

## **Howth Road National School – Notice 26th September 2011.**

**Head Lice** – There appears to be head lice in most classrooms. Please check heads, and treat them, if necessary. Pharmacies can advise on treatments available.

If everyone acts now we can try to remove the problem from the school.

### **How Do I know My Child Has Head Lice?**

Many head lice infections cause no symptoms, and probably less than half cause itch. So you have to LOOK to find out if your child has head lice. Do not rely on itching and scratching.

Eggs are not difficult to see; use a strong light and look on the hair shafts. Newly laid eggs are usually within 1.5 cm of the scalp while older eggs are higher up the hair shafts. If you are not sure whether an object you find is a head louse egg, try sliding it up the hair shaft using your fingers. Eggs are usually quite difficult to move, whereas hair muffs and other items slide easily.

However, finding live lice can be difficult since the climbers move away quickly from disturbances in the hair, and they are very difficult to see.

### **An easy way is to find the climbers is to use the conditioner and nit comb treatment**

1. Apply conditioner to dry hair aiming to cover each hair from root to tip with a layer of conditioner.
2. Detangle the hair using an ordinary comb.
3. Immediately comb the hair with a fine tooth comb. The best comb for this is the Lice Meister comb. However, plastic nit combs with conditioner are also very effective for detecting climbers.
4. Wipe the conditioner off the fine tooth comb onto a paper tissue and look for lice and eggs.
5. Repeat the combing for every part of the head at least 5 times.
6. Also examine the comb for lice and eggs.

### **If you find lice, your child should be treated.**

If your child has not been treated for head lice before, and you only find eggs, you should consider treating for head lice. However, another option if you do not want to use insecticidal treatments is to check again the next day using the conditioner and comb technique. If your child has been treated recently, and you find only hatched eggs, but no lice, you may not need to treat since the eggs could be from the old infection.

### **You should check your child every week using conditioner, a fine tooth comb, and paper tissue as described above.**

If you find lice, your child should be treated.

If your child has not been treated for head lice before, and you only find eggs, you should consider treating for head lice. However, another option if you do not want to use insecticidal treatments, is to check again the next day using the conditioner and comb

### **Prevention is the best cure!**

You should always encourage anyone with long hair to keep it tied back in a pony tail, pig tails. plaits or a bun. This will eliminate the lice being transferred from one child to another.

### **Other methods of prevention are:**

- avoiding physical contact with a person who has lice
- not sharing combs, brushes, hats, scarves, ribbons, or other personal items
- examining and treating members of your household who have had close contact with a person infected with lice

- keeping your child home from school or day care until the morning after treatment for lice

If you find lice, your child should be treated.

If your child has not been treated for head lice before, and you only find eggs, you should consider treating for head lice. However, another option if you do not want to use insecticidal treatments is to check again the next day using the conditioner and comb technique.

If your child has been treated recently, and you find only hatched eggs, but no lice, you may not need to treat since the eggs could be from the old infection.

**You should check your child *EVERY WEEK* using conditioner, a fine tooth comb, and paper tissue as described on this page.**

**Remember once you find eggs the likelihood is that there will be adults in a few days time – there is a need to repeat treatment in *8-10 days time again!***