

Pediculosis, or head lice infestation, has been a public health nuisance for thousands of years. Lice are small insects that live only off human blood. Head lice do not transmit disease nor are they a sign of poor hygiene. They can cause embarrassment and concern for children, parents, and schools. Since head lice spread person to person, the Guilford County School system has adopted procedures.

If an individual is suspected of having an infestation with head lice, that person will be referred to the school nurse or designated trained staff member for examination. When an infestation is confirmed, the following action will be taken:

*The principal will be notified.

*If *live head lice* have been detected, the parent/guardian will be notified to pick up the child from school.

If *nits alone* are seen, the parent/guardian will be notified by telephone by the end of the school day. In either case, the parent/guardian will be given treatment options and education on the biology of head lice and methods to eliminate the infestation.

*Children who have had live lice identified may be readmitted to school when the parent/guardian provides proof of purchase of the lice treatment product and **no** live lice are present. There should be a significant reduction (75%) in the number of nits observed. The school nurse or trained school staff may recommend that the child be sent home for additional nit removal.

*The expectation is that students should be able to return to school the following day. In unusual circumstances where the problem persists, a total of three excused absences will be allowed per episode. After three days of absences for lice infestation, the absences will be counted as unexcused.

*Individuals with repeated infestations will be referred to the school nurse who will determine appropriate interventions.