HEAD LICE POLICY

RATIONALE
Most schools will have some students with head lice at any given time and while parents have primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, schools also have a role in the management of head lice infections and in providing support for parents and students. Whilst parents have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice, our school community will work in a cooperative and collaborative manner to assist all families to manage head lice effectively.

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 offering up-to-date information through the newsletter, by offering a screening process, and by alerting parents of lice when detected.
- The school principal will ensure all teachers and aides are provided with professional development regarding head lice, who will then be authorised to carry out visual checks of students heads for head lice (observations without touching of the students head or hair).
- Our qualified First Aid Officer at the school will conduct bi-yearly head lice inspections (physical examinations) of students head and hair for the presence of head lice and also when the need arises.
- The school will ask parents to sign a permission form allowing their children to be inspected (by our specific staff members for the presence of head lice). Only children whose parents have returned the permission form will be inspected, however, all students may be visually checked.
- Where there is evidence of eggs or live head lice, parents/guardians will be confidentially notified in writing indicating to parents the results of the inspection, as well as advice on the latest information regarding head lice.
- Consistent with Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001, the principal will ensure that the parents of any child found to have live lice are informed that their child is to be excluded from attending school until appropriate treatment has commenced. The principal will provide parents of children found to have live lice with information about head lice treatment and prevention.
- Upon their return to school, parents of excluded children must indicate that appropriate treatment has commenced. All excluded children to undergo another inspection from our trained head lice inspectors upon recommencement of school.
- 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.
- The principal must alert parents/guardians of an infestation, particularly the parents/guardians of other students in the same class as the affected child/children.

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

REFERENCES
Department of Human Services-Treating and Controlling Head Lice-“Scratching for Ideas”.
Head Lice Management Kit: (10th July 2008)
Guidelines are updated annually and/or as per DEECD recommendations.

CERTIFICATION
This policy was ratified at the School Council Meeting held at Patterson Lakes Primary School, June 2013.