HEAD LICE
(PEDICULUS HUMANUS)

Scope

This policy is to be applied to all schools within the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board.

Purpose

To ensure that all personnel are aware of the appropriate procedures to follow in dealing with students infected with head lice (pediculus humanus). The Board has developed a uniform approach to addressing the pediculosis (head lice) issue in its schools. This new procedure will provide a standard practice for all schools.

Policy Statement

Head lice (pediculosis) are common and can infest anyone regardless of socio-economic status or level of personal cleanliness. It is the policy of the Board that in schools where head lice (pediculus humanus) is suspected, the school administrator follows the procedures outlined.

Cross Reference

Authorization

This policy has been authorized by the Board under motions number 2011-10-13.

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the Director of Programs and Student Services to ensure that this policy and administrative procedures are implemented.

Implementation

The Coordinator of School Services will implement the policy and administrative procedures.
Procedures

1. A staff member who suspects or finds lice on a student will notify the Principal.

2. Parents/guardians of children identified with head lice will be notified by the school of that fact by letter (Pediculosis Notification Letter - Appendix A and Pediculosis Treatment and Instruction Sheet – Appendix C), and will be required to seek treatment for the child. It is recommended that other members of the household be checked as well.

3. The parent/guardian is required to keep the child at home until the problem is cleared.

4. On returning to school, the student is required to bring a form signed by the parent indicating the treatment used, and confirming that the child is free of lice. The form is reviewed by the principal or designate. (This form is provided on the bottom of the Pediculosis Notification Letter – Appendix A)

5. If a returning child is not free of lice, the child shall not be readmitted to class. The parent/guardian is contacted by the school and arrangements made for the child to return home as soon as possible. The parent/guardian is provided with a new Pediculosis Notification Letter and Treatment Instruction Sheet.

6. All parents/guardians of children in a class in which a student or students are found to have head lice will be sent a letter (Class/School Letter - Appendix B) informing them of that fact. The letter contains a description of methods of observation and precautionary measures that can be taken in the home to monitor and treat head lice infestations.

7. If a number of cases are identified in different classrooms, the principal will send home a general notification to parents/guardians of all students in the school.

8. If the problem appears to be widespread, the principal may wish to have teams of parent volunteers trained by the Public Health nurse to assist in monitoring and checking students for head lice. These parent volunteers must ensure confidentiality.

9. Parents/guardians should be assured that reporting head lice is encouraged and that confidentiality will be maintained.

10. Public Health personnel may be requested to make home visits for support and education.

11. If parents/guardians are unable to afford the cost of treatment, they are advised to contact the principal or your nearest Public Health office.
Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed by Director of Programs and Student Services within three years from the authorization date.

Associated Forms

- Pediculosis Notification Letter (Appendix A)
- Pediculosis Class/School Letter (Appendix B)
- Pediculosis Treatment Instruction Sheet (Appendix C)

Distribution

Board Members
All Policy Manual Holders
APPENDIX A

PEDICULOSIS NOTIFICATION LETTER

Date: ______________________________
Child’s Name: ___________________________ School: ___________________________

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Pediculosis (Head Lice) is a common problem in schools especially at certain times of the year. Head lice and their eggs (nits) is a nuisance that can infect any of us. **Your child was found to have head lice or nits (eggs).** In order to ensure effective treatment, we require that you follow the instructions on the enclosed Pediculosis Treatment Instruction Sheet. It is important that all lice are removed before returning to class. If all lice are not removed, other children in the class, as well as your child will continue to be affected by the problem. Therefore if your child is not free of lice on returning to school, he/she will not be re-admitted to class. You will be contacted to make arrangements for the return of your child to your home and you will be provided with treatment instructions.

Thank you for your co-operation,

Principal

-------------------------------

**PLEASE SIGN BELOW AND HAVE YOUR CHILD RETURN THIS FORM TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE BEFORE GOING BACK TO CLASS.**

Child’s Name: ___________________________

Treatment Used: ____________________________________________________________

Yes. My child’s hair has been checked, and all lice have been removed.

Parent’s/Guardian’s Signature: _______________________________________________

Date: ______________________________
APPENDIX B

PEDICULOSIS CLASS LETTER

To: Parents/Guardians

Re: Pediculosis (Head Lice)

A case of Pediculosis has been found to exist in your child’s classroom. Pediculosis is an infestation of head lice or head lice eggs (called “nits”) which is spread by direct contact with an infested person and, indirectly, by contact with his/her personal belongings. These include clothing, combs, brushes and head gear.

We ask that you take the following precautions:

1. **Inspect your child’s hair and scalp frequently for the next 10 days.** The louse may be brown or grayish, with a flat, wingless body 2-3 mm in length with six legs. The eggs may be yellow, brown, or white teardrop-shaped, are glued to the hair near the scalp and are called “nits”. It is usually the eggs which are first noticed.

2. If your child complains of an itchy scalp, you should check for lice and/or nits.

3. If you discover your child has lice or nits, **please notify the school right away** and a Treatment Instruction sheet will be sent home.

4. Please note that if a child is found to have pediculosis, the parent or guardian will be required to keep the child at home until the child is free of all head lice.

Thank you,

Principal
APPENDIX C

PEDICULOSIS TREATMENT INSTRUCTION SHEET

Head Lice
Lice are very small brown wingless insects. Their eggs, called nits, appear gray in dark hair and brown in light hair. They are oval shaped and stick to the side of the hair near the scalp.

Checking for Lice
If you notice signs such as frequent head scratching, check all family members at least once a week. Only treat people who have lice or nits.

How to Treat Head Lice
Lice treatments and lice combs are available at your local drugstore. If the person with lice or nits has allergies, asthma, epilepsy, other medical conditions, or is pregnant or nursing, please consult your pharmacist or doctor.

Here are two ways to get rid of head lice. In both treatments, you will have to remove nits from the hair by hand.

Commercial Treatments (i.e. Nix, Pronto, Licetrol)
- Shampoo your child’s hair according to the instructions.
- Separate the hair into sections and remove all the nits with the lice comb and your fingernails. **Shampoos alone will not get rid of nits.**
- To help loosen the eggs rinse the hair with a mixture of warm water (1/2) and vinegar (1/2).
- Treating head lice requires **two** treatments one week apart.
- Each day for a month, inspect the hair for lice and nits.

Vinegar and Oil Treatments
- Mix equal parts of vinegar and oil (mineral oil, baby oil, cooking oil).
- Apply to dry hair and rub well.
- Cover the hair in plastic wrap for 2-3 hours.
- Wash hair with regular shampoo.
- Separate the hair into sections and remove all the nits with the lice comb and your fingernails.
  To help loosen the eggs rinse the hair with a mixture of warm water (1/2) and vinegar (1/2).
- Repeat this treatment **five** times (once every three days for 15 days).

In Addition
Put bed linen, clothes and stuffed toys in a hot dryer or wash them in hot water. Combs, brushes and head gear should also be washed in hot water. Siblings should be checked as well. **Do not use chemical sprays in your home as part of the treatment.** They are dangerous and totally unnecessary.

Returning to School
Your child may return to school after the first treatment. If you have any questions, please contact your school.