

## **LETTER FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS IN A CLASSROOM WITH A CONFIRMED CASE OF HEAD LICE**

<School Letterhead>

<Insert Date>

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Subject: Notification of Head Lice in Our Classroom

We are writing to inform you that a case of head lice (Pediculosis) has been confirmed in your child's classroom. While head lice are a common occurrence and not a health hazard, we understand the concern this may cause and are committed to providing you with information and guidance to effectively manage this situation.

Understanding Head Lice:

- Head lice are tiny insects that live on the scalp and can cause a tickling sensation or itching. However, itching is not always a reliable indicator of an infestation.
- It may take 4-6 weeks after the first infestation for itching to occur. In subsequent infestations, itching can develop within 24-48 hours.
- A diagnosis of head lice requires the detection of live lice. The presence of nits (lice eggs) alone does not confirm an active infestation.
- An infested individual typically carries fewer than 20 head lice, and each louse can live for three to four weeks if not treated.

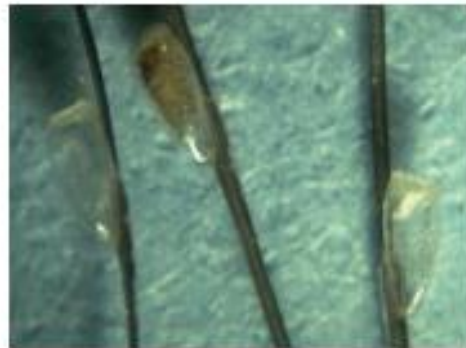
Detection and Misdiagnosis:

- It's common to misdiagnose head lice. Dandruff, hairspray droplets, scabs, dirt, or other insects are often mistaken for lice or nits.
- To accurately detect head lice, use a fine-toothed lice comb. This method is more effective and faster than visual examination.
- Follow the steps outlined in the steps for effective detection, including using conditioner and combing the hair thoroughly.
  - Apply ample conditioner to dry hair, enough to soak from the scalp to the end of the strands.
  - Remove tangles with a regular comb.
  - Start behind the ears and comb the hair section by section. Separating the hair with hair clips is helpful.
  - Place the lice comb against the scalp and pull to the end of the hair.
  - Check the comb for lice after each pull.
  - Wipe the comb with a tissue each time and look for lice.
  - Place the tissue in a bag.
  - Check all the hair over the entire head.
  - Repeat combing for every part of the head at least 5 times.
  - Once finished, tie the bag with the soiled tissues and throw it in the garbage.
  - If lice are detected and treatment is required, ensure all conditioners are washed from the hair before treatment.

What do nits (eggs) look like?

Nits are attached to the shaft of the hair close to the scalp with a glue-like substance. They are not easily removed and will not fall or shake out of the hair. Nits that have already

hatched are often more visible than eggs that have not because they appear white in color against dark hair. Nits that have not hatched blend into the hair color of the infested person. Nits are found more easily at the back of the head along the hair line.



#### Treatment:

- Anyone with an active infestation (live lice) should receive appropriate treatment.
- Health Canada recommends treatments like pyrethrins, permethrin 1%, lindane, or Resultz®.
- Treatments typically involve an initial application followed by a second application after 7 days to kill any lice that have hatched since the first treatment.

#### Preventive Measures:

- Regularly check your child's hair for lice, especially if they report itching or irritation.
- Encourage your child to avoid head-to-head contact with others and not to share personal items like hats or hairbrushes.

#### School Measures:

- We are taking steps to manage the situation in school, including cleaning and disinfecting as appropriate.
- We respect the privacy of the affected individual(s) and ask for your cooperation in maintaining a supportive and understanding environment.

#### Further Assistance:

- If you find live lice on your child, please inform the school and begin treatment as recommended.
- If you have questions or need assistance, please feel free to contact our school or public health.
- We appreciate your cooperation and understanding in managing this situation. Together, we can ensure a healthy and comfortable environment for all our students.

Yours in education,  
<Insert Principal's Name>  
<Insert Principal's Email Address>