

Sterling Public School District No. 35

Sterling, North Dakota 58572

Head Lice Management

Descriptor Code JGCA-R

The objectives of this Policy are to avoid misdiagnosis and unneeded school absences, to assure fair treatment for all students affected by head lice, to assist parents in the process of monitoring and resolving the problem, and to provide evidence-based and consistent head lice information to parents and students.

The first goal is prevention. Where lockers are not available, if space allows, require students to hang their coats leaving a space between them, avoid situations where coats are piled up, and remind students not to share headgear, including headphones.

We shall use the following protocol for instances of head lice:

1. Remember: our attitudes about lice can make a student feel unaccepted or discriminated against. Head lice can affect anyone, do not carry disease, do not fly or jump, are transmitted more often in out-of-school activities than in school, and are transmitted through close contact. Getting rid of head lice is a process of checking and removing nits for a number of weeks.
2. The school nurse or designated staff will check any student reported to possibly have head lice.
3. An active infestation of head lice is the presence of live lice or nits (eggs) in clusters, laid close (1/4 in.) from the scalp.
4. If head lice are found, the teacher will be informed immediately, and the child will not use any shared headphones or related items.
5. Parents will be notified to pick up their child as soon as possible. The child will return to the classroom until parents arrive.
6. Procedure for dismissal from and return to school:
 - Give parents a head lice home action plan. Encourage them to take steps to rid head lice from the home environment. Give parents a copy of the 2 pages provided by the ND Dept. of Health in their handbook *Head Lice: A Lousy Problem*. Do not distribute materials recommending treatment products. Do not encourage parents to use head lice products for the purpose of preventing head lice.
 - Inform parents a school nurse or other trained staff member will recheck their child once a week for two weeks after readmission. Encourage parents to conduct daily checks for any signs of reinfestation and to continue to comb out nits. The removal of all nits is encouraged for aesthetic purposes, but not required for school attendance.
 - Encourage parents to inform other parents of their child's close playmates about the head lice incident.
7. Siblings of the student with an active infestation and close playmates may be screened for head lice. If an active case is identified, their parents will be notified.
8. Letters to parents of classmates will NOT be sent and names of affected students shall not be shared with classmates' parents.
9. If the identified student is in kindergarten, the principal and/or school nurse will determine if the entire classroom needs to be screened. Parental consent is not required for classroom screening.
10. Cleaning of the school environment (to be completed on the same day as active case is found if possible): Vacuum upholstered furniture and carpet in the affected classroom and wipe non-upholstered furniture with a damp cloth. Do not use aerosol sprays! It is harmful to those with respiratory conditions and does not remove or kill lice or eggs.
11. Training: the staff members designated to check students for head lice in the absence of the school nurse must be trained by the school nurse. All school staff members should attend a presentation by the school nurse for training in the current practices in the management of head lice.