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September 2022 – September 2026

Headlice Policy



WATERTON
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1. Our School

1.1 Our Vision

Grow. Achieve. Shine – These are much more than words or a motto. At Churchfield Primary School we enable all children to **grow** as independent learners, **achieve** more than they ever believe they could and **shine** as unique individuals. Our school is a very special place, having been the beating heart of our community for over 120 years, we respect the lessons of the past whilst looking to the difference we can make in the future. Preparing our pupils for life in an ever-changing world, developing curious, well-rounded individuals who are determined to succeed.

1.2 Our Values



We are proud, and work hard to be the best that we can be



We are determined and resilient, embracing all challenges



We collaborate well, treating everyone as equals



We are honest, kind and show integrity



We respect all people, property and the environment



We believe in ourselves and strive for our goals

1.3 Our Golden Rule

Our Golden Rule

We keep ourselves, and each other, safe.



1.4 Our School Aims

Our school aims are underpinned by our values. Through our school values, we aim to:

1. Promote high standards of academic and vocational achievement for every child, every time, through a highly-inclusive approach.
2. Promote a holistic view of the whole child, supporting them to become well-rounded individuals and members of society.
3. Encourage all children to develop positive relationships with, and respect for, themselves, each other, our local community and the wider world.
4. Provide a safe, welcoming and positive environment for our children and families; acting as a hub at the heart of our community.

1.5 Our Community

Bricks and mortar do not make a school, people do. We can achieve great things when we work together, and our community is at the heart of what we do. We are a hub of support for our families, and provide a safe and loving environment for our children to shine.

1.6 Our Academy Trust

Since December 2019 we have been a proud member of Waterton Academy Trust, providing even more opportunities for our pupils to shine. As part of the Waterton family, we ensure that success for all is not a goal, but an expectation.



2. Policy Summary

2.1 Policy Introduction & Rationale

Churchfield Primary School is aware of the national problem of headlice and how it can sometimes affect children of a primary school age at home and in school. This policy aims to set out the duties and responsibilities of parents, the school and the Health Authorities in dealing with head lice and to provide guidance on the detection, treatment and prevention of headlice infestations. It sets out what school can and cannot do legally as well as providing some practical advice as to how to tackle head lice.

2.2 Policy Aims

This policy is underpinned by the central aims of Churchfield Primary School and the values held by the school community. This policy aims to ensure that all pupils who suffer from asthma:

- Provide information for all stakeholders on the detection, prevention and treatment of headlice

2.3 Inclusivity Statement

At Churchfield Primary School we use an inclusive approach to all aspects of education. Our aim is to always involve all children and stakeholders in all areas of the curriculum and school life. In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice, we recognise that this may mean making special adaptations or arrangements from time to time for children with specific disabilities. We welcome the involvement of disabled adults in all areas of school life.

3. Legalities & Linked Documents

3.1 Linked School & Trust Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and other linked policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Communication Policy

3.2 Linked National & Local Documents

The policy has been developed in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [NHS Choices Headlice](#)
- [PHE Headlice](#)

4. Background Information

Headlouse infestation is not primarily a problem of schools but one of the wider community. It cannot be solved by school, but the school can help the local community to deal with it. Headlice are transmitted by direct, still, prolonged head-to-head contact. Transmission of lice within a classroom is relatively rare. When it does occur, it is usually from a 'best friend'.

Headlice will not be eradicated in the foreseeable future, but a sensible, informed approach, based on fact not mythology, will help to limit the problem. 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. The perception by parents/carers however, is often that there is a serious 'outbreak' with many children infected. This is hardly ever the case.



5. Roles & Responsibilities

5.1 Parent/ Carer Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to:

- Undertake regular weekly and where appropriate daily checks to ensure that your child/family is not affected. This should be done with a detector comb as noted in this advice in the school's parent leaflet on headlice and in this policy. All family members should be checked
- Hair should be checked on the same day if a letter/text /verbal notification is received from school or school staff have advised that there is a case of headlice in your child's class
- If live headlice are found, prompt treatment should be given. Leaving it will only increase the possibility of in your child becoming uncomfortable with a possible infestation
- Inform all contacts of the family / friends who may have come in to head to head contact for a minute or more in the last month if headlice or nits (eggs) are found
- Seek advice from a medical practitioner (Pharmacist/ Health Visitor/ Doctor) about using an approved lotion and treat using this method in the recommended way

5.1 School Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of school to:

- Provide information about headlice on a regular basis if many cases arise
- Encourage parents to seek advice from the professionals if they find headlice to be a persistent problem
- Maintain a visual check on pupils
- Alert parents (class/year group) via a text or letter (and if necessary verbal notification) if an outbreak is noted or school is notified by a parent that a pupil has headlice
- Invite parents to meet with the Wellbeing Manager to discuss treatment/ provide advice should parents wish
- The Wellbeing Manager (with the parent's permission) may then offer to provide assistance with wet combing and /or other treatment
- Encourage parents to return their child to school immediately after treatment – there is no need to keep a child off school for the day
- School staff will be encouraged to check their own hair regularly

