Huron-Superior Catholic
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

# *PEDICULOSIS (HEAD LICE) IN SCHOOLS*
# *PROCEDURAL GUIDELINE*

## 1. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

### *a) PEDICULOSIS / HEAD LICE*

Pediculosis / head lice are tiny bugs 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 cause itching and scratching. Scratching may cause sores, which may get infected.

### *b) 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 pin head 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.

## 2. PROCEDURAL GUIDELINE

a) Every attempt will be made to respect the student's privacy and self-esteem, which are of the utmost importance.

b) Each school will have an action plan in place to respond to cases of head lice, which includes the following:

i) An annual regular procedure for informing parents about pediculosis, using information from the Public Health Unit for insertion in such items as newsletters or student agendas.

ii) A process for pediculosis screening and informing parents about the exclusion process.

iii) A clear re-admission procedure, requiring that the student is lice free and nit free.

iv) Parent assurance that reporting head lice is encouraged and confidentiality will be maintained.

v) Communication throughout the year reminding parents to check their child's hair regularly for lice and nits.

c) Staff members who suspect head lice will report this immediately to the school principal or designate.

d) When a student is identified as having pediculosis or nits , the principal or designate will contact the parent/guardian and request that the pupil be treated as soon as possible. The parent/guardian should pick up the child immediately and begin treatment. If this is not feasible, the child will be removed from the classroom to an environment that is sensitive to the feelings of the child. Close contact with others must be avoided and the child will be sent home at the end of the day.

e) Verbal and/or written instructions for treatment will be given to the family of each identified student. The instructions will include a suggestion that the parent/guardian of the student contact a local pharmacist or professional who can assist.

f) The principal or designate will also make arrangements for the examination of all children in the same classroom with an identified active case and handle the situation accordingly.

g) The student may return to school after one treatment has been completed and live lice have been removed.

h) Before returning to school, the student must have treatment verified. Verification will be handled either by the parent/guardian signing a treatment completion form or by a visual check for live lice performed by authorized school staff in a designated area.

i) The principal or designate will also have the discretion to send the Public Health Fact Sheet and Letter of Attention home to all parents in classes where there are siblings if the child is infected.

j) The principal may request assistance from an outside professional. Parents and Catholic School Councils may offer to provide financial assistance to assist with costs.

## 3. RELATED FORMS

- Letter to Parents
- Withdrawal Notice for Head Lice
- Return to School Notice
- Public Health Unit Fact Sheets