

## **Head Lice Policy**

All countries treat head lice outbreaks in schools differently. Island Academy's policy has been devised using the guidelines offered by the:

Ministry of Health, Science and Technology, (MoEST), Antigua and Barbuda  
National Health Service (NHS) UK,  
Canadian Pediatric Society, Canada

### **School Screening**

For the primary school the administration will conduct 2 lice checks per term. The first check will be in the week one of a new term and the second check will be around 6 weeks later. The school will also check children adhoc if we have an outbreak at any point during the year.

### **General School Policy for Lice and Eggs**

- Please check your children and household members regularly, as it's the most consistent way to maintain healthy scalps.
- Any student with long hair must wear it tied back for school.
- Live lice- If a child is found to have live lice in their hair parents will be informed by telephone. If students are infested with live lice, then they may be sent home from school or asked to continue in isolation. Parents will be told that their child must receive a head lice treatment that evening. They should return to school the next day.
- If a child is found to have eggs in their hair parents will be called and will be told that their child must receive a head lice treatment that evening. They should return to school the next day.
- If there is no evidence that parents have treated children on their return to school, then they may be sent home.
- Live lice do not jump, instead they crawl relatively quickly. Lice are contagious but they can only be spread by direct head-to-head contact.

### **Treatment advice for families**

1. For eggs or lice children need to be treated with a medicated lotion or spray. Using lots of conditioner and 'wet combing' the hair can also help to dislodge the eggs. 'Wet Combing' means to comb wet hair with a conditioner in it with a lice comb. Medicated lice treatments generally kill the lice but not the eggs.
2. To remove eggs from the hair 'lice combs' are helpful but are not fool-proof. The hair needs to be carefully examined and in many cases eggs need to be removed using fingers and removing the egg physically off the hair shaft.
3. Treatment with an approved, properly applied, topical head lice insecticide (two applications 7 to 10 days apart) is recommended when a case of active infestation is detected.
4. In addition, to catch any newly hatched head lice, 'wet combing' should be done on days 1, 5, 9 and 13 to check again that everyone's hair is free of lice.

### **Action for the wider home**

- Head lice can only survive for 1-2 days away from the human host.
- To avoid re-infestation, you should wash items in close or prolonged contact with the head (e.g. hats, pillowcases, brushes and combs). Wash items in hot water ( $\geq 66^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) and dry them in a hot dryer for 15 minutes. Storing any item in a sealed plastic bag for 2 weeks will also kill both live lice and eggs.