



Graded Head Lice Policy (2020-2021)

This policy aims to provide information to the Graded community on how to deal with Pediculosis.

According to the United States' National Association of School Nurses, head lice (*Pediculus capitus*) are small parasitic insects that live on the scalp and neck hairs of their human hosts. The presence of lice is most often detected through the presence of adult lice or nits (eggs) attached to the hair shaft of the host, most often at the nape of the neck and behind the ears. Complications of infestations are rare and involve secondary bacterial skin infection (Lebwohl, Clark & Levitt, 2007). Pruritus (itching) is the most common symptom of a lice infestation, along with the following additional symptoms:

- A tickling feeling or a sensation of something moving in the hair;
- Irritability and sleeplessness; and
- Sores on the head caused by scratching. Sores caused by scratching can sometimes become infected with bacteria normally found on a person's skin (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2010).

Pediculosis can be considered a public health issue that is brought into the school setting. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2010) reports that an estimated 6 to 12 million infestations occur each year in the United States among children 3 to 11 years of age. According to Instituto Oswaldo Cruz the rate of occurrences in Brazil is the same.

There is a lack of evidence showing that routine class or school-wide screening reduces lice infestation rates (Frankowski, 2010). Therefore, class screenings will not be routinely implemented at Graded. Parents should check their children for lice regularly. If crawling lice are seen on a student at school, the parents will be called to pick up their child at school and be given information about head lice and its treatment. At home, all members of the family must be checked for head lice. The student's parents will be responsible for treating their child at home. After treatment, the child will be re-examined by the nurses and admitted to class. If the child is still infested, then the parent will be contacted again.

As head lice are not a risk for carrying communicable disease, are primarily spread through direct head to head contact, and only live 18-24 hours off a host, the subsequent steps will be followed:

1. Students with suspected head lice will be sent to the Nurse's Office for evaluation.
2. The school nurse will complete a thorough inspection for live lice and nits.
3. The student's parents will be notified of the event by the nurse. If nits are found, the student may remain in school for the rest of the school day. If live (crawling) lice are found, parents will be asked to come pick their child up at school.
4. The student's siblings will also be called to the Nurse's Office for examination.
5. The parents will be provided with information on the biology of head lice.
6. The parents will be instructed to inspect other household members for live lice.
7. The parents will be instructed in methods for elimination of infestation.
8. The parents will be instructed to continue daily combing until no live lice are discovered (for a period of seven days).
9. The parents will be instructed to wash pillow cases, pajamas, and towels daily.
10. The parents will be instructed not to share combs and brushes of an infested child.
11. Students will not be excluded from school if nits (eggs) are found.
12. The Divisional Office(s) will notify parents of students, if there is a case of head lice in their child's classroom. These parents will be instructed to inspect their child's head at home.

References:

[California Department of Public Health](#)

[Warsaw Community Schools](#)

[National Association of School Nurses](#)

[Instituto Oswaldo Cruz](#)

[Blog Pediatria](#)

Scheme for Managing Head Lice (in School)

