



YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

No.: 210

Section: Students

Approved: April 25, 1989

Board Approved Revision Date(s): November 1996
January 2005

Implementation: Director of Education

POLICY:

PEDICULOSIS

The York Catholic District School Board recognizes and appreciates concerns related to pediculosis at the school, community, and regional level. The Board also recognizes that the Ministry of Health does not designate pediculosis as a communicable disease, and as such, it is not considered a health hazard to the community.

The Policy and Procedures which follow have been prepared to give assistance and direction to Board staff, parents, and pupils, and most importantly, to ensure that the dignity and well-being of the pupil is given the highest priority.

POLICY STATEMENT

The York Catholic District School Board will assist staff, parents, and pupils in the identification, treatment, and prevention of pediculosis in co-operation with the York Region Health Services Department.

CROSS REFERENCE

- Head Lice (Pediculosis) Resource Kit

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

PROCEDURE

1. The principal's responsibility and authority to exclude a child from school is derived from the common law duty of care, and sections 236(j) and (m) of the Education Act which read as follows:
 - (j) to give assiduous attention to the health and comfort of the pupils, to the cleanliness, temperature and ventilation of the school, to the care of all teaching materials and other school property, and to the condition and appearance of the school buildings and grounds;
 - (m) subject to an appeal to the Board, to refuse to admit to the school or classroom, a person whose presence in the school or classroom would, in his judgement, be detrimental to the physical or mental well-being of the pupils.
2. It is the responsibility of the pupil to "be clean in person and habits". (Regulation 262 Clause (1)(f).
3. The principal shall review the "Pediculosis Policy and Procedures" at the beginning of each school year. The availability of the "Head Lice (Pediculosis) Resource Kit" should be noted and its use should be encouraged. The principal shall include a message regarding Pediculosis in a school newsletter at the beginning of each school year.
4. Copies of the Board's policy and the York Region Health Services Department information pamphlet, "*The Facts of Lice*", will be available in every school.
5. The principal shall liaise with the Community Health Nurse to provide additional information to parents as necessary throughout the school year. This may take the form of presentations to parents' associations, staff, and pupils on an individual or group basis.

Two Head Lice Information/Training kits developed by the York Region Health Services Department are available for loan through the York Catholic District School Board Central Resource Library.
6. Where a case of pediculosis is confirmed, the most effective approach to minimize the spread is to have each pupil in the classroom, along with the child's siblings, checked for nits/lice. Where possible the principal may train parent volunteers to assist him/her with this task.
7. When a pupil is suspected/identified as having pediculosis:
 - a) The principal or delegate will attempt to contact the parent/guardian and request that the pupil be treated as soon as possible. If feasible, the parent/ guardian should pick up the child and commence treatment. If this is not feasible, then the child should be removed from the classroom to an environment that is sensitive to the feelings of the child.

- b) The principal shall send home the notice "A Message To Families About Head Lice". Additional information may be made available to parents/guardians at the discretion of the Principal.
- c) The principal may, if felt necessary, encourage parents/guardians to contact the York Region Health Services Department for clarification and/or assistance.
- d) The parent/guardian is to be advised that the pupil will only be readmitted to class after parent/guardian has contacted the principal or designate to confirm that treatment has been administered and the pupil is free of pediculosis.

The principal **or** designate in conjunction with one other adult, shall examine the child prior to granting readmission.

- 8. Pupils whose parents support their withdrawal from school for treatment purposes may be excused from attendance at school under Clause 20(2) (b) of the Education Act.
- 9. If a parent/guardian has not taken effective treatment steps to remove the pediculosis:
 - a) The principal may refer the parent/ guardian to the York Region Health Services Department, Public Health Nurses through the Health Connection line 1-800-361-5653 nurse, and inform the appropriate Superintendent of Schools.
 - b) Where in the opinion of the principal, a pupil should be excused from attendance at school under Clause 20(2) (b) of the Education Act and the parent/guardian refuses, then the principal may, under Clause 22(1) of the Act, suspend the pupil for conduct injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school. Only in the face of unusual circumstances such as persistent refusal on the part of the parent, should such exclusion be entertained. Every effort should be made to reduce any possible absence from school due to incidence of pediculosis. An alternate approach may be to remove the pupil from the classroom environment to a suitable area for the pupil to complete assignments until a resolution is realized.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

