



BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

707 Pediculosis (Head Lice)

DIRECTIONAL POLICY

Healthy Schools and Workplaces

Title of Administrative Procedure:

Pediculosis (Head Lice)

Date Approved:

April 2025

Projected Review Date:

April 2030

Directional Policy Alignment:

This Administrative Procedure aligns with the Healthy Schools and Workplaces Directional Policy 700. The Board recognizes that the health and well-being of students and staff is foundational to their success. A healthy environment involves being respectful of one another's social, emotional, spiritual, and physical well-being. We all have a collective responsibility to create healthy work environments to keep students and staff safe.

Alignment with Multi-Year Strategic Plan:

The Pediculosis Administrative Procedure supports our mission of cultivating the heart, mind, body, and soul of students and staff. The Board is committed to the safety and well-being of our staff and students and will ensure that Board employees are aware of CDSBEO Administrative Procedures connected to Healthy Schools and Workplaces. This mission calls the Board to these Strategic Priorities:

[CDSBEO Strategic Plan 2025-2030](#)

Purpose

This Administrative Procedure is intended to support schools, parent(s)/guardian(s), and other members of the school community to understand Pediculosis and its related impact on the individual and wider community. This procedure provides for an awareness and recognition of

Pediculosis and an overview of multi-layered approaches to support students, staff, and families within school communities.

Action Required

The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario is committed to a partnership with parent(s)/guardian(s), students, staff, and the school community in understanding and managing Pediculosis, with dignity and compassion for all. The Board recognizes that Pediculosis is not a reportable disease under the Health Promotion and Protection Act. It is defined by Public Health organizations as a nuisance, not a disease.

According to the Canadian Pediatric Society (CPS): A Clinical Update (2018):

- Pediculosis infestations are not a primary health hazard or a vector for disease, but they are a societal problem with substantial costs.
- Definitive diagnosis of Pediculosis infestation requires the detection of a living louse.
- Research indicates that Pediculosis is frequently misdiagnosed and over diagnosed, particularly when relying on nit detection only; without microscopy, the ability to distinguish viable from nonviable nits is difficult.
- When a live louse is detected in a student's head, a full course of treatment and avoiding close head-to-head activities are recommended.

The CPS states that well-established treatment options for a proven Pediculosis infestation include topical insecticides and oral agents. Non insecticidal products that have been approved by Health Canada can all be obtained over the counter.

The treatment and eradication of Pediculosis is ultimately parent(s)/guardian(s) responsibility; however, the school will provide information to guide them in their options.

According to the CPS, families of students in the same classroom as a student who has Pediculosis must be alerted, and information on diagnosis and management should be shared with those parent(s)/guardian(s) as well. The dignity and privacy of all parties must be maintained at all times. Messaging that Pediculosis is a common nuisance, not a disease risk or a sign of lack of cleanliness is important.

Ultimately, education for staff, students, and parent(s)/guardian(s) around Pediculosis detection and management is the key factor in reducing outbreaks in schools.

Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- Reviewing this Administrative Procedure to ensure its alignment with the Health Schools and Workplaces Directional Policy.
- Reviewing the Pediculosis Administrative Procedure as part of its regular Policy and Procedures review cycle.

The Director of Education is responsible for:

- Designating resources for ensuring the implementation of and compliance with this Administrative Procedure.

Superintendents of Schools and System Portfolios are responsible for:

- Supporting Principals and other employees for whom they have supervisory responsibility with the implementation and compliance with the procedures and requirements under this Administrative Procedure.
- Collaborating with the Public Health Units within the jurisdiction of the Board to ensure that updated educational materials are available to schools.

Principals and Vice-Principals are responsible for:

- Implementing this Administrative Procedure in accordance with the parameters outlined.
- Providing leadership and support for staff in their knowledge, understanding, and implementation of this Administrative Procedure.
- Establishing guidelines for trained screeners in monitoring and checking students for Pediculosis within the school. If desired, external professional services may be used for regular screening, at the school's expense.
- Communicating with the parent(s)/guardian(s) when a student is identified as having Pediculosis and requesting that the student be treated as soon as possible. If possible, the parent(s)/guardian(s) should pick up the student to initiate treatment. If this is not feasible, staff should promote preventative practices to avoid further infestation.
- Providing a letter to parent(s)/guardian(s) when a student is identified as having Pediculosis which outlines the expectation that the student may return to class only when treatment has been administered (*Appendix A*), and a signed Verification of Treatment for Pediculosis (*Appendix B*) has been submitted to the school.
- Providing written instructions for treatment to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of each identified student.
- Ensuring that the student who returns to school after having Pediculosis is indeed Pediculosis free.

