

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

<School Letterhead>

<Insert Date>

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Subject: Suspected Case of Head Lice for [Student's Name]

We are contacting you regarding a matter of importance concerning your child, [Student's Name]. It has come to our attention that there may be a suspected case of head lice (Pediculosis) involving your child. We understand that this can be a sensitive and concerning issue, but please rest assured that head lice are a common and manageable condition.

Understanding Head Lice:

- Head lice can cause a tickling sensation or itching on the scalp, but not everyone experiences these symptoms.
- It can take up to 4-6 weeks for itching to develop after the first case of head lice. In subsequent infestations, itching can occur within 24-48 hours.
- To confirm an active infestation, the presence of live head lice is required. Nits alone do not indicate an active infestation.
- Typically, fewer than 20 mature head lice are found on an infested individual, and misdiagnosis is common.

Detection of Head Lice:

- The best way to find live lice is by using a fine-tooth 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.



Recommended Treatment:

- If live lice are detected, treatment is necessary.
- Health Canada recommends treatments such as pyrethrins, permethrin 1%, lindane, or Resultz®. Each treatment involves an initial application followed by a second application after 7 days to target newly hatched lice.

Why is a second treatment required?

- Most treatments effectively kill lice but are not as effective against nits. The second treatment ensures that any lice hatched after the first treatment are eliminated before they can lay new eggs.

Action Steps:

- Please follow the attached guidelines to check for head lice.
- If you detect live lice, begin the recommended treatment immediately.
- Inform the school if live lice are found so we can take appropriate measures.

Preventive Measures:

- Regular checks for head lice are advisable.
- Encourage your child to avoid direct head-to-head contact and not to share personal items like hats or hairbrushes.

School Measures:

- We are taking steps to ensure cleanliness and hygiene in our classrooms.
- The privacy and dignity of all students are of utmost importance to us.
- We request your cooperation in addressing this matter promptly and discreetly. If you have any concerns or need further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Thank you for your attention to this important health matter.

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