Head Lice Policy

Policy Statement:
At Mt Hawthorn Out of School Hours Centre children are in a situation where they have close contact with each other. This provides the opportunity for head lice to be transferred from head to head. The service will take every precaution to limit the spread of head lice within the Centre, whilst ensuring children are not discriminated against, or unnecessarily excluded from the Centre. The successful management of outbreaks will require a co-operative effort from staff and parents.

Procedures:
In order to control the spread of infection at the centre the following steps will be taken:

- Children who scratch their heads a lot will be examined by staff for evidence of eggs (nits) or lice near the scalp.
- Children who are suspected of being infected will be unable to attend the Centre until treatment for the lice has been undertaken. Staff members will always confirm their inspection with the Director or another staff member before the parent is contacted.
- Parents will be asked to collect their child and keep them away from the Centre until the day after appropriate treatment has been started, and the lice are removed. Parents will be given a letter with a tear off and return section to be filled in to confirm that treatment has commenced.
- Staff will ensure that the child does not have close contact with other children whilst waiting for collection.
- The child may return to the Centre the day after treatment has commenced and when all live head lice have been removed. A few remaining eggs are not a reason for continued exclusion, however, the parent must continue treatment until all eggs and hatchlings have been removed (usually over the following ten days).
- During an outbreak of head lice at the Centre, parents of all children should inspect their child’s head for signs of infestation.
- When an incident of head lice occurs at the Centre, a notice will be displayed at the Centre requesting parents to check their children. A letter will be given to parents advising how to treat hair effectively using hair conditioner.
- All staff will be given information and training on detecting head lice.
- To help prevent staff from becoming infected, those with long hair will be required to tie their hair up whilst they are at the Centre.
- Where a staff member becomes infected with eggs or lice they will be required to go home to commence treatment on their hair as soon as a relief staff member arrives.
- To reduce the spread of infections and maintain appropriate hygiene standards.

Sources:
Staying Healthy in Child Care by National Health and Medical Research Council
Harvard University School of Public Health, www.hsph.harvard.edu/headlice.html
NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK
Education and Care Services National Regulations – Reg 75(h); 75(l); 89; 93; 99(1)(2); 115; 118; 119; 120; 126; 127; 131(1); 131(2)(d)
National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care (Nov 2010) – Element 2.1.2; Element 2.1.3; Element 2.1.4; Element 2.3.1; Element 2.3.2; Element 3.1.2
Early Years Learning Framework for Australia
Framework for School Age Care in Australia

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