Dear Parent or Guardian,

A case of head lice has been detected in your child’s class. Anyone can get head lice, mainly through direct head-to-head contact but also from sharing hats, brushes and other personal items. Head lice are a problem in many communities and do not reflect poor hygiene or social status. ***Please do your part to prevent the spread of this communicable condition by checking your child(ren) daily for the next few weeks, and on a regular basis thereafter. Lice infestation is much easier to treat if caught early.***

If you should discover a case of head lice, please notify your child’s school. Notify the parents of your child’s playmates. This is the best way to protect your family and community.

**What are head lice?**

Head lice are tiny, wingless insects that live close to the human scalp. They feed on blood. The eggs, also called nits, are tiny, teardrop shaped eggs that attach to the hair shaft. Nits often appear yellowish or white, and can look like dandruff but cannot be removed or brushed off.The nymph, or baby louse, is smaller and grow to adult size in one to two weeks. The adult louse is the size of a sesame seed and appears tan to grayish-white. An itchy and inflamed scalp is a common symptom of lice. Although not common, persistent scratching may lead to skin irritation and even infection.

**Who are affected by head lice?**

Head lice are not related to cleanliness.In fact, head lice often infest people with good hygiene and grooming habits.Infestations can occur at home, school or in the community. Head lice are mostly spread by direct head-to-head contact-for example, during play at home or school, slumber parties, sports activities, or camp. Less often, lice are spread via objects that have been in recent contact with a person with head lice, such as hats, scarves, hair ribbons, combs, brushes, stuffed animals or bedding.

**What to do if an infestation occurs?**

If you think your child has head lice, it’s important to talk to a healthcare provider to discuss the best treatment approach for your family. Resistance to some over-the-counter head lice treatments has been reported, but the prevalence of resistance is not known. There are new prescription treatment options available that are safe and do not require nit combing.

Sincerely,

Principal