

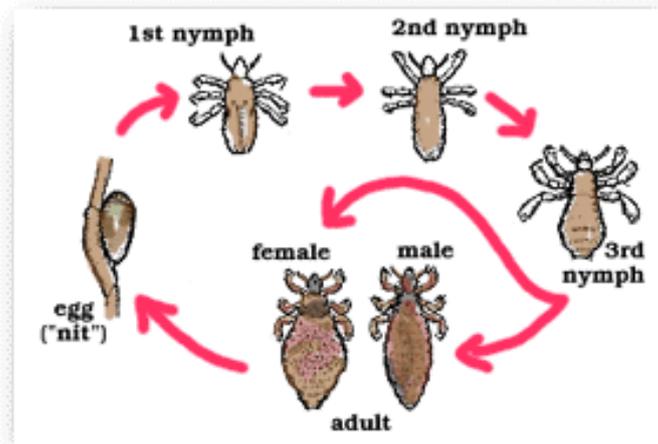
Headlice Policy



Eatock School

Policy on Head lice

Which Came First... the Itchin' or the Egg?



(The Life-Cycle of the Head Louse)

General Information

Head lice are only transmitted by direct, prolonged head to head contact. This is when live head lice walk from one head to another. The head lice then lay eggs (nits) and these nits hatch into live lice. This cycle takes about 2 weeks.

If children come to school 'clear' of head lice and catch them again in a couple of days, it is not likely that head lice have walked from another child's head, but more likely that an egg has hatched out because it was left in the hair.

Live eggs tend to stick firmly to the hair, they need to be pulled off and are often left after head lice treatment. Dead (empty) eggs will slide off the hair easily.

All children and adults can catch head lice; it does not mean the hair is dirty! However, prolonged infection over months and years often denotes neglect. The Headteacher needs to talk sensitively to the parents of children who persistently have head lice.

If staff have any concerns these should be reported to the Headteacher.

At any one time, most schools will have a few children who have active infection with headlice. This is often between 0% and 5%, rarely more.

Guidance

Regular information is sent home to parents.

Parents are encouraged to inform the school if their child has head lice, or nits.

Parents are asked if they do not want their child's head to be looked at regularly. If they give permission, the Headteacher, or other designated person will look through the hair of all the children in a class.

Letters are sent home if nits (eggs) are found.

If live lice are found, children are isolated from their classmates and their parents are contacted. A request is made that children with live lice are taken home. Parents need not comply with this request.

Persistent use of head lice preparations can be damaging. Some professionals recommend tea tree oil shampoo, others electrical bug busting combs. Often, eggs just need to be pulled off by hand.

The school nurse will provide regular educational information to parents and children. This will take place at parent's meetings, or when requested. The school nurse will also offer advice, support and information to parents as requested.

Detection combs are available from the school office, together with information on treatment.

The school should always advise parents to seek medical advice in the event of infection.

Teachers should work with the children about head lice prevention – this is primarily wearing long hair tied back, not touching heads with another child and asking their parents to check their hair regularly.

Teachers should do some Science and PSHE work on head lice and talk to the children about being sensitive if they know another pupil has head lice. Having head lice or nits is not a stigma; it does not mean children are dirty!

It is only by staff and parents working together and being vigilant that we can rid the school of head lice.

Eatock Primary School, December 2014