



BACUP HOLY TRINITY STACKSTEADS C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL
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Headteachers: Mr. J. Aspin B.Sc. and Mrs. D. Burns B.A.

Dear Parent / Carer

VERBAL ABUSE OF STAFF

The vast majority of parents whose children attend the school have high standards of behaviour, and we enjoy mutually respectful relationships with them.

Unfortunately, a very small minority feel it is acceptable to speak aggressively towards members of staff.

The current situation regarding the on-going head lice problem in Year 1, has resulted on more than one occasion, a parent speaking aggressively to the class teacher, and appearing to blame school staff for the outbreak of head lice.

This is simply not the case. Research shows that the large majority of cases of head lice are the result of transmission outside the school, most often in the family setting. Head lice outbreaks are brought into the school setting from outside, not the other way around.

When we are alerted to a head lice problem, this is communicated to the parents of the children in the class, with the advice to check hair and treat if necessary. That is the limit of what we can do.

From that point on, it is the sole responsibility of parents to check their child's hair, check the hair of other family members, including extended family members who the child has close contact with e.g. cousins, grandparents etc. If head lice are discovered, it is again the responsibility of every parent to take the necessary action to treat the child and any other family members.

In order for a child to become infected, a pregnant female head louse has to make its way into their hair. Head lice cannot fly or jump, and they move slowly, so close head-to-head contact is needed for a significant time for this to happen. Generally, this type of prolonged head-to-head close contact is rare between children in school, but there will undoubtedly be occasions when it does happen. It is for this reason that children with long hair should have it tied up during the school day, as this will reduce the chance of transmission.

By the time eggs or "nits" are visible in a child's hair, the child will have had head lice for at least 6-7 days, and probably longer.

Roots to grow...wings to fly.



Below is a timeline of a louse's life cycle.

1. The louse emerges after 6–7 days.
2. The first moult occurs two days after hatching.
3. The second moult occurs 5 days after hatching.
4. The third moult occurs 10 days after hatching.
5. Emerging from their third moult as adult lice, the female and male begin to reproduce.
6. The female lays her first egg 1–2 days after mating.
7. The female can lay approximately 3–8 eggs per day for the next 16 days.
8. The louse dies, having lived for 32–35 days.

Outbreaks of head lice can be frustrating for parents who follow the rules of detection and treatment, especially if the child has repeat infestations.

However, as mentioned earlier, the large majority of cases of head lice transmission and repeat transmissions occur in settings other than the school, although some will be due to contact in school.

The school has no legal power to prevent a child coming to school if they have head lice, and no power to make parents check their child's hair and treat them. Prolonged outbreaks of head lice in a class is the result of a very small number of parents not taking responsibility for checking and properly treating their child's hair. It is not the fault of the class teacher.

It is easy to blame a school, but if every parent checked and treated their child's hair, and ensured that the source of the head lice is not someone within the family to avoid re-infestation, then no child would come to school with head lice.

Verbal aggression towards any member of staff will not be tolerated at any time, but particularly when the member of staff is not the one at fault. There has been more than one occasion where this has happened, with the most recent being on Wednesday morning.

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I would ask that those parents who have allowed their frustration to boil over recently, to consider the impact that their aggression has on the morale and emotional well-being of the teacher who is responsible for educating and caring for their child, and wants the best for them.

If the verbal abuse of a member of staff becomes a pattern, the parent responsible will be barred from entering the school premises.

Finally, please follow the advice in this letter, as we need every parent to do their bit to control the current head lice outbreak.

Yours sincerely,

J. ASPIN CO-HEADTEACHER

Roots to grow...wings to fly.
