



**AUSTRALIAN
ISLAMIC COLLEGE**

HEAD LICE POLICY & PROCEDURE

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1. Policy Statement

Australian Islamic College is committed to reducing the frequency and impact of head lice infestation. Identification of children with head lice is essential to prevent person-to-person spread of head lice. Head lice are spread from direct head-to-head contact with another person who has head lice. This Policy is to be made available for the school's parent community, so they are aware of the procedures the College staff will follow.

The Policy draws on information obtained from the Department of Health and the School Education Act 1990. It is essential that all members of the College community work in a cooperative, collaborative and respectful manner to assist families to manage headlice effectively.

2. Exclusion from Attendance at School

Under Section 27 of the School Education Act 1999, a Principal may require a student's non-attendance if the student or another student at the school is suffering from a medical condition that is relevant to the provisions of this section of the Act. As the school has a responsibility to prevent the spread of lice, if a student has been found to have head lice, the Principal may require the student to not attend school until treatment has commenced. Students will be treated by College staff with sensitivity if head lice are found. The Department of Health advises that students do not necessarily need to be excluded from class activities until the end of the school day and may be given tasks which do not involve close group work for the remainder of that day. However, the Principal has authority to exercise discretion and require the parents to collect a student from school until treatment has commenced.

3. Examining Student's Head for Head Lice

The Principal may authorise a school nurse or another member of staff deemed appropriate by the Principal, to examine the head of any student or students for the purpose of ascertaining whether head lice are present. Examinations will not take place in front of other students and other students will not be advised of the names of any students who have been identified to have head lice.

2. Procedures

2.1 What to do when Head Lice are Found

Where an active case is detected, the Principal or their nominee will advise the student's parents / caregivers, encourage immediate treatment and advise that a return to school is only possible the day after appropriate treatment has been commenced by the family. Upon returning their child to school, the parents / caregivers must provide information as to what steps they have taken to treat the head lice and what steps they will continue to take to fully eradicate the lice.

The parents of all students in the student's class will be informed in writing that a case of head lice has been found in their child's class with a request for parents/caregivers to examine their own child and treat if required. All families will also be requested and encouraged to frequently check their children.

To facilitate a community-wide approach to the reduction of head lice, parents are encouraged to notify the school if they find their child has head lice, to treat the head lice immediately and to only return their child to school the day after administering the first stage of treatment.

Parents will be advised that head lice elimination requires at least 10 days of follow-up treatment with daily removal of head lice. The Department of Health advises that a few remaining eggs are not a reason for continued exclusion, however, parents will be advised that treatment must continue until all eggs and hatchlings have been removed. An empathetic attitude will be maintained by the entire school community to avoid stigmatising or blaming of families who are experiencing difficulties with control measures. Student well-being is of primary importance.

The Department of Health's website provides information on how to effectively treat head lice, available through the below link:

http://healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/S_T/Treating-head-lice

2.2 Collaborative Approach to Head Lice Reduction

Evidence shows we cannot fully eradicate head lice but we can reduce the number of cases if the whole school community works together in a coordinated way. The College is committed to do this in the following ways:

- Make this policy available to parents /caregivers so they are aware of the procedures that will be followed when headlice is suspected / detected, whilst protecting student's well-being and privacy.
- Screening students for headlice if headlice is suspected, to confirm the presence of headlice. This will usually be done away from other students by the school nurse.
- Withdrawing children from close contact with other children until they can be collected by a parent/ caregiver if deemed appropriate by the Principal.
- Contacting parents /caregivers to advise of the possibility of the presence of headlice and requesting parents / caregivers to inspect their child's hair as soon as possible and provide treatment if necessary.
- Students and staff in classrooms where a case has been found will be asked to regularly check the hair of all their household members for live lice and where found, to commence treatment. They will be asked To follow the treating headlice guidelines provided by the Department of Health on their website.

2.3 Head Lice Reduction Education

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

- Distribute up to date and accurate information regarding detection, treatment and control of head lice to students and their families and staff at the beginning of the school year, or more frequently if deemed appropriate.
- To provide practical advice, maintain an empathetic attitude and consistently avoid stigmatising / blaming families who are experiencing difficulties controlling head lice outbreaks.
- Assist families in accessing community educational resources and support, such as community health centres.
- Encourage children to learn about head lice to help remove any stigma or negative attitudes towards other children.

Reviewed date: [April 2025]
 Approved by: [Executive Principal]
 Next review: [April 2027]

APPENDIX A – SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents/Caregivers

We have discovered cases of head lice in your child's class. Please remember that anyone can catch head lice but with a team approach we can reduce head lice outbreaks.

Please check your children's hair tonight in bright light and check their scalp, paying careful attention to the following areas:

- Front of the scalp
- Nape of the neck
- Behind the ears
- Under the fringe
- At the base of any plaits or ponytails

What to look for:

- Small red dots (head lice bites) behind ears and nape of neck
- Pillows that appear dirtier than usual
- Eggs (not dandruff) – dandruff is flaky and easily removed
- A 'sandy' or 'gritty' feel when running fingers through the hair (these are eggs)

If you find any lice or eggs, please keep your child at home until you have started to treat your child's scalp. Following the first treatment, please continue to use a nit comb every day for at least 10 days.