



Saint James Elementary School

Rev. Msgr. Philip A. Lowery, Director
Mrs. Janet P. Dolan, Principal

30 Peters Place
Red Bank, New Jersey 07701
732 741-3363 Fax 732 933-4960

January 12, 2019

Dear Parents,

Some of our preschool through fourth grade students had contracted head lice sporadically during the fall months. This is not unusual. It was not widespread by any means and those classes or grades were notified at that time. As a preventative method to avoid any further outbreak, we are bringing this to your attention at this time now that we have reconvened after the Christmas break.

Preschool through fourth grade only: to prevent anymore outbreaks, please send two large plastic bags with draw strings to school with your child (grades preschool through four only at this time). Students' coats, hats, and scarves will be placed in the bags and hung in the coat closet. For now, girls with shoulder length hair or longer should wear their hair up off their collars.

If your child had contracted head lice during the Christmas break, please inform the nurse's office. If your child contracts head lice in the future please inform the nurse's office immediately and follow the directions on the reverse side of this letter. It is crucial that after treatment, your child's head is checked daily for 21 days to insure that he or she is cleared.

As a precaution, all children need to be checked regularly at home.

For additional information, please see the website headlice.org. There is also information on the business office eboard under the link to nurse.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely

Marie Lehmann, R.N.
School Nurse

(OVER)

stjames_office@yahoo.com
www.mysaintjames.com



St. James Elementary School

Education in the Catholic Tradition - Preschool to Eighth Grade

30 Peters Place

Red Bank, New Jersey 07701

(732) 741-3363 Fax (732) 933-4960

Website: mysaintjames.com E-mail Address: stjames_office@yahoo.com

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Dear Parent or Guardian,

Please do not be alarmed, Head Lice is a common occurrence in schools and is not a sign of unclean people or homes.

Please take these precautions:

1. Check your child's hair for eggs (also called nits).
2. If you suspect your child has head lice, ask your Doctor or School nurse to diagnose the problem and recommend appropriate treatment.
3. Tell your school nurse if your child is diagnosed as having head lice as soon as possible.
4. If head lice are diagnosed, do not return your child to school until he or she has been treated and then checked by the school nurse.

Information about head lice:

What are they? Head lice are tiny insects that live only on people's scalp and hair. They hatch from small eggs (nits) that are firmly attached to the individual hairs near the scalp and cannot be easily moved up or down the hair (as can specks or dandruff). They look like grains of sand. Nits may be found throughout the hair but are most often located at the back of the scalp, behind the ears, and at the top of the head. The eggs hatch in about 10 days, with new lice reaching adulthood in about 2 weeks. The female louse, about the size of sesame seed, can live for 20 to 30 days and can lay about 6 eggs a day. The lice live by biting and sucking blood from the scalp. Lice can survive up to 8 hours between feedings and can do so off the body. Until a person with head lice is treated they can transmit them to others.

How should you check for head lice? You probably will not see the lice, only the eggs. These are tiny, pearl-gray, oval-shaped specks attached to the hair near the scalp. Look carefully using a magnifying glass and natural light. Search for nits at the back of the neck, behind the ears, and at the top of the head.

How does a person get head lice? Anyone who has close contact with an infested person, or shares personal items can become infested. Lice are spread **only** by crawling from person to person directly or onto shared personal items, such as brushes, combs, head coverings, clothing, bedding, or towels.

What should you do about head lice? If your child does have head lice, your health care provider may want to treat everyone in your family. Everyone should be checked, and anyone with nits should definitely be treated.

To get rid of head lice:

1. **Use a medicine or Electronic head lice detector and remover that your health care provider prescribes or recommends.** Use any of these products very carefully, and consult a physician before treating infants, pregnant or nursing women, or people with extensive cuts or scratches on the head or neck.
2. After appropriate treatment, removal of nits is necessary. Removal is difficult and time-consuming process because nits have such a firm grip on the hair. A solution of vinegar and water may help loosen nits so you can remove them with a special, fine-toothed, nit-removal comb.
3. **Check for nits daily for the next 10 – 14 days.** Then repeat the treatment to kill any newly hatched lice.
4. **Clean personal items and surroundings:**

- ❖ Machine wash all washable and possibly infested items in **Hot** water. Dry them in a **Hot** dryer.
- ❖ Put nonwashable items (furry toys or pillows) in a **Hot** dryer for 20 minutes or dry clean them.
- ❖ Seal items that cannot be washed or dried in a plastic bag for 10 days (any eggs or lice present will die in this time).
- ❖ Soak combs and brushes for 10 minutes, or wash them with a shampoo approved to kill lice.
- ❖ Thoroughly vacuum rugs, upholstered furniture, and mattresses.
- ❖ Do not use insecticide sprays because they can be harmful to people and animals.

When can your child return to school? Your child may come back as soon as the shampoo has been used, you have removed all nits from your child's hair and you have cleaned or stored personal items. Also the child must be brought to the school nurse by the parent for inspection on the day they are returning