



HEAD LICE

Responsibility:	<i>Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being</i>
Legal References:	<i>Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2, s. 265(1)(m); Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19</i>
Related References:	<i>IS-1480-05 – Head Lice Exclusion Notice;</i> <i>IS-1480-03 – Notice to Parents Regarding Head Lice in Your Child's Classroom;</i> <i>IS-1480-01 – Head Lice Parent/Guardian Response Form;</i> <i>IS-1480-02 – Involvement of Non-School Board Employee Permission Form;</i> <i>Region of Waterloo Public Health Head Lice Pamphlet</i>
Revisions:	<i>January 2016, June 2026</i>
Reviewed:	<i>October 2016</i>

1. Preamble

- 1.1 Head lice are wingless insects that live in human hair and feed on blood from the scalp.
- 1.2 Head lice can spread easily between children playing or working together in schools, and between members of the same family.
- 1.3 Although head lice do not cause disease or illness, the WRDSB aims to:
 - 1.3.1 Prevent the spread of head lice in its schools; and
 - 1.3.2 Support families experiencing considerable difficulty with head lice.

2. Responding to Cases of Head Lice

- 2.1 A staff member will inform the principal if they:
 - 2.1.1 Become aware that a student has head lice; or
 - 2.1.2 Have reasonable grounds to believe that a student has head lice.
- 2.2 If the principal confirms that a student has head lice, or the principal has reasonable grounds to believe that a student has head lice, the principal will:
 - 2.2.1 Notify the student's parent/guardian that their child:
 - Has head lice or is believed to have head lice; and
 - Will be excluded from school, effective the following school day, until the conditions outlined in the Head Lice Exclusion Notice (IS-1480-05) are met.
 - 2.2.2 Provide the student's parent/guardian with:
 - A Head Lice Exclusion Notice (IS-1480-05);
 - A Head Lice Parent/Guardian Response Form (IS-1480-01); and
 - A copy of the [Region of Waterloo Public Health Head Lice Pamphlet](#).
 - 2.2.3 File a copy of the Head Lice Exclusion Notice (IS-1480-05) in the student's Ontario Student Record. Please refer to [Administrative Procedure 1050 – Ontario Student Record \(OSR\) and Office Index Card \(OIC\)](#) for information regarding retention periods.
 - 2.2.4 Provide the parents/guardians of all other students in the class with:

- A Notice Regarding Head Lice in Your Child's Classroom (IS-1480-03); and
 - A copy of the Region of Waterloo Public Health Head Lice Pamphlet.
- 2.3 A student must be provided with school work to complete at home while excluded from school; the student must be given an opportunity to catch up on missed school work as part of the re-entry process.
- 2.4 As soon as the parent/guardian of the excluded student returns the completed Head Lice Parent/Guardian Response Form (IS-1480-01) to the principal, the exclusion ends and the student may return to school.
- 2.5 If possible, the principal will confirm that the returning student does not have head lice; if multiple applications of a treatment are expected, the principal will confirm that the student does not have head lice on or after the date that the final application of the treatment is expected.

3. Environmental Precautions

- 3.1 The following precautions will help minimize the spread of head lice in the school:
- 3.1.1 Discourage students from using each other's personal articles and clothing (e.g., brushes, combs, hats, sporting helmets, scarves and coats);
 - 3.1.2 Encourage students to keep hats and scarves in coat sleeves, pockets, school bags or plastic bags;
 - 3.1.3 Permanently assign resting mats, towels or pillows to younger children (e.g., junior and senior kindergarten) and keep these articles separated during use and storage;
 - 3.1.4 Assign individual coat hooks or lockers to students.
- 3.2 Extra housecleaning and the use of insecticide spraying are not needed.

4. Referral for Professional Lice Removal Services

- 4.1 In cases where a parent/guardian is experiencing considerable difficulty with successfully treating their child(ren)'s head lice and, as a result, their child(ren)'s education is at risk due to missing a significant amount of school, the principal may consider referring the parent/guardian for professional lice removal services.
- 4.2 The referral will take place in accordance with the following process:
- 4.2.1 The principal will email the System Administrator responsible for Safe Schools to request a referral for professional lice removal services; the email must include copies of any of the following documents related to the referral:
 - Head Lice Exclusion Notices (IS-1480-05); and
 - Head Lice Parent/Guardian Response Forms (IS-1480-01).
 - 4.2.2 Upon receiving approval from the System Administrator responsible for Safe Schools, the principal will contact the parent/guardian and offer to provide professional lice removal services at no cost to the parent/guardian.
 - 4.2.3 If the parent/guardian accepts the offer, the principal will provide the parent/guardian with an Involvement of Non-School Board Employee Permission Form (IS-1480-02).
 - 4.2.4 As soon as the parent/guardian returns the completed Involvement of Non-School Board Employee Permission Form (IS-1480-02), the principal will:
 - Contact the approved service provider to request professional lice removal services; and

- Provide the approved service provider with a copy of the completed Involvement of Non-School Board Employee Permission Form (IS-1480-02).
- 4.2.5 The approved service provider will contact the parent/guardian to schedule an appropriate intervention.
- 4.2.6 Following the intervention, the approved service provider will send an invoice for services rendered to the principal.
- 4.2.7 The principal will send the invoice to the System Administrator responsible for Safe Schools.
- 4.2.8 The System Administrator responsible for Safe Schools will arrange for payment of the invoice.

5. Volunteer Head Check Program

- 5.1 A principal may choose to implement a Volunteer Head Check Program, subject to the following conditions:
 - 5.1.1 The principal has identified a need for the program in the school community.
 - 5.1.2 School staff and School Council support the implementation of the program.
 - 5.1.3 The principal is able to establish a volunteer base that would be willing to carry out the program.
 - 5.1.4 The principal has taken into account the cultural practices of students in the school (e.g., students wearing head coverings such as hijabs, patkas or durags)
- 5.2 To implement a Volunteer Head Check Program, the principal will:
 - 5.2.1 Establish a team of volunteers from among staff, parents/guardians and community members who are willing to carry out the program.
 - 5.2.2 Identify the children (e.g., grades JK to 4) who would be included in the head check program.
 - 5.2.3 Prepare a letter/consent form to be sent home with each child that would be checked. No students can be checked unless consent is given by the parent/guardian.
 - 5.2.4 Establish a location for head checks.
 - 5.2.5 Provide training to the team of volunteers who will be carrying out the program; the training should include:
 - Demonstration of how to do a head check;
 - Use a “no touch” technique with wooden applicators to part hair and check under the bangs, behind the ears and at the back of the neck;
 - Any nits or live lice removed should be placed in a sealed plastic bag or other sealed container;
 - If the scalp has any open areas or broken skin, gloves are recommended before contact;
 - Log of cases found;
 - In-school reporting process;
 - Protection of privacy of student information;
 - Communication with the child; and
 - Consideration for cultural practices.
 - 5.2.6 Prepare equipment kits for the team of volunteers:
 - Disposable nitrile gloves;
 - Wooden applicators;

- Student lists;
- Log book (record name/date of cases);
- Source of soap and water for hand washing.

- 5.2.7 Establish suggested school procedures for volunteers:
- Office or school staff check the child for final confirmation;
 - Inform the child in a sensitive manner (determine the best person);
 - Inform the parent/guardian (determine the best person);
 - Document each case in a log book (include the name and date).