



## Ararat Primary School HEADLICE MANAGEMENT POLICY

### **Rationale:**

Head lice (pediculosis) are tiny insects that live on the human scalp where they feed and breed. Health authorities estimated that between 2-3% of primary school children are infested at any one time. While they do not carry or transmit disease, they are a cause of scalp-itch and scratching, which may lead to infection and swollen lymph glands; therefore, they need to be controlled.

### **Aims:**

- To respond to reports of head lice quickly and effectively
- To ensure effective processes for treating head lice are well known and consistently followed
- To ensure that parents and guardians are well informed about head lice and their treatment

### **Implementation:**

- Anyone can catch head lice. Head lice cannot fly, hop or jump. They spread from person to person by head to head contact, and may also be spread by the sharing of personal items such as combs, brushes and hats
- While it is parents who have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice on their children, the school will assist by providing up-to-date head lice management information, by offering a screening process, and by alerting parents when lice are detected through the distribution of class-specific notices
- The school principal will ensure all head lice inspections are carried out by trained parents in accordance with the Parent Managed Head Lice Screening Program. Those parents will be authorised to carry out visual and physical checks of students heads for head lice
- The school will ask parents to sign a permission form allowing their children to be inspected by authorised parent volunteers. Only children whose parents have returned the permission form will be inspected, however, all students may be visually checked
- All children inspected will be provided with a confidential report indicating to parents the results of the inspection
- Consistent with Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001, the principal will ensure that the parents of any child found to have live lice are informed, with a request made that the student be collected from school and not returned until appropriate treatment has commenced
- Upon their return to school, parents of affected children are asked to present the signed declaration indicating that appropriate treatment has commenced
- Where possible, follow-up checks will be undertaken for affected children
- The principal will ensure that information relating to the prevention and eradication of head lice appears throughout the year in the school newsletter, particularly at times of heavy infestations

### **Evaluation:**

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in March, 2012.