

# Head Lice Policy



Deutsche Schule Nairobi  
German School Nairobi

## HEAD LICE POLICY

This is to make you aware in case off head lice have been identified in our school. Lice outbreaks are very common among school children. Head lice do not carry any disease, and their presence does not indicate a lack of cleanliness.

## PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

1. Prevention: Informing students, parents, and staff about ways to prevent the spread of head lice.
2. Identification: Procedures for identifying head lice, including symptoms to look out for and methods for conducting regular checks of students' heads.
3. Treatment: Guidelines for treating head lice infestations, which may include using over-the-counter or prescription medications, as well as recommendations for removing lice and their eggs from the environment, such as washing bedding and clothing in hot water.
4. Notification: Procedures for informing parents and staff if head lice are identified in the school, along with reassurance that confidentiality will be maintained to protect the privacy of affected individuals.
5. Return to School: Policies regarding when students can return to school after being treated for head lice, which typically involve being nit-free and no longer actively infested.
6. Support: Providing support and resources for families dealing with head lice infestations, including information on where to seek treatment and how to prevent reinfestation.

## PREVENTION 1

- i. Avoid Head-to-head contact; Children get lice from other children through head to head contact during play or sports or nap time and most often in school settings.
- ii. Personal items; Sometimes sharing combs, hats or school lockers with a louse-infested child can spread head lice.
- iii. Regular Checks; Encourage routine checks of children's scalps for signs of head lice, especially after potential exposure or if there are reports of lice in the community. You can't spread the eggs...only live lice.
- iv. Cleanliness; While head lice are not a sign of poor hygiene, maintaining good personal hygiene practices, such as regular hair washing, can help reduce the risk of infestation.
- v. Any child can get head lice. It doesn't matter where they live or go to school. Children get head lice almost as much as the common cold. Millions get it at least once a year.
- vi. Proper Storage: Encourage students to store their belongings separately to minimize the risk of lice transmission.
- vii. Environmental Measures: Regularly clean and vacuum areas where children's belongings are stored, such as backpacks, coats, and bedding.

## IDENTIFICATION 2

- i. Head lice are tiny grey to brown insects about the size of a sesame seed that live in human hair and must feed on human blood to live.
- ii. They lay tiny white oval-shaped eggs about the size of a knot in a thread. Lice glue their eggs to each strand of hair close to the scalp.
- iii. Although it is hard to see head lice, a person can see the eggs if they look closely.

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- i. Lice eggs and live lice are most often found in the hair behind the ears and at the back of the head and neck.
- ii. The first sign of lice is itching of the head that is caused by the bite of the head lice.

## TREATMENT 3

- i. Use an approved shampoo treatment that you find at the drugstore. Follow the directions on the packaging exactly.
- ii. Remove as many eggs as possible with a special comb that comes with the head lice treatment.
- iii. Treat your home at the same time you treat your child. Do the following:
  - i) Soak combs and brushes for 5-10 minutes in some of the lice shampoo for 1 hour or in very, very hot water.
  - ii) Wash sheets, blankets and other bedding in the hottest setting of water in the washing machine. Dry in a hot dryer.
  - iii) Dry-clean non-washable items or seal these items in a plastic bag for 1 week or tumble them in a very hot dryer.
  - iv) Vacuum furniture, carpets and mattresses thoroughly.
- iv. Treat hair a second time 7 to 10 days after the first treatment (or follow the instructions of the manufacturer of the lice treatment) to make sure that you kill any lice that may have hatched from eggs that might have been missed during the combing.

## NOTIFICATION 4

- i. The school is presently taking every measure to effectively control spread of the infestation, including random head checks after every school break, we conduct head lice to all children from Kiga up to grade 8. For your information, we don't use combs during the checks. We will disinfect our hands after every student.
- ii. Those found with head lice/nits- their parents are notified. We recommend a treatment that that evening. If a parent is not able to treat the child, the child will not be allowed to school the next day. Note; the siblings of the students are also checked.
- iii. Before, attending class the respective students need to be cleared by the school nurse. She will give a clearance note.
- iv. If you discover your child has lice, please contact the school nurse. It is important to act immediately to prevent the spread to other classmates and to your family as well.
- v. When a student is identified with live lice at school, the health office will be notified, upon which we check the student to confirm, and if found, we proceed to check the whole grade.
- vi. The standard lice information letter is sent to families of students in any grade level in which lice have been discovered. Parents are requested to be vigilant and to cross check at home.
- vii. Educational materials are shared with the family for proper treatment of the student, other family members, and the home.

## RETURN TO SCHOOL 5

- i. A student with live lice should receive appropriate lice treatment prior to returning to school. The student will be examined upon returning to school to confirm absence of live head lice as well as treatment is ongoing (despite the presence of nits) before returning to class.
- ii. If the headlice is still present your child will have to be seen by a healthcare professional for further assistance.

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## SUPPORT 6

### How Do You Keep Lice From Coming Back?

- i. Teach family members to recognize eggs and how lice are spread and check everyone's hair.
- ii. If you find lice, follow the recommended treatment closely. It should be reported to the school nurse, who may want to check close contacts.
- iii. Remind children not to share combs, brushes, hair accessories, headphones, hats, clothing, bedding, coats and so forth. Emotional Support: Dealing with head lice can be emotionally taxing for families, especially if there is stigma or embarrassment associated with it. Offer empathetic support and reassurance, reminding them that head lice are a common problem that can happen to anyone and do not reflect personal hygiene or cleanliness.
- iv. Professional Assistance: For severe infestations or cases where families are struggling to eliminate head lice, recommend seeking assistance from healthcare professionals. In Kenya you can also go to a barbershop who can help you to remove lice and their eggs.
- v. Follow-Up and Monitoring: Encourage families to follow the recommended treatment protocol and provide guidance on how to monitor for any signs of reinfestation. Regular check-ins at the health office can help ensure that families feel supported throughout the process.
- vi. If you have any questions concerning head lice please contact the health office, the pharmacist or your child's teacher.
- vii.

