

NOTIFICATION OF HEAD LICE

Dear Parent:

Your child has been sent home today because s/he was found to have head lice. This is an easily-treated condition that is generally not associated with any serious complications, but is highly contagious.

Head lice are usually transmitted through:

- A. close personal contact with another person who is infested with the lice or through the use of shared combs, brushes, and other grooming aids, or
- B. sharing caps, hats, or coats or co-mingling of such items at homes of friends, at school or church, or at other places.

Many parents have the impression that a person becomes infested with head lice because s/he is unclean. This is NOT TRUE. Frequent bathing neither prevents head lice nor eliminates the infestation.

Head lice are elongated insects about 2.3-3.6 mm long (about the size of a sesame seed) and are grayish-white in color. They do not have wings nor can they jump. They do move very quickly which can make it difficult to find in a child's hair. Because they can be so hard to see, the diagnosis of head lice is often made by examining the scalp for NITS. A nit is the louse egg. It is tear-shaped, about 0.8 mm by 0.3 mm in size, and varies in color from white to yellowish-brown. Head lice attach each nit to a hair shaft in a water-proof, cement-like substance. This means they cannot be washed or brushed out of the hair or scalp like dandruff and other such particles that sometimes look like nits to the naked eye. Clusters of nits may be found in any section of the hair so a careful examination should be made of the entire scalp.

We have enclosed a form which describes the necessary treatment as well as a treatment verification form which must be completed and signed before your child may return to school. If you have any questions, please call the school office as soon as possible. You may wish to consult with your physician or the local health department concerning the treatment.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Sincerely,

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Principal or School Nurse