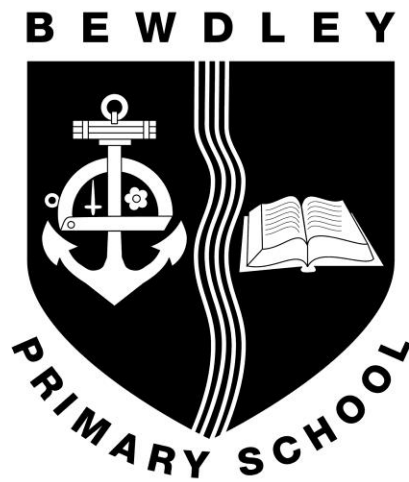


Reviewed Jan 2023
Next Review Jan 2026

Bewdley Primary School



Head Lice Policy

Bewdley Primary School
POLICY ON CONTROL OF HEAD LICE
2023

This policy is intended to set out the steps to be taken when head lice are identified in school.

INFORMATION

- Head lice are small insects, roughly the size of a match head when fully grown, and usually grey or brown in colour. They are difficult to detect, even under close examination and do not necessarily cause itching.
- Head lice cannot fly, jump or swim, but spread by clambering from head to head. Anyone with hair can catch them but children, who put their heads together a lot at school or during play, are most commonly affected. It requires two minutes of head to head contact for lice to transfer.
- The female lays eggs in sacs (nits) glued to hairs where the warmth of the scalp will hatch them. The eggs are very small, dull in colour and well camouflaged. They take 7-10 days to hatch. Empty egg sacs are white and shiny, and may be found further along the hair shaft as the hair grows out.
- Lice are most easily detected by fine tooth combing really wet hair. If no lice can be found by careful combing of shampooed hair from the roots, there is no need to consider applying head lice treatments (lotions or rinses), even if there have been cases reported in school. If head lice are discovered, then there are two options to deal with the problem.

PROCEDURE

When a case of head lice is reported to a teacher the office should be informed the same day. A letter will be sent to all families in the class that day notifying them of the presence of head lice, advising the form of treatment and providing the School Nurse as a contact for discussion of the problem.

Staff must only discuss a case of head lice with the parents concerned. They should not discuss other individual cases of head lice or suggest there is a persistent source of head lice in the class.

PERSISTENT HEAD LICE IN INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN

Where a member of staff believes that an infestation of head lice is going untreated, they should report this to the head teacher. The head teacher will authorise an individual letter telling parents that children may return to school after the first treatment (wet combing or lotion) has taken place. A reply slip and envelope will be provided to enable parents to communicate when the first treatment has been started.

Staff must not physically inspect a child's hair for head lice/nits or encourage another person to do so.
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Head lice are a persistent problem in school that needs to be handled sensitively and consistently. Providing parents with information of infestation and treatment methods, and advising confidentially when it is suspected treatment is required will enable the matter to be thoroughly addressed within the school. Where infestation is so persistent that it is considered a health risk, the matter will be passed to the School Nurse for their attention.