

WPS Head Lice (PEDICULOSIS) Protocol

Winchester Public Schools is committed to providing a healthy environment for all students and employees. WPS protocol for lice management in our schools is guided by current recommendations from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Harvard School of Public Health, and the National Association for School Nurses (NASN). It is the position of these organizations that the management of Pediculosis (infestation by head lice) should not disrupt the educational process and no disease is associated with head lice. Using these recommendations WPS has established the following guidelines:

When a student is identified with live lice at school, the family will be notified.

The student will be sent home at the end of the day. Families may choose to pick up their child earlier if desired.

A student with live lice should receive an appropriate lice treatment prior to returning to school. Students will not be excluded from school attendance. However families will be notified if live lice are still present upon their return to school requiring further treatment.

The student will be examined upon returning to school for treatment and absence of live lice.

Educational materials will be shared with the family for proper treatment of the student, other family members, and the home.

The standard lice information letter may be sent to families of students in any grade level in which lice has been discovered.

Current evidence does not support the efficacy and cost effectiveness of classroom or school-wide screening for decreasing the incidence of head lice among school children. Families provide the most effective screening by checking their children regularly at home, using appropriate treatments and removing nits.

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Steps to take when your child is identified with live lice at school:

- Speak with your school nurse.
- Choose and use an appropriate treatment. In addition to your school nurse you may wish to consult with your pharmacist, pediatrician, or family physician.
- Treat your child prior to their return to school the next day. Carefully follow all treatment instructions.
- All household members and other close contacts should be checked, and those with live lice should also be treated at the same time.
- Have your child avoid head to head contact with others.
- Discourage your child from sharing personal items such as hats, scarves, headbands, helmets, brushes, combs, or pillows to decrease the likelihood of spread from one person to another.
- All recently worn clothing, hats, bedding, and towels used by anyone having lice or thought to be exposed to lice should be washed in hot water or dry cleaned.
- Personal care items such as combs, brushes, and hair clips should also be washed in hot water or thrown away.
- Toys such as stuffed animals can be placed in a hot dryer for 30 minutes or placed in a plastic bag for two weeks.
- Check your child following treatment. If live lice remain consider consultation with your school nurse, pediatrician, or family physician.