

Head Lice and Nits Policy

Vision: Grow - Flourish - Succeed

Mission: Together we inspire creative, mindful learners who value diversity, support one another and strive for success.

1. Introduction

Head lice are tiny insects that live in human hair. They are particularly common in children. They can't fly, jump or swim and are spread by head-to-head contact, climbing from the hair of an infected person to the hair of someone else. A head lice infestation isn't the result of dirty hair or poor hygiene. All types of hair can be affected, regardless of its length and condition.

Head lice and nits can be visible with the naked eye. It's recommended to use the conditioner/fine toothed combing detection method, although use of a magnifying lens may be necessary to find crawling lice or to identify a developing nymph inside a viable nit. Nits are often confused with other particles found in hair such as dandruff, hair spray droplets, and dirt particles.

Head lice continue to be an ongoing nuisance. The GFS attends to the guidelines for the treatment and eradication of head lice.

2. Purpose

This policy provides procedures for schools and parents to follow in the treatment of head lice and nits.

3. Aims and Objectives

- Decrease school absenteeism
- Support families in their efforts to control and eliminate head lice
- Maintain student privacy

4. Assessment and recording

Symptoms

Head lice often cause a person's scalp to itch. Itching isn't caused by lice biting the scalp, but by an allergy to the lice. However, not everyone is allergic to head lice, so you may not notice a head lice infestation. In some cases, a rash may appear on the back of the neck. This is caused by a reaction to lice droppings.

In working with head lice and student, it is important to keep the following elements in mind:

Implementation of head lice surveillance and control procedures is based on current scientific research and best practice.

- Information about head lice infestation is to be shared on a "need to know" basis.
- Consideration of the student's ability to understand if they have head lice and if this information is developmentally appropriate.
- The importance of the School Nurse and/or school staff documenting head lice surveillance efforts.

Note: In case suspected head lice are reported to the school nurse a head inspection may be carried out by the school nurse. If the teacher suspects, the nurse should check and the doctor if available should confirm. If a parent opts out of allowing the nurse to examine their child, they must, however, collect the child as requested and have the child examined by another medical practitioner.

When a student is found to have live lice:



- The parents are notified, and information related to detecting and eliminating head lice with advice to check family members and taking precautionary measures to avoid family infestation is provided by email. Best practice is to also attempt contact personally by phone.
- Students with live lice are excluded from school until appropriate treatment has commenced.
- The parent is instructed that the student should be treated before returning to school.
- Students are allowed back in school with nits provided they have been treated with medicated shampoo to remove lice.
- Repeat treatment one week after the first shampoo to ensure that any bugs that hatch from the eggs (which treatments do not destroy) will be eradicated.
- It is the best practice to determine if the student has siblings at school. If yes, then take consent from parents to check the siblings.

Rescreening is needed 7-10 days after initial treatments

- to inspect hair for live crawling lice
- If lice and/or nits are found, the parent is notified to keep nit-picking and combing (at least daily per day for the next two weeks)
- Record these head checks in online sheet
- If live lice/nits are found the process of notification to parents/guardians by email keeping privacy and confidentiality begins again.
- If future checks reveal an increased number of nits present or it is obvious to the school nurse that the student's hair has not been treated, the parent will be contacted for follow-up and support.

When a student is found to have nits present (no live lice detected):

- The student is not sent home from school.
- Students found to have nits can come to school.



Notification

- The customary notification for head lice is to be done individually/case-by-case to the parent/guardian of an infested student.
- In the rare case where a student is to be excluded, an email will be sent to the parent with a phone call.

Exclusion

Note: the presence of severe infestations of untreated head lice can be disruptive to the educational setting.

- In the rare case that a student has either:

- 1) chronic head lice infestation or
- 2) severe head lice infestation that is disruptive to the learning environment, the building nurse will be consulted.

- If in the nurse's professional judgment, it is determined that Exclusion needs to be considered, the nurse will consult with the parent and health advice will be given. With chronic head lice infestation



cases, the nurse will secure documentation of repeated and unsuccessful head lice management measures in the school health file. The return of a student after exclusion will be predicated on a head check in the clinic with parent consent to screen for any left live head lice.

- It may be appropriate in the judgment of the School Nurse to monitor progress of lice management over a period of time; the goal is supporting the family in eradication of this pest.

Documentation

All students identified with head lice will have their names and the dates the lice/nits were found, recorded in an online communicable disease excel sheet.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibility of School Medical team:

- School staff is trained by the School Nurse in head lice detection and management procedures.
- Maintaining confidentiality of student information.
- The School Nurse can use professional judgment to determine when unusual measures are necessary to respond to extraordinary cases.
- The nurse will secure documentation of repeated and unsuccessful head lice management measures
- Keeping the student confidentiality, seek consent from parents for examination or in case screening is advised

Responsibility of the Students:

- Students are strictly discouraged to share hats, combs, coats, pillows or other personal items.
- Girls with long hair are advised to wear their hair in "contained" hair styles (ponytails, buns, braids, etc.).

Responsibility of the Teachers:

- Inform the school medical team for suspected students with head lice/nits
- Confidentiality of the suspected students is maintained

Responsibility of the Parents:


- Proper treatment of their child when it is needed
- Support the child in elimination of head lice and nits
- Inform the school (Class teacher and School Clinic) if any lice are found at home.

5. General strategy

To support parents or guardians in adopting a consistent and collaborative approach to head lice management, the school is committed to providing up-to-date and accurate information on the **detection, treatment, and prevention** of head lice. This information will be made available to parents and staff upon request and may also be distributed proactively when cases are identified within the school community maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of the confirmed case.

6. Monitoring and review

This policy has been reviewed and approved by the teaching staff and leadership teams at GEMS Founders School, Dubai for implementation.

Signed 
School Doctor

Date 22 August 2025.....



Signed *Monia Cimichello*
Manager School Operations

Date 22 August 2025.

Signed *[Signature]*
Executive Principal/CEO/GEMS Executive Vice President- Education

Date 22 August 2025.

Next policy review date:
February 2026