



Dear Parents/Guardians

We have been made aware of a number of cases of head lice in school, so would be very grateful if you could check your child's hair when they get home this evening and if you find any head lice, please ensure that they are treated straightaway.

Incidents of head lice in school can be a recurring problem, so we need every parent/carer to help us prevent spreading by being vigilant and some advice on what to look for and how to treat head lice is outlined below.

Head lice are parasitic insects that only live on the heads of people. There are 3 forms of head lice: nits, nymphs and adults.

Nits - Nits are head lice eggs. The oval, yellowy white eggs are hard to see and may be confused with dandruff. They attach themselves to the hair shaft, and take about a week to hatch. The eggs remain after hatching, and many nits are empty egg cases.

Nymphs - Nymphs hatch from the nits. The baby lice look like the adults, but are smaller. They take about 7 days to mature to adults, and feed on blood to survive.

Adults - Adults are about the size of a sesame seed, have 6 legs, and are tan to greyish-white. The legs have hook-like claws to hold onto the hair with. Adults can live up to 30 days and feed on blood.

Transmission - Anyone can catch head lice, but preschool children, primary school children and their families are most at risk. Head lice are spread most commonly by close person-to-person contact.

It is important that you:

- 1) Treat head lice as soon as you spot them.

To live, love and learn with the guidance of God

Acting Headteacher: Mrs A McClurey

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Tennyson Avenue, Grangetown, Middlesbrough, TS6 7AD

Tel: 01642 455309 | Email: enquiries@stmarys.npcat.org.uk | Website: stmarys.npcat.org.uk

Part of the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust

2) You should check everyone in the house and treat them on the same day if they have head lice.

3) There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice.

4) If your child has long hair, it would be helpful if you could ensure that it is tied up in a ponytail/bun to help prevent the spread of head lice.

There are two ways to treat head lice: Using a chemical lotion or spray or by wet combing.

Please turn over page

Using Lotion or Spray to Treat Head Lice

You can use medicated lotions and sprays that kill head lice in all types of hair and these can be bought from pharmacies, supermarkets or online.

Always follow the instructions carefully and check the pack to see whether they're suitable for you or your child to use and how long they should be left in the hair.

Once treated, the head lice should die within a day. Lotions and sprays usually come with a comb to remove dead lice and eggs.

Some treatments need to be repeated after a week to kill any newly hatched lice.

If lotions or sprays don't work, speak to your pharmacist about other treatments.

Wet Combing Method

You can buy a special fine-toothed comb (detection comb) from pharmacies/supermarkets or online to remove head lice and nits. There will be instructions on the pack to follow, but typically you should:

- Wash hair in the normal way with an ordinary shampoo.
- Put lots of conditioner on the hair and while it is very wet, comb through the hair from the roots to the tip using the fine-toothed comb. Make sure that the teeth of the comb slot into the hair at the roots with every stroke and do this over a pale surface, such as a paper towel or the bath.
- Clean any lice off the comb between each stroke.
- Wet lice find it hard to keep their grip on the wet hair which is slippery from the conditioner, so they find it difficult to escape and will stick to the comb instead.

To live, love and learn with the guidance of God

Acting Headteacher: Mrs A McClurey

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Tennyson Avenue, Grangetown, Middlesbrough, TS6 7AD

Tel: 01642 455309 | Email: enquiries@stmarys.npcat.org.uk | Website: stmarys.npcat.org.uk

Part of the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust



- If you find lice, it is important to repeat this process every 3-4 days for 2 weeks to ensure that all of the lice have been removed.

There's nothing you can do to prevent head lice and some treatments, such as tea tree/eucalyptus/lavender oil and head lice repellents aren't recommended because they're unlikely to work.

If you need any help or further information in treating this matter, please speak to a member of staff and they will be happy to help.

Many thanks for your support.

Nicola Pickthall
Trust Business Manager

To live, love and learn with the guidance of God

Acting Headteacher: Mrs A McClurey

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Tennyson Avenue, Grangetown, Middlesbrough, TS6 7AD

Tel: 01642 455309 | Email: enquiries@stmarys.npcat.org.uk | Website: stmarys.npcat.org.uk

Part of the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust

