

BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE	
Administrative Procedure	Administrative Procedure Number
Pediculosis in Schools (Head Lice)	AP -803
Directional Policy	
800 – Healthy Schools and Workplaces	

Title of Administrative Procedure:

Pediculosis in Schools (Head Lice)

Date Approved:

November, 2022

Projected Review Date:

2027

Directional Policy Alignment:

This Administrative Procedure aligns with the Healthy Schools and Workplaces Directional Policy 800. The Board recognizes that the health and well-being of our students and staff is foundational to their success. A healthy environment involves being respectful of one another’s social, emotional, spiritual and physical well-being. We all have a collective responsibility to create healthy work environments to keep our students and staff safe.

Alignment with Multi-Year Strategic Plan:

The Pediculosis Administrative Procedure supports the Board’s Mission to educate students in faith-filled, loving, safe, inclusive schools to develop the God-given abilities of each person. This Administrative Procedure aligns with the Board’s Multi-Year

Strategic Plan to Value Relationships, Nurture Mental Health and Well-being and to Ensure Equity.

[PVNCCDSB Board Vision, Mission and Strategic Priorities](#)

Purpose:

This administrative procedure is intended to support schools, parents/guardians and other members of the school community to understand Pediculosis and its related impact on the individual and wider community. This procedure provides for an awareness and recognition of Pediculosis and an overview of multi-layered approaches to support students, staff and families within school communities.

Action Required:

The Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board is committed to a partnership with parents/guardians, students, staff, and the school community in understanding and managing pediculosis (head lice), with dignity and compassion for all. The Board recognizes that pediculosis is not a reportable disease under the Health Promotion and Protection Act. It is defined by public health organizations as a nuisance, not a disease.

According to the [Canadian Pediatric Society: A Clinical Update \(2018\)](#),

- pediculosis infestations are not a primary health hazard or a vector for disease, but they are a societal problem with substantial costs;
- definitive diagnosis of head lice infestation requires the detection of a living louse;
- research indicates that head lice is frequently misdiagnosed and overdiagnosed, particularly when relying on nit detection only; without microscopy, the ability to distinguish viable from nonviable nits is difficult;
- when a live louse is detected in a student's head, a full course of treatment and avoiding close head-to-head activities are recommended.

According to the Canadian Pediatric Society, well-established treatment options for a proven head lice infestation include topical insecticides and oral agents. Non Insecticidal products that have been approved by Health Canada can all be obtained over the counter.

The treatment and eradication of pediculosis is ultimately parents/guardians'

responsibility; however, the school will provide information to guide them in their options.

According to the CPS, families of students in the same classroom as a student who has pediculosis must be alerted, and information on diagnosis and management should be shared with those parents as well. The dignity and privacy of all parties must be maintained at all times. Messaging that pediculosis is a common nuisance, not a disease risk or a sign of a lack of cleanliness, is important.

Ultimately, education for staff, students and parents/guardians around pediculosis detection and management is the key factor in reducing outbreaks in schools.

Responsibilities:

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- Ensuring alignment of this administrative procedure with the Healthy Schools and Workplaces Directional Policy;
- Reviewing this administrative procedure as part of its regular policy and procedure review cycle.

The Director of Education is responsible for:

- Providing leadership and designating resources to ensure the implementation of and compliance with this administrative procedure.

Superintendents are responsible for:

- Supporting principals and other employees for whom they have supervisory responsibility with the implementation and compliance with the procedures and requirements under this administrative procedure;
- Collaborating with the public health units within the jurisdiction of the Board to ensure updated educational materials are available to schools.