By law, school cannot:

- Carry out physical checks on pupils for head lice
- Tell parents to keep children away from school because of head lice
- Exclude/suspend a child from school because of head lice

6. Advice

6.1 Headlice Facts

- Head lice are small, six-legged wingless insects that live on the hair close to the scalp where it is warm and easy for them to feed
- They are pin-head size when they hatch, less than match-head size when fully grown and are difficult to see in the hair
- The eggs are glued individually to hairs near the scalp. Unhatched eggs are dull in colour and hard to see, but after the lice have hatched the empty egg sacs – called 'nits' – are white and easy to see. Many people mistake the empty egg sacs or nits for head lice when they are actually evidence of a previous infection of head lice

Head lice are easily missed in dry hair and do not necessarily cause itching. There are often only 10 lice or less on a head



- Head lice can't fly, jump or swim
- They spread from person to person by climbing swiftly along hairs during close head to head contact
- Head lice are not fussy about hair length or condition – clean hair is no protection
- Head lice are not harmful
- Head lice infection is common. Anyone with hair can get them, but children, who put their heads together a lot, tend to get them more often

6.2 Detection

Head lice can't be prevented but regular checking ensures early detection and treatment if necessary. The best detection method is wet combing (see below). Parents and carers should aim to check their children's hair once a week during hair washing. You need your usual shampoo, ordinary conditioner and a louse detection comb. Remember that you are looking for living moving head lice – the only evidence that your child has a head lice infection. The comb must be fine enough to catch the lice. Your pharmacist should be able to recommend a suitable one.

6.3 How to Check

Good lighting is important. Look for nits by parting hair in small sections, going from one side of the head to the other. Check carefully, looking close to the scalp. Nits are most predictably found on hairs at the nape of the neck and behind the ears, where they are protected from extremes of light and temperature. However, they may be laid anywhere on the hair, especially in warm weather. The appearance of a nit is often confused with that of a flake of dandruff or a dried particle of hairspray or gel. A distinguishing feature is that dandruff and hair products can be easily combed off the hair or removed with the fingers, while nits cannot. Nits are firmly glued to the hair and must be removed with a fine-toothed comb or fingernails, or snipped off with scissors. The scalp should be examined in sunlight or under bright artificial light. The hair should be parted, with individual strands checked for nits. Head lice 'hold on' to the hair with hook like claws found at the end of each of their six legs.

7. Treatment

7.1 Wet Combing

1. Shampoo the hair, rinse, apply lots of conditioner and use a wide-toothed comb to untangle and straighten
2. Once the tangles have gone, section the hair and comb with a fine-toothed detection comb from root to end. Comb one section at a time, paying particular attention to the back of the neck and the area around the ears
3. Check the comb for live lice between each stroke and remove them
4. When the whole head of hair has been combed through and checked, rinse off the conditioner
5. Check all family members at the same time and arrange treatment if lice are found. If you discover head lice, inform any close contacts, so they and their families know they should check too. The time required to wet comb the whole head can range from 2 minutes for short, straight hair to 30 minutes for long, curly hair

7.2 Lotions

You can ask a health professional about which lotion is most effective. People with asthma or allergies, pregnant or breastfeeding mothers, and parents or carers of very young children should always ask their doctor or pharmacist about which treatments are safe for them. Note the following advice for using lotions:

- Do not use lotions unless you find a living, moving louse. Head lice may become resistant to lotions if they are used too often
- If live head lice are still being found after two treatments, ask your doctor, pharmacist, health visitor or school nurse for advice
- Follow the instructions on the packet carefully. These will tell you how to apply the lotion, how long to leave it on the hair and when any repeat application is required for the treatment to be effective. The treatment method may vary between different lotions



- Although the lotion will kill the lice, it will not kill the eggs. You will need to apply the lotion again after 7 days to kill any newly hatched baby lice. Again, this procedure may vary between different lotions, so follow the instructions on the packet carefully
- Treatment does not prevent infections

7.3 Tips

- Head louse eggs take up to 10 days to hatch. Baby lice take 6-14 days to become fully grown, and it is after this that they will take the opportunity to move from head to head during close contact. Younger lice tend to remain for a minimum of 6 days on the head where they have hatched
- Treatment is only needed when a thorough check detects live lice. Insecticide lotion, rinse, mousse or shampoo should never be used preventatively – doing this may help the lice to become resistant to treatment
- Beware of mixing your own potion for treatment or repelling lice – it is unlikely to be effective and could be dangerous. In particular, essential oils, such as tea tree, must be used with extreme caution on children and pregnant or breastfeeding mothers. 'Natural' does not necessarily mean 'safe'
- Seek advice from a medical professional about which treatments are effective – not all those on the market are. In particular, there is currently no evidence that 'electronic zappers', tea tree oil or preparations that claim to contain insecticides of natural origin are effective

