HEAD LICE INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDED PRECAUTIONS

INFORMATION:

1. Head lice can affect anyone. It does not discriminate. And it does not mean that you are a bad housekeeper.
2. Head lice are wingless insects about the size of a sesame seed. They may be reddish brown, gray or white in color. They live on the scalp and feed by sucking blood.
3. Head lice cannot hop, jump or fly.
4. The female louse lays four or five eggs at a time which are glued strongly to the hair shaft. After seven to ten days the nits hatch. A single louse can lay as many as 150 eggs during its typical 30 day life span.
5. When separated from the host (humans), head lice die within 48 hours at room temperature. Nits can last up to two to three weeks. Lice cannot survive on other hosts like dogs or cats—only humans.
6. Lice and their nits are most commonly found behind a child’s ears, the base of the neck, crown of the head or the bang area.
7. The nits are small, oval, whitish, semi-translucent nodules glued at an angle to the side of the hair shaft. Nits can be distinguished from dandruff because they are very sticky and difficult to remove. Dandruff will easily flake off.
8. Adult head lice do not like bright light and will move rapidly around the head to avoid it.
9. The most common symptom of lice infestation is itching.
10. For more information, visit the website of the National Pediculosis Association, www.headlice.org.

PRECAUTIONS:

1. ___ **Wash** all recently used clothes, bed linens, throw pillows, and towels in hot water and dry on hot cycle. This should be done daily if at all possible.
2. ___ **Vacuum** all carpeting, upholstered furniture, mattresses and car seats, as well as fabric toys, stuffed animals, headphones, and helmets thoroughly, on a daily basis. Throw vacuum bag away when done.
3. ___ **Educate** households and organizations where children stay about head lice so that they may take all necessary and reasonable precautions.
4. ___ **Inform** the school and childcare provider and any other organization a child goes to on a regular basis that they have had head lice and have been treated.
5. ___ **Store** coats, hats and other personal items in their backpack or plastic bags with handles that will hang on hooks in the room or locker. Never pile coats on top of each other or allow students to share things like pinnies, hats, headphones, etc.