

Pediculosis (Head Lice) Policy

This policy is adopted to carry out the provisions of RSA 200:32, RSA 200:38 and RSA 200:39.

Pediculosis: Screening.

Based on recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Board recognizes that school-wide screening is not an accurate way of predicting which children will become infested with head lice and has not been proven to have a significant decrease on the incidence of head lice in a school community.

At all times, the identity of an infested student shall be kept confidential.

The school nurse will periodically provide information to families of all children on the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of head lice. Periodic head checks by parents, resulting in early detection, treatment and removal of live lice and nits, is recommended for controlling pediculosis. Parents are encouraged to check their children's heads for lice regularly. The school nurse or principal's designee may check a student's head if the student is demonstrating symptoms.

Management on the Day of Diagnosis.

The management of pediculosis should proceed so as to not disrupt the education process. Nonetheless, any student's parent/guardian or teacher who finds nits or head lice shall contact the school nurse as soon as the nits or head lice are found.

If the nits or head lice are found at school, the school nurse will notify the parent/guardian by telephone or other available means. Verbal and written instructions for treatment will be given to the family of each identified student. Instructions will include recommendations for treatment that are consistent with New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services recommendations.

All students will be discouraged from close direct head contact with others and from sharing personal items with other students. District employees will act to ensure that student confidentiality is maintained.

Based upon the school nurse's recommendation, other children who were most likely to have had direct head-to-head contact with the infested child may be screened for head lice.

Criteria for Return to School.

Students will be allowed to return to school after proper treatment has occurred as recommended by the school nurse. The school nurse may recheck a child's head to determine that treatment has occurred, and proof of treatment may be required. In addition, the school nurse may offer extra help or information to families of children who are repeatedly or chronically infested.

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(Continued)**

Protection of the student's emotional sensitivity is a priority while promoting health and safeguarding other students. Therefore, discretion, confidentiality and diplomacy will be required of all staff aware of an infestation and/or involved with screening for head lice or nits.

Legal References:

RSA 200:32, Physical Examination of Pupils

RSA 200:38, Control and Prevention of communicable Diseases: duties of School Nurse

RSA 200:39, Exclusion from School

American Academy of Pediatrics, Clinical Report on Head Lice Infestation, September 2002

<http://aapolicy.aapublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;110/3/638>

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