Dear Parents/Caregivers

RE: HEAD LICE OUTBREAK

Unfortunately our class is experiencing a head lice outbreak.

Finding Head Lice

We are asking all parents to examine their child’s hair and head for signs of lice or nits (eggs). Lice are hard to find as they move around the head. We are therefore suggesting that parents look for nits. Nits look very similar to dandruff and gather as tiny silver white eggs at the base of the hair shaft.

Treatment of Head Lice

Please do not be alarmed if your child has contracted head lice. Although the condition is frustrating, it is easily treated. There are many specialised products available from your local pharmacy or 10 Day Hair Conditioner Treatment (see overleaf).

Exclusion from School

Department of Health Govt of WA guidelines state that the infested person should be ‘excluded until the day after treatment has commenced’.

Thanking you for your co-operation in this matter.

Sophie Figueiredo
Year 6 Teacher
**Appendix 4**

**Head Lice**

A Head Lice Fact Sheet is available from:

www.public.health.wa.gov.au
or 1300 518 963

Local School/Nurse or Public Health Unit telephone number on inside cover.

**Head infestation**

Children with head lice infestation are required to have their hair cleared of lice before returning to school. This can be achieved by parents using an insecticide product purchased from the local pharmacy and used according to the manufacturer’s instruction. However, this must be followed by parents physically removing the lice from the hair after the recommended time period using a special knit comb. Hair will need to be checked by parents on a daily basis for the following 10-days to ensure that all lice and eggs have been removed from the hair. Refer to the Department of Health, Head lice fact sheet www.public.health.wa.gov.au

Alternatively, for those parents who do not wish to use an insecticide the 10-day hair conditioner method of removal can be used.

Head lice can be more easily removed by applying plenty of hair conditioner to dry hair before combing to remove live lice and eggs (nits). Any type of hair conditioner may be used, including generic ‘home’ brands, together with a metal fine-tooth ‘nit’ comb. Suitable ‘nit’ combs can be purchased from most pharmacies.

**What to do**

- Apply plenty of hair conditioner to the dry hair until saturated.
- Comb through with an ordinary comb or brush to remove tangles.
- Section and comb the hair thoroughly with a metal fine-tooth ‘nit’ comb in 4 directions – forwards, backwards, left, and right.
- Wipe the comb on a white paper towel to check that the dark adult lice or the paler hatchlings are being removed. Hatchlings are young lice which emerge from eggs. You may need to use a magnifying glass and a strong light to see the lice and eggs.

**What to do (cont.)**

- Using white hair conditioner may make it easier to see the head lice.
- When combing is completed rinse the hair conditioner out and dry the hair.
- Repeat this process daily for 10-days to cover the hatching period of the eggs. This removes the hatchlings which emerge from missed eggs.
- Check your findings for adult head lice each day after commencing the 10-day combing period. If any are found this will be a new infestation. You will need to start again from Day 1, as new eggs may have been laid.
- Check for lice reinfection once a week for at least 4 weeks after completion of the 10-day treatment. Hair conditioner makes the inspection easier.
- Check all other household members for head lice infestation using the method described above, and treat as necessary.