**Head Lice Information for Parents**

**Head lice are tiny wingless insects that live in human hair.  They are common, particularly in children.** Head lice are grey-brown in colour, the size of a pinhead when hatched and of a sesame seed when fully grown. They cannot fly, jump or swim and are spread by head-to-head contact, climbing from the hair of an infected person to the hair of someone else. A head lice infestation is not the result of dirty hair or poor hygiene. Head lice can affect all types of hair irrespective of its condition and length.

**We would advise that you watch out for the following symptoms:**

Head lice may cause the scalp to itch.

A rash may appear on the back of the neck.

**Treating head lice:**

Wet combing

Medication, lotion or spray.

**Prevention:**

**It's not always easy to prevent an infestation occurring because head lice are spread by head-to-head contact.**

Regular [detection combing](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Head-lice/Pages/Diagnosis.aspx) on a weekly basis is the best way to find new lice quickly.

[Medicated lotions and sprays](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Head-lice/Pages/Treatment.aspx) are not effective in preventing head lice infestations and should only be used if a live louse is found on your child’s head.

Washing clothing and bed linen on a high temperature setting of at least 50°C (122°F) will kill any living head lice. However, lice that fall off the head are unlikely to survive for more than 24 hours.

The Management Team