

## **St. Michael's Episcopal Day School Head Lice Policy**

### **Subject:**

Pediculosis (active infestation of head lice)

### **Purpose:**

To describe the policy for:

- Managing students or staff members with pediculosis in order to prevent infestation of others.
- Maintaining school attendance while minimizing disruption to the learning process.
- Preserving the privacy and confidentiality of students and staff.

### **Definitions:**

**Head lice:** Small parasitic insects that live on the scalp and neck

**Louse:** Singular form of lice

**Active infestation:** Presence of a live louse or nymph on the scalp, or a viable nit within 1 cm of the scalp

**Pediculosis:** An active infestation of head lice

**Nit:** The egg of a female louse, attached to the hair shaft

**Non-viable nit:** An egg located *farther* than 1 cm from the scalp; already hatched

**Viable nit:** An egg located *closer* than 1 cm from the scalp; considered unhatched

**Ovicide:** A chemical that kills lice eggs/nits

**Pediculicide:** A chemical that kills nymph-stage and adult lice

### **Policy:**

In compliance with current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Association of School Nurses, and the California Department of Public Health Division of Communicable Disease Control, St. Michael's Episcopal Day School (SMEDS) will follow the following to control pediculosis among students and staff:

- Persons with live head lice or viable nits, as identified by the school nurse or another trained designee, will be referred for treatment at the end of the school day. Prompt treatment at home will be advised, including the removal of live lice and viable nits. In most cases, immediate removal from school is unnecessary. If the person has lice, the infestation has likely been present for weeks; prompt removal could lead to embarrassment or ridicule and may disrupt the educational process.
- Recommendations for treatment will follow current standards of evidence-based practice as recommended by the California Department of Public Health as outlined in [Head Lice](#) and [SchoolGuidanceonHeadLice.pdf](#)

- Following treatment, the child should be readmitted to class the following day regardless of infestation status. If head lice or signs/symptoms of an infestation are still observed, the parent/caregiver will be contacted again.
- Siblings and other individuals who are believed to have been in close contact with a person who has live lice may be inspected at the discretion of the school or the school nurse, and referred as appropriate. Widespread school- or class-wide screening is not recommended.
- The school, in consultation with the school nurse, retains the authority to exclude a child who has a severe infestation, repeated infestations with live lice or viable nits, or a current active infestation for which there appears to be inadequate follow-through by parents or guardians.
- Please refer to the guidelines put forth by the California Department of Public Health Division of Communicable Disease Control for further information on SMEDS policy:  
[SchoolGuidanceonHeadLice.pdf](#)