

Dear Parents/Guardians

The scourge of the nit infestation is not a pleasant experience and can be very upsetting.

A small number of cases have been reported to the school BUT it is vital that the 'weekly peek' becomes a routine for everyone.

It is vital that any infestation is shared via email - [info@stpatsps.holywood.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stpatsps.holywood.ni.sch.uk)  so that appropriate information can be shared with families, and the cycle of infestation is broken.

In the event, of a infestation- you will receive a text message alert.

I have attached three different links regarding treatment.

Please note that nit treatment lotions are available via a Pharmacist Minor ailment prescription for free.

 School Nurse Information

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-lice-and-nits/>

<https://www.hedrin.co.uk/media/1259/oawtap_parents_guide.pdf>

Kind regards

C O'Neill

Principal

**How to Prevent Head Lice**

There are a few methods of head lice prevention that might reduce the risk.

* **Keep long hair tied up in ponytails or even better, braids or a bun.**
* Use a little hairspray to keep stray hairs contained.
* **Use**[**tea tree oil**](http://www.licesquad.com/lice-products/enzymes-a-more/d-tea-tree-oil-detail) either by adding a few drops to your regular shampoo, or by making a spritz by adding a few drops to water in a spray bottle.  Tea tree oil can be very drying, so only use a few drops (as directed).

Parents should be alert to the common sign of head lice **– scratching the head.**  Watch for children who are scratching or who might even wake up in the night saying that they head is itchy.  Pay attention to kids who are visiting and watch to see if they are scratching their scalps as this could indicate a case of lice.

**Once a Week, Take a Peek**

**Regular checking for head lice can identify a new case early.**  If a case is caught early enough, the life cycle of the louse can be interrupted.  No further eggs will be laid and a case can be eradicated in just a few days.  The best way to screen for head lice is to lather the hair with [conditioner](http://www.licesquad.com/lice-products/lice-products/kits-families-groups/c-ls-family-nit-kit/) and thoroughly comb the hair out with a head lice removal comb (Louse Trap, Nit Free Terminator, and Licemeister are recommended brands), wiping the comb on a white paper towel after a few passes.   Inspect the paper towel looking for brownish-coloured eggs or actual bugs.

If [checking for head lice visually](http://www.licesquad.com/resources/articles/identifying-head-lice/), be sure to use direct sunlight or a very good table lamp.  Carefully inspect the hair paying particular attention to the area when the hair shaft meets the scalp.  Look around the ear, nape of the neck and especially the crown of the head, as these are common areas for lice to be found.

When checking for head lice, look for lice eggs attached securely to the hair close to the scalp.  Viable eggs will be brownish in colour and cannot be flicked off the hair.  They have to be removed between the fingernails, with tweezers, or with a good nit comb.   Though head lice move very quickly, you may see an actual bug.  Lice are the size of sesame seeds and are brownish-grey to caramel in colour.  They are see-through and can appear to take on the colour of the hair.