr P. Dean



Poringland Primary School and Nursery
Registered Charity Number: 1063006



HEAD LICE

PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO READ THIS SHEET NOW AND KEEP FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

Dear Parents / Carers

As you will know, incidents of head lice in school can be a recurring problem. Therefore we all need to be vigilant to keep on top of the problem. It is important that you please:

1. Look at your child's hair this evening.
2. Treat if necessary straight away.
3. If using chemical solution, before treating wash off all conditioner and chlorine from the hair.
4. Check your family's hair on a daily basis.

Facts about Head lice

Head lice are spread by climbing from head to head. They cannot fly, jump or swim. Head lice lay their eggs on the hairs near the roots. Old eggs are found on the hairs further along as the hair grows, and the empty egg cases are called nits. It does not make any difference whether hair is long or short, clean or dirty. To help with the problem, may I suggest that long hair is kept tied back.

Wet combing method

It is possible to treat head lice without the use of harmful chemicals. If you find lice, you can use the following recommended wet combing method.

- Wash hair in the normal way with an ordinary shampoo.
- Using lots of conditioner and while the hair is very wet, comb through from the roots with a fine tooth comb. Make sure that the teeth of the comb slot into the hair at the roots with every stroke, and do this over a pale surface, such as a paper towel or the bath.
- Clean the lice off the comb between each stroke.
- Wet lice find it difficult to escape, and the hair, which is slippery from conditioner, makes it hard for them to keep a grip - so removal with the comb is easier.
- If you find lice, REPEAT EVERY 3 - 4 DAYS FOR TWO WEEKS, so that any lice emerging from the eggs are removed before they can spread.

If EVERYONE tries to follow these guidelines, the chances of re-infestation will be greatly reduced.

For further information visit:

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Head-lice/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,

Mr M. Walker
Deputy Headteacher