PROCEDURES

- 1. The principal's responsibility and authority to exclude a child from school is derived from the common law duty of care, and sections 236(j) and (m) of the Education Act which read as follows:
 - (j) to give assiduous attention to the health and comfort of the pupils, to the cleanliness, temperature and ventilation of the school, to the care of all teaching materials and other school property, and to the condition and appearance of the school buildings and grounds.
 - (m) subject to an appeal to the Board, to refuse to admit to the school or classroom, a person whose presence in the school or classroom would, in his judgement, be detrimental to the physical or mental well-being of the pupils.

2. It is assumed and expected that secondary school students accept responsibility for their own personal management. The incidence of pediculosis is not as prevalent in the secondary school population as it is in the elementary school population.
3. Copies of the Board's policy, and the York Region Health Services Department information pamphlet will be available in every school.
4. When a student is suspected of having pediculosis:
 - a) The principal or delegate will remove the student from classes until the end of the day and send him/her home with a copy of the York Region Health Services Department information sheet "*The Facts of Lice*" outlining the treatment; or, if a parent or guardian is at home, attempt to send the student home at once with the pamphlet.
 - b) The student will only be readmitted to class upon a signed statement by the parent or guardian or other evidence to the principal that treatment has been administered and that the student is free of lice.
5. If a parent has not taken effective steps to remove the pediculosis:
 - a) The principal may seek the assistance of the Public Health Nurses at Health Connection 1-800-361-5653 and inform the Superintendent of Secondary Schools.
 - b) Where, in the opinion of the principal, a pupil should be excused from attendance at school under Clause 20(2)(b) of the Education Act and the parent/guardian refuses, then the principal may, under Clause 22(1) of the Act, suspend the pupil for conduct injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school. Only in the face of unusual circumstances such as persistent refusal on the part of the parent, should such exclusion be entertained. Every effort should be made to reduce to a minimum, possible absence from school due to incidence of pediculosis. An alternate approach may be to remove the pupil from the classroom environment to a suitable area for the pupil to complete assignments until a resolution is realized.

ADULT STUDENTS

PROCEDURE

Where the student is 18 years of age or over he/she will be readmitted to school upon evidence satisfactory to the principal that treatment has been administered and the student is free of pediculosis. The parental requirements in this policy and procedure do not apply to students in this age category.

SAMPLE LETTERS TO PARENTS

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your child may have come in contact with pediculosis (head lice). Please check your child's head for live lice and/or their nits (eggs). If you find head lice, please use a treatment to kill the lice and remove all the nits from your child's hair before they return to school.

If you have any questions on the prevention, identification or treatment of lead lice, please refer to the information sheet, "The Facts of Lice" sent home in September. For further information, you may contact the school principal or call the Public Health Nurses at Health Connection, 1-800-361-5653.

Sincerely,

Principal

IDENTIFICATION AND TREATMENT LETTER

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child appears to have pediculosis (head lice). School children are prone to getting head lice because they are frequently in head to head contact. Anyone can get head lice, regardless of cleanliness. Head lice are not a public health hazard as they do not cause illness, but they are a nuisance.

Please refer to the information sheet attached to this letter "The Facts of Lice". It contains information about the identification, treatment and prevention of head lice.

Please use a treatment on your child's hair as soon as possible. Readmission to school is contingent upon lice no longer being present and all the (nits) eggs have been removed, AND the principal or designate has verified the condition of the scalp and granted approval for readmission for your child.

For more information or advice on the identification, treatment and prevention of head lice, please contact the Public Health Nurses at Health Connection, 1-800-361-5653.

Sincerely,

Principal