

HEAD LICE

We periodically get outbreaks of headlice in school. As many of you will be aware head lice is very common amongst younger children, being easily passed from child to child if their heads are close together. We would ask all parents to **check your child's hair regularly** and should you find any evidence of head lice keep your child away from school until you have had an opportunity to deal with them.

Prevention

Combing with a fine tooth comb each night should remove any stray lice your child may have picked up during the day and prevent them laying their eggs. Once they have been laid, the eggs stick close to the scalp until they hatch into lice after about 7 - 10 days. The lice feed by sucking blood from the tiny blood vessels in the scalp. It is not always easy to spot head lice and the first sign may well be an itchy scalp.

Treatment

Following is the treatment which is being recommended by our local community health centre as an alternative to chemicals which are losing their effectiveness against head lice.

- Wash the hair in the normal way with an ordinary shampoo
- Inspect the rinsing water for lice floating to the surface
- Using lots of hair conditioner and while the hair is very wet, comb through with a fine tooth comb. Make sure that the teeth of the comb slot into the hair at the roots with every stroke. Do this over a pale surface such as a paper towel.
- Sodden lice will not move and slippery hair is hard for lice to get a grip on so they should be easy to remove with a comb
- If you do find any lice, you should repeat this routine every day for two weeks.

Further Advice

Your family doctor can advise you and prescribe the most effective treatment if the problem persists. Tea Tree Oil has also been suggested as a preventative measure.

This is a link to a useful website resource.

<http://www.headlice.co.uk/schools/resources/Parent%20Leaflet.pdf>