- Sending the Letter of Attention (*Appendix C*) home to all parent(s)/guardian(s) of students in the class where there is a live case. If multiple cases are found during a short time frame (e.g., two-three-week period), the Principal will determine the number of times the letter is sent home.
- Prioritizing and preserving the affected child's well-being and dignity.
- Being culturally responsive when supporting students and families through occurrences of Pediculosis.
- Creating a school action plan to respond to cases of Pediculosis which ensures that the dignity, privacy, and well-being of students is prioritized, and which outlines school and classroom practices which control the spread of Pediculosis, to include:
 - An annual communication to parent(s)/guardian(s) about Pediculosis, using information from Board Administrative Procedures and local Health Units for insertion on the school website, as well as in newsletters, student agendas, etc.
 - Inform parent(s)/guardian(s) of potential screening options for Pediculosis.
 - A process for educating staff on Pediculosis to avoid misdiagnosis.
 - Clear communication in regard to re-admission in alignment with this Administrative Procedure.
 - Reinforcement that reporting Pediculosis is encouraged, and that confidentiality will be maintained.
 - Communication throughout the year reminding parent(s)/guardian(s) to check student's hair regularly for Pediculosis and nits.

Staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are knowledgeable about the requirements and parameters outlined in this Administrative Procedure.
- Being aware of the signs and symptoms of a Pediculosis infestation.
- Reporting infestation of Pediculosis to the Principal.
- Actively promote preventative practices to avoid further infestation.
- Distributing communication materials as per the Principal's direction.
- Prioritizing and preserving the affected child's well-being and dignity.
- Being culturally responsive when supporting students and families through occurrences of Pediculosis.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are responsible for:

- Being aware of the signs and symptoms of a Pediculosis infestation.
- Checking the student regularly for Pediculosis and/or nits, but specifically when the school has notified the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the student may have come into contact with Pediculosis.

- Reviewing with the student strategies to avoid Pediculosis, such as no sharing of hats, combs or brushes, and no head-to-head contact.
- Reporting suspected cases of Pediculosis to the Principal.
- Arranging for the student to be picked up from school as soon as possible, and commencing treatment, should they be contacted by the school to indicate that Pediculosis has been found in the student's hair.
- Treating the student in accordance with Public Health Guidelines and the Verification of Treatment for Pediculosis parameters.
- Ensuring treatment for Pediculosis is complete, prior to the student returning to school.
- Completing the Verification of Treatment for Pediculosis form provided by the school (Appendix C), indicating the treatment which has occurred, and returning this form to the school when the student(s) are ready to return.

Progress Indicators

- Increased awareness within the school community of the signs, symptoms, and treatment of Pediculosis through communication and distribution of Public Health materials to the school community.
- Processes within the Administrative Procedure are adhered to in support of students, staff, and families and to mitigate a Pediculosis infestation within the school environment.

Definitions

- **Pediculosis (Head Lice)** – Pediculosis/Head Lice are tiny insects that live only on the scalp of human beings. They do not have wings so they cannot fly or jump, and they are not found on cats, dogs, or any other household pet. The bites from Pediculosis/Head Lice can cause itching and scratching. Scratching may cause sores, which may get infected.
- **Nits** – Nits are the eggs that the Pediculosis/Head Lice lay. Live eggs can range in colour from off-white to dark brown and can also be the colour of the hair they are on. Nits are typically half the size of a pinhead, but they can be smaller or larger. They stick to the hair and do not fall off if touched. After the eggs are hatched, the shells are white. These empty shells stay on the hair as the hair grows.

Related Documents

- Appendix A – [Letter of Notification of Suspected Pediculosis](#)
- Appendix B – [Verification of Treatment for Pediculosis](#)

- Appendix C – [Letter of Attention to Classes of Identified Students](#)

References

- [Canadian Pediatric Society: A Clinical Update \(2018\)](#)
- [Caring for Kids: Head Lice](#)
- [Eastern Ontario Health Unit](#)
- [Health Canada](#)
- [South East Health Unit](#)