

Student Illness (Communicable Diseases) and Head Lice

Jennings Street School (JSS) has a responsibility to ensure the provision and maintenance of a safe and secure learning environment for all members of the community. The Occupational Health and Safety Act 1985, requires employers to provide a safe work place, and as far as practical, without risks to health.

Broad Guidelines

- JSS aims to develop responsible behaviour and attitudes in order to eliminate risks to the health and wellbeing of all members of the school community.
- JSS aims to reduce the risk of head lice and disease being spread between members of the community.
- Parents/carers have the responsibility to inform JSS of any potentially serious communicable disease or illness to which their child has been exposed.
- Parents/carers have the responsibility to inform JSS if they have detected head lice on their child.

Head lice

Parents/carers have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice on their children. JSS will alert parents/carers of cases of head lice when it is detected at school. **(see head lice management agreement between schools and parents/guardians/carers).**

Communicable diseases

JSS wishes to minimise the spread of illness and disease as they are of a serious concern to the JSS community.

Rationale

Head lice

JSS has a responsibility to ensure the implementation of relevant regulations and advice concerning head lice. Head lice (pediculosis) are tiny insects that live on the human scalp where they feed and breed. Between 2-3% of primary school children have head lice at any one time. Head lice do not carry or transmit disease; however, they are a cause of head itch and scratching, which may lead to infection and swollen lymph glands. Head lice spread from person to person by head to head contact, and by the sharing of personal items such as combs, brushes and hats. Hygiene is not a major factor in the spread of head lice. The management of head lice, including inspections and communications, must be conducted sensitively to maintain the dignity of students and parents/carers.

Communicable Diseases

Students who have a communicable disease will be excluded from school as indicated in the Infectious Diseases Exclusion Table, published by the Victorian Department of Human Services (attached). JSS is unable to provide long day care for ill students. Students who are unwell need to be cared for at

home. JSS provides emergency care for students who are unwell until a parent/carer is able to collect the child from school. JSS is unable to provide medication without the permission of parents/carers. JSS is unable to transport student's home, to medical appointments or to the hospital.

Implementation

Head lice

- On enrolment, parents/carers will be requested to sign a consent form for head lice inspections. Only children whose parents have signed the permission form will be physically inspected, however, all students may be visually inspected. This permission applies for the duration the child is at school. **(See head lice consent form).**
- Visual inspection of students for head lice are made by people authorised by the Principal, eg. Classroom teachers and will be conducted - when a child shows signs of having head lice (scratching head/appearance of specks in hair).
- Head lice inspections involving the examination of a student are made by people authorised by the Principal and school council, eg school nurse or parent volunteer; in the absence of a school nurse the classroom teacher can examine the student
- If live head lice are found on a student, siblings in other grades will then be inspected.
- Parents/carers will be requested to conduct regular checks of their child's hair. If head lice are discovered parents/carers should inform the class teacher.
- Consistent with Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001, students with live head lice and/or eggs will be provided with a note to take home to inform the parent/carer that their child may have head lice at the conclusion of the school day **(see head lice action form)**
- The student will be excluded from school until treatment has commenced. **(See head lice treatment form)**

Note: The presence of eggs in the hair is not a cause for exclusion however the Principal has the overall responsibility to exclude a student from school

- A note will be sent to the parents/carers of each student in a class where head lice have been detected. It will inform them of the need to check their child's hair regularly.
- Information relating to the prevention and eradication of head lice will appear throughout the year in the school newsletter, particularly at times of heavy infestations.

Communicable Diseases

- A copy of the *Infectious Diseases Exclusions Table* will be included in the newsletter at the beginning of each school year and included in the *Parent Pack* given to all new and current parents/carers. This will be referenced to determine the required action, intervention and length of absence for specific medical conditions.
- Students who attend JSS and are presenting with signs of possible illness or infection – lethargy, temperature, expelling green mucus, headache/stomach ache (vomiting, diarrhoea) – will be sent home.

- Teachers will seek permission from a member of the leadership team before contacting parents/carers to collect an ill child from school.
- If parents/carers are unable to attend school to collect their child the second emergency contact will be called.
- In the event a child needs emergency care an ambulance will be engaged.
- Appropriate enrolment procedures regarding medical intervention and management and the provision of immunisation certificates will be followed.
- Vaccination against influenza will be offered to all staff on an annual basis.
- Vaccination against Hepatitis A & B will be offered to key staff.
- Spill kits will be provided to each classroom.
- When staff members are providing first aid to a student suspected of having a communicable disease, standard precautions will be followed. Standard precautions are practices which ensure that the basic level of infection control is used at all times and includes:
 - the washing and drying of hands before and after contact with contaminated objects;
 - the use of protective barriers which may include gloves and masks;
 - immediate disposal of contaminated items into the rubbish bin.

References

- School Policy and Advisory Guide
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/spag/default.htm>
- Victorian Government Health Information, *Infectious Diseases Exclusion Table*,
<http://ideas.health.vic.gov.au/guidelines/school-exclusion-table.asp>

Resources

Funds will be allocated annually for appropriate first aid training and materials.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

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References	

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V1 – 05.06.2019 amendment to staff vaccination