PREVENTION OF THE SPREAD OF HEAD LICE POLICY

National Quality Standard (NQS)

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| Quality Area 2: Children’s Health & Safety  |
| 2.1 | Health  | Each child’s health is promoted.  |
| 2.1.2 | Health Practices and procedures  | Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.  |
| 2.2 | Safety  | Each child is protected  |
| 2.2.1 | Supervision  | At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.  |
| Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities  |
| 6.1 | Supportive relationships with families  | Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.  |

# Purpose

To ensure parents, staff, educators and healthcare workers are well informed about the early identification of head lice and managing infestations through effective treatment and communication with families.

Our service aims to:

* Keep children safe from the spread of head lice at
* Outline the roles and responsibilities of families, educators and management who are involved in early detection, treatment and control of head lice.
* Document effective treatment and management strategies that are vital, as head lice cannot be exterminated.
* Provide information and support for families.

# Policy statement

## Values

 is committed to:

* providing a safe environment for all children, staff and persons participating in programs at
* creating and maintaininga well-informed community (parents, Carers, educators, children) confident in their ability to manage head lice.
* providing a clear set of guidelines and procedures to be followed by parents/Carerswith regard to attendance if children have an infestation of head lice

## Scope

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/Carers, children and others attending the programs and activities of , including during offsite excursions and activities.

This policy includes encouraging parents not to send their child/ren to Preschool with untreated head lice.

## Background and legislation

#### Background

Educators, administrators, parents/carers and children should be proactively and appropriately informed about what the symptoms of a head lice infestation are and how head lice can be spread.

The policy aims to encourage each family to do its part at home with routine screening, early detection, accurate identification and thorough removal of lice and nits. Routine screenings can help prevent the spread of lice by finding them before they spread. If caught in the early stages, lice and their eggs can be manually removed without the use of pesticides.

Children with nits should not attend the Apollo Bay Preschool until they have been treated for nits.

**Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:**

* Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
* Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
* National Quality Standard, including Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice and Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety

## Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the General Definitions section of this manual.

**Head lice**: The presence of eggs (nits) and/or adult lice that have hatched, found in the hair.

**Nits**: are an empty egg casing, or the lice eggs themselves. Hatched nit casings can remain in the hair for months after treatment. Removing nits is a time-consuming process.

## Sources and related policies

#### Sources

* Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009 <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/head-lice/regulations>
* Victorian Government Department of Education Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001, School Exclusion Table
* Department of Health Headlice Management Guidelines[www.health.vic.gov.au/headlice](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/headlice)
* <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/head-lice/resources>

#### Related Service policies

* *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
* *Staffing Policy*
* *Supervision of Children Policy*

# Procedures

**The Approved Provider is responsible for:**

* Promptly informing all parents/carers of a case of head lice at the Apollo Bay Preschool
* Support parents and children who have head lice by providing factual information, reducing parental anxiety and not singling out individual children with head lice
* Record confidentially all cases so an outbreak can potentially be avoided

**The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:**

* Confidentially notify the parent/caregiver of a child who is suspected of having live head lice and request that the child is treated before returning to the service the following day.

#### All staff are responsible for:

* Providing information and raising awareness to children, their parents/Carersabout head lice and their treatment.
* Communicating with parents/carers about head lice and head lice prevention
* Encourage parents/carers to tie back children’s hair when attending the Apollo Bay Preschool

**Parents/Carers are responsible for:**

* Routinely screening for nits and acting on any detection of nits through thorough removal of lice and nits
* Ensuring the child does not attend the Preschool until after the treatment of head lice has commenced(in accordance with Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009).
* Treating head lice safely and as recommended.
* Maintaining a sympathetic attitude and avoiding stigmatising or blaming families who are finding it hard to control head lice.

# Evaluation

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

* review the policy to determine whether it is effective and adequately addresses a nit infestation
* regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy
* review procedures, including notification of parents/carers and information and awareness
* revise the policy and procedures as part of the service’s policy review cycle, or as required by legislation, research, policy and best practice

# Attachments

* Department of Health Fact Sheet \_Treating and controlling head lice

# Authorisation

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of on 10/5/19.

# Review date: 19/05/2021