Head lice continue to cause concern and frustration for some parents, teachers and children. This school policy is intended to outline roles, responsibilities and expectations of the school community to assist with treating and controlling head lice in a consistent and coordinated manner.

Whilst parents have the main responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice our school community will work in a cooperative and collaborative manner to assist all families to manage head lice effectively.

This school policy draws on information from the Scratching for Answers? Information pamphlet and management guidelines.

It is the expectation of parents/carers and families attending this school that you will:

• Check your children’s hair for head lice weekly, at home, using the recommended conditioner/combing detection method.

• Not allow your child to attend school with untreated head lice (in accordance with Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009).

• Regularly inspect all household members and then treat them if necessary.

• Tie your child’s hair back if it is long.

• Treat head lice safely and as recommended.

• Notify the parents or carers of your child’s friends so they can check their children and treat if necessary.

• Maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising or blaming families who are finding it hard to control head lice.

• Act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community around issues of head lice.

• Sign an agreement accepting the terms of the School Head Lice Policy.

To support parents/carers and the broader school community to achieve a consistent, collaborative approach to head lice management the school will:

• Distribute up to date and accurate information on the finding, treating and controlling head lice to parents and staff at the beginning of the year or more frequently if required.
• Include information about head lice management in orientation and transition programs for new families/staff attending the school.

• Include information and updates in school newsletters.

• Include annual head lice updates for staff in-service programs.

• Provide practical advice and maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatising or blaming families who are finding it hard to control head lice.

• Access community educational resources and support, such as primary school nurses, community health centres and local government.

• Follow the recommendations of the School Exclusion Policy of the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009 in that the responsibility to exclude a child from the school rests with the principal or person in charge.

• Only exclude children from school with live insects.

• Accept the advice of parents that appropriate treatment has commenced.

• Encourage children to learn about head lice to help reduce stigma or bullying.

• Ask all families to sign an agreement accepting the conditions of the school’s head lice policy.

• Be aware of real difficulties some parents may have and seek extra support if required.

• Participate in a Head Lice Local Area Network to work with other schools, childcare centres, health services and pharmacists in your Local Government Area to achieve consistent management and policy.

• Review the head lice policy annually and seek endorsement from the School Education Board.

• Act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and broader community around issues of head lice.

**ROLE OF THE PARENT-MANAGED HEAD LICE PROGRAMME**

• Any person employed by the school, or volunteering, to undertake head lice inspections will adhere to the school policy, to the latest Department of Human Services information and to the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001.

• Any person employed by the school, or volunteering, to undertake head lice inspections will sign a confidentiality agreement.

• Any person employed by the school, or volunteering, to undertake head lice inspections will obtain a Working with Children Check prior to commencing screening duties.

• Such people will only inspect the heads of children whose parents have given prior consent.
• The school will develop a consent form for parents and guardians to sign at the commencement of children's schooling. This form will be kept on file for the duration of the children’s time at St Agnes School.

• The programme will respect the wishes of parents and carers who elect not to participate in a school head lice check.

• To help reduce stigma and to maintain confidentiality when conducting head lice inspections, a letter should be given to all the children involved after their hair has been inspected.

• The programme will only use the dry checking method to screen students' hair (see attachment A).

• The programme will adhere to infection control guidelines (see attachment B).

• People engaged in undertaking head lice inspections will complete the Screening Results spreadsheet and submit it to the Principal.

• People engaged in undertaking head lice inspections will prepare the Parent and Carer Notification form for each student participating in the screening programme and give the forms to those children's teachers on the day of screening.

• The programme will not be responsible for any incorrect screening reports that are sent home to students.

Evaluation:

• Feedback will be sought from the school community.

• Regular review of this policy and procedure, in line with current Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and Department of Human Services guidelines, will be carried out.

ATTACHMENT A
**Parent-managed head lice programme**

**CHILD SCREENING GUIDELINES**

**Dry checking**

Head lice move very quickly when disturbed and are therefore often difficult to locate when checking. Whilst dry checking is not as effective as the combing with conditioner method it is, however, more practical when screening large numbers of children. It is therefore important to remember that the results from dry checking will not be as accurate as the conditioner method.

**PROCEDURE**

1. Ensure the child has returned the signed consent form.
2. Ensure adequate lighting. Natural light is best.
3. Introduce yourself to the child and explain the procedure simply.
4. Randomly check areas of the child’s scalp. Check the full length of the hair.
5. Work your way towards the scalp. Louse eggs are usually laid 1.5cm from the scalp and are firmly attached to the hair. They often look like dandruff, but cannot be brushed off. Pay particular attention to areas of warmth (e.g. behind the ears).
6. Ensure the appropriate confidential notification procedure occurs as per school policy.

**OUTCOME**

Each child will be assessed for head lice in an effective and confidential manner and the parents and carers of those infected will be notified as per school policy.
ATTACHMENT B

Parent-managed head lice programme

INFECTION CONTROL GUIDELINES

EQUIPMENT

Disinfect solution – to disinfect hands and combs between checking of children

PROCEDURE

1. Ensure that the volunteer parents remove their jewellery and their nails are short, to prevent injury to the children. Ensure any open wounds or abrasions they have are covered.
2. Volunteers’ hair should be tied back.
3. Volunteers’ hands do not need to be washed between each check of children, except when head lice have been identified.
ATTACHMENT C

St Agnes' Parent-Managed Head Lice Programme

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT
As a volunteer parent head lice inspector at St Agnes' Primary School,
· I acknowledge that, in the course of my work, I will be privileged to personal and confidential information about children and their families.
· I agree to not discuss such personal and confidential matters with any persons, except where it is necessary that I inform the Principal.
· I understand that breach of confidentiality would result in my dismissal from the programme.
· I also agree to obtain a Working with Children Check prior to commencing any screening duties and to organise for the school office to keep a copy on file.

________________________
Volunteer Parent’s Name (Please Print)

________________________
Volunteer Parent’s Signature Date: ___/___/20

________________________
Principal’s Signature Date: ___/___/20
ATTACHMENT E

St Agnes' Primary School
Parent-Managed Head Lice Programme
PARENT AND CARER NOTIFICATION

Child's name: ________________________ Grade: _______________

Today your child was screened by the volunteer parents of the St Agnes Primary School parent-managed head lice programme and was found to have the following:

- Live lice
- Dead lice
- Louse eggs
- No evidence of lice or eggs found

Under the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001, children found with live lice cannot be readmitted to school until appropriate treatment for lice has commenced.

Please treat your child appropriately by following the attached information sheet on management and treatment of head lice.

Please return the slip below, informing me that treatment has occurred, when your child returns to school.

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Thank you for taking part in this community approach to head lice control.

Andrew Butler Principal
St Agnes Parent-Managed Head Lice Programme

NOTIFICATION OF TREATMENT

Child's name: ________________________ Grade: _______________

My child was screened on ___/___/___ by the parent-managed head lice programme and was found to have live lice and/or eggs.
I have treated my child with _______________________________ and my child will be returning to school today.

___________________________ __________________ ___/___/___
Parent's name (Please print) Parent's signature Date