Principals and Vice-Principals are responsible for:

- Implementing this administrative procedure in accordance with the parameters outlined.
- Providing leadership and support for staff in their knowledge, understanding, and implementation of this administrative procedure.
- Creating a school action plan to respond to cases of head lice, which ensures that the dignity, privacy and well-being of students is prioritized, and which

outlines school and classroom practices which control the spread of pediculosis, to include:

- an annual regular procedure for informing parents about pediculosis, using information from Board administrative procedures and local health units (see Appendix A - *Pediculosis Fact Sheet*) for insertion on the school website, as well as in newsletters, the student agenda, etc.;
 - informing parents of potential screening options for pediculosis;
 - a process for educating staff on pediculosis to avoid misdiagnoses;
 - a clear re-admission procedure in alignment with this administrative procedure;
 - reinforcement that reporting head lice is encouraged and that confidentiality will be maintained;
 - communication throughout the year reminding parents to check their children's hair regularly for head lice and nits.
- Establishing guidelines for trained screeners in monitoring and checking students for head lice within the school. If desired, external professional services may be used for regular screening, at the school's expense.
 - Communicating with a parent/guardian when a student is identified as having pediculosis and requesting that the student be treated as soon as possible. If possible, the parent/guardian should pick up the student to initiate treatment. If this is not feasible, staff should promote preventative practices to avoid further infestation;
 - Providing a letter to the affected student's family, outlining the expectation that the student may return to class only when treatment has been administered (Appendix B), and a signed *Verification of Treatment for Pediculosis* (Appendix C) has been submitted to the school;
 - Providing written instructions for treatment, which are included in the *Pediculosis Fact Sheet* and in the *Verification of Treatment for Pediculosis* form, to the family of each identified student;
 - Ensuring that the student who returns to school after having lice is indeed lice free;
 - Sending the *Letter of Attention* (Appendix D) home to all parents of students in the class where there is a live case. If multiple cases are found during a short time frame (i.e. two-three week period), the principal will determine the number of times the letter is sent home;

- Prioritizing and preserving the affected child's well-being and dignity;
- Being culturally responsive when supporting students and families through occurrences of pediculosis.

Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are knowledgeable about the requirements and parameters outlined in this administrative procedure;
- Being aware of the signs and symptoms of lice infestation;
- Reporting infestation of head lice to the principal;
- Actively promote preventative practices to avoid further infestation;
- Distributing communication materials as per the Principal's direction
- Prioritizing and preserving the affected child's well-being and dignity;
- Being culturally responsive when supporting students and families through occurrences of pediculosis.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for:

- Being aware of the signs and symptoms of lice infestation;
- Checking their children regularly for lice and/or nits, but specifically when the school has notified parents that their children may have come into contact with pediculosis;
- Reviewing with their children strategies to avoid pediculosis, such as no sharing of hats, combs or brushes, and no head-to-head contact;
- Reporting suspected cases of pediculosis to the principal;
- Arranging for their children to be picked up from school as soon as possible, and commencing treatment, should they be contacted by the school to indicated that lice have been found in their children's hair;
- Treating their children in accordance with the Public Health Guidelines and the *Verification of Treatment for Pediculosis* parameters;

- Ensuring treatment for head lice is complete, prior to returning to school;
- Completing the *Verification of Treatment for Pediculosis* form provided by the school (Appendix C), indicating the treatment which has occurred, and returning this form to the school when the children are ready to return.

Progress Indicators:

- Increased awareness within the school community, of the signs, symptoms and treatment of pediculosis through communication and distribution of public health materials to the school community;
- Processes within the administrative procedure are adhered to in support of students, staff and families and to mitigate a lice infestation within the school environment.

Definitions:

Pediculosis / Head Lice - Pediculosis/head lice are tiny insects that live only on the scalp of human beings. They do not have wings so they cannot fly or jump, and they are not found on cats, dogs, or any other household pet. The bites from head lice can cause itching and scratching. Scratching may cause sores, which may get infected.

Nits- Nits are the eggs that head lice lay. Live eggs can range in colour from off-white to dark brown, and can also be the colour of the hair they are on. Nits are typically half the size of a pinhead but they can be smaller or larger. They stick to the hair and do not fall off if touched. After the eggs are hatched, the shells are white. These empty shells stay on the hair as the hair grows.

References:

[Caring for Kids](#)

[Canadian Pediatric Society: A Clinical Update \(2018\)](#)

[Peterborough Public Health](#)

[Sick Kids About Kids Health](#)

APPENDIX A - Pediculosis Fact Sheets

(Current fact sheets provided by the Public Health units in the Board's jurisdiction.)

APPENDIX B - Letter of Notification of Suspected Head Lice

APPENDIX C - Verification of Treatment for Pediculosis

APPENDIX D - Letter of Attention to Classes of Identified Students