



DELVES LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Delves Lane, Consett, Co Durham, DH8 7ES Head

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READY RESPECTFUL SAFE

Tuesday 14th March 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

Head lice

We seem to be having a persistent outbreak of headlice at the moment. Please can we ask parents to check their children's hair weekly.

As a school we want to ensure parents/carers are provided with the advice and support to effectively detect and treat cases of head lice affecting their own children. For information on how to spot, treat and prevent head lice you may wish to visit NHS Choices at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-lice/pages/introduction.aspx/amp/>

We understand your frustrations and concerns regarding head lice so here are some answers to your questions.

- **Who is responsible for the prevention of head lice?**
It remains parental responsibility to detect and administer treatment for head lice to their own children.
- **Why do you not exclude children from school who have head lice?**
The Department for Children, Schools and Families advises that pupils should not be excluded. The reason for this is that although head lice are unpleasant it is not classed as an infectious disease, which warrants keeping a pupil away from school.
- **Why do we no longer receive letters when there is an outbreak of head lice?**
Most schools are likely to have a few pupils with head lice at any one time. On that basis, 'alert' letters could potentially be required every day of the school year. 'Alert' letters also frequently lead parents to attempt to treat their children preventatively, which is neither effective nor advised. Head lice infection cannot be prevented, and over-use of insecticide treatments may lead to resistance.
- **What is the school doing to help control infection?**
Although schools no longer have 'nit nurses' we do recognise that we still have an important role in supporting parents in managing the problem. By working closely with parents and our pupils we can hopefully make a difference. We will provide advice and support to parents on detection and treatment. If your child is suspected of having head lice we will inform you and request that you check your child and treat if necessary.
- **What can I do as a parent to help control infection?**
As previously mentioned it is parental responsibility to detect and administer treatment for head lice to their own children. We would like you to check your child for head lice once a week using a nit comb which are available from the local chemist. We also promote the 'Once a week, take a peek' campaign. Each week on a Friday, we would encourage you to 'take a peek!' in your child's hair as head lice don't always cause an itchy scalp (head) so many people will be unaware that they are infected. We understand many children like to wear their hair down but we do request that long hair is tied up to minimise head to head contact in school.

Detection and effective ongoing treatment of head lice is key to reducing the outbreaks.

Thank you for your support with this matter.

B Woods

Mrs B Woods
Head Teacher

