Policy Overview

This policy addresses how the Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB) will respond to head lice in our schools.

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Policy and Procedures History

- Policy approved - September 1997
- Policy revised - June 22, 2011
- Policy revised – June 3, 2015
- Procedures approved - September 1997
- Procedures revised - June 22, 2011
- Procedures revised – June 3, 2015

1.0 Legislative Context

1.1 The Halifax Regional School Board is committed to ensuring the management of head lice in schools is in accordance with the following guidelines:

1.1.1 Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness, Guidelines for Treatment of Pediculosis Capitis (Head Lice);

1.1.2 Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness, How to Prevent, Find and Treat Head Lice.
2.0 Principles

2.1 The HRSB adopts the position of the Department of Health and Wellness with regards to head lice.

2.2 The confidentiality and dignity of students with head lice will be respected. The Halifax Regional School Board recognizes that the discovery of head lice on a child can result in parents feeling discomfort and embarrassment.

2.3 The Halifax Regional School Board acknowledges that head lice are a common condition that can affect anyone and encourages parents to have open and frank conversation on the topic.

2.4 The Halifax Regional School Board’s objective is to minimize time missed from school as a result of head lice.

3.0 Authorization

3.1 The Superintendent is authorized to develop and implement procedures in support of this policy.

4.0 Policy Review

4.1 This policy will be reviewed every five (5) years or on an as needed basis.
Head Lice Procedures

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1.0 Principal’s Responsibilities

1.1 The principal shall:

1.1.1 Communicate pro-actively to parent(s)/guardian(s) regarding head lice prevention and treatment;

1.1.2 Notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the suspicion that their child has head lice;

1.1.1.1 Children who are suspected of having nits (small silver-gray egg casings) may remain at school;

1.1.1.2 Children who are suspected of having live lice (insects) will be sent home with parent(s)/guardian(s) for treatment.

1.1.3 Recommend to parent(s)/guardian(s) that they examine their child for the presence of head lice;

1.1.4 Send home a copy in an envelope or email an electronic copy of the NS Department of Health and Wellness pamphlet, How to Prevent, Find and Treat Head Lice, (Available at http://www.novascotia.ca/dhw/publications/Public-Health-Education/07135_HeadLicePamphlet_En.pdf)

1.1.5 Notify parent(s)/guardian(s) that a child with head lice, may return to school after the first treatment outlined by NS Department of Health and Wellness, How to Prevent, Find and Treat Head Lice, is completed;

1.1.6 Recommend to parent(s)/guardian(s) that anyone living or spending time in their household be checked for head lice;

1.1.7 Regularly remind parent(s)/guardian(s) to check their child for nits or lice;

1.1.8 Advise school staff that student confidentiality is to be maintained.
2.0 Staff Responsibilities

2.1 A staff member who suspects that a student may have head lice shall notify the school principal.

3.0 Parent(s)'/Guardian(s)’ Responsibilities

3.1 Parent(s)/guardian(s) are expected to:

3.1.1 Check their child for nits and head lice on a regular basis;

3.1.2 Notify the school if their child has head lice;

3.1.3 Check other family members or others spending time in the house of children identified as having head lice;

3.1.4 Provide recommended head lice treatment to a child identified as having head lice as outlined by Public Health, How to Prevent, Find and Treat Head Lice, and complete first treatment prior to their child returning to school;

3.1.5 Call 8-1-1 at any time to speak with a Registered Nurse for more information and guidance if head lice are still present after the second treatment.