



**The Manor**  
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

## **To all Parents**

20 January 2012

Dear Parents

### **Vomiting and diarrhoea**

It has been reported that there are a number of children within our school and other schools in the area with symptoms of vomiting and diarrhoea. As there is no specific cure, you have to let it run its course, but it should not last longer than a couple of days. Fluids should be encouraged to avoid dehydration and give Calpol for any aches, pains or fever.

These viruses are highly contagious and easily spread from person to person through their hands. We follow the Health Protection Agency guidelines which advise that children should stay away from school for **48** hours from the last episode of either diarrhoea or vomiting.

Thorough hand washing with soap and water after using the toilet and before preparing food is vital to help limit the spread of the virus. Food preparation should ideally be avoided until symptom free for 48 hours but this is obviously not practical for parents who have been afflicted! Do not share towels or flannels with an infected person, and disinfect surfaces or objects that could be contaminated with the virus. Wash items of clothing or bedding that could have been contaminated in a hot wash separately from other laundry.

### **Head Lice**

I often have queries regarding head lice and the best way of detecting and getting rid of them.

The first thing I would like to say is that if you find live head lice in your child's hair **DON'T PANIC!** They are a very common occurrence and anyone can catch them but are most prevalent in school age children. They certainly aren't an indication of poor hygiene so please don't feel alarmed; lice love every type of hair!

Head lice are small, six-legged wingless insects that are grey/brown in colour. Contrary to many beliefs, they cannot fly, swim or jump but are spread when two heads come into close contact and the louse clammers from one host to another.

Nits are the empty eggshells of hatched lice; they are white and shiny and remain glued to the hair shaft as it grows. They are not a sign of active infection. They can often be mistaken for dandruff or other debris so close inspection is essential.

The most effective way of detecting head lice is to routinely wet comb with conditioner and a fine toothed 'nit comb' once a week.

Firstly wash the hair with an ordinary shampoo followed by plenty of conditioner. Detangle the hair with a wide-toothed comb, and then using a fine-toothed comb, begin by drawing the comb from the roots to the tip of the hair keeping close to the scalp and checking the comb for lice after each stroke. If you do find lice there are two options:

- **Chemical treatments** - only to be used if you find a living, moving louse and not as a preventative measure. Check all family members using the 'wet combing' method and treat anyone found to have lice at the same time. Most chemical treatments require a second application after 7 days. Your pharmacist will be able to advise you on the products available. Caution should be taken when using chemical treatments as over use can encourage resistance.
- **Wet combing or 'Bug Busting' method** - this involves systematically removing the lice with a fine-toothed comb as described above. A painstaking approach needs to be adopted to be successful and the procedure should be repeated every 4 days for two weeks to break the life cycle of the louse and thus prevent further egg laying.

Whatever treatment you chose to eliminate head lice, the most effective prevention is to regularly check your family's hair once a week using the wet-combing and conditioner method.

To minimise head lice spreading to other people, and to prevent your child getting them again after treatment, it's advisable to tell everyone your child has been in contact with about their possible exposure. They can then be checked and treated if necessary as soon as possible.

If I can answer any more questions you might have please do come and see me. The First Aid Room is in the main Manor building and I am here from 08.00 until 15.30 every day. Alternatively you call me on 01235 858473, or send an e-mail to [shorrox@manorprep.org](mailto:shorrox@manorprep.org).

Yours sincerely



Sarah Horrox  
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