

Students 9511 Insect Pest Management Protocols in Schools	Administrative Application	
	Last Reviewed /Approved on:	April 21, 2021
	References:	Saskatchewan Health Authority The Child and Family Services Act, Sec. 11, 12, 13 Government of Canada – Pest Control Tips Policy 12 – Role of the Director
	Status:	Operational

Preamble

The home of any person can be infested by insect pests, regardless of race or economic status. A pest is any animal, creature, or plant harmful to humans or human concerns. The term is particularly used for creatures that cause a nuisance to people, especially in their homes. These insect pests can then be carried into schools. Examples of insect pests are bed bugs, black ants, cockroaches, fleas, houseflies, and moths. Insect pests prefer an environment where they can hide during the day and come out at night to feed on a sleeping host. Because most schools and institutional childcare centers do not provide this type of environment, major infestations of school and childcare center buildings are rare. However, insect pests hiding in clothing or backpacks can hitchhike to and from schools and childcare centers, potentially providing a hub for insect pests to spread. It is important to treat each child with dignity and respect when dealing with this issue.

Currently there is no scientific evidence demonstrating that exclusion policies are effective at reducing insect pest transmission in the school environment. What is encouraged and supported is for schools to develop a response plan based on the recommendation and management procedures outlined in this administrative application. These procedures would include:

1. Assist staff to identify insect pest(s) and the signs of an insect pest in the classroom and children's items. This may include actual insects, cast skins, or excessive insect bites on a child.
2. When a student with insect pest(s) is identified on their person or in their belongings, the student may remain in school until the end of the day. (See *Procedures to Follow if an Insect pest is Found on a Student* in this administrative application).
3. Respond promptly to the insect pest complaints within the school and through contact and counseling with parents/caregivers.
4. Parents/caregivers should promptly respond to the insect pests in the home for the health and safety of the family and school community.

Application

1. Reporting

As soon as an insect pest is suspected or a number of students are getting bitten during class, the school should contact the Controller of Plant and Accommodation Services who will contact the appropriate pest management resource.

2. To Avoid an Insect Pest Infestation in a Classroom

- a. Reduce all clutter within a classroom and cloth furniture.
- b. Backpacks, lunchboxes, and other items that travel back and forth to school can be inspected daily and sealed in plastic containers or bags.
- c. Regular cleaning routines should be maintained, such as vacuuming, sweeping and damp mopping.
- d. Caretaking staff should wear regular protective cleaning equipment.
- e. Hard surfaces can be cleaned with standard cleaning products.
- f. If insect pests have been found repeatedly in a particular classroom, contact the Controller of Plant and Accommodation Services.

3. School Communities have Responsibility for:

- a. Developing school procedures to support prevention and control.
- b. Policies and procedures should include the following elements:
 - i. Individual school insect pest policy.
 - ii. Procedures for students with recurring evidence of insect pest infestation in the home or repeat violators of the school's insect pest policy.
- c. School Administration in conjunction with Education Services will work together to evaluate chronic cases within the school and/or school division and work together with other local agencies to achieve compliance with the school's insect pest policy.
- d. Disseminating current information about insect pests.
- e. Providing educational information for parents/caregivers.
- f. Alerting parents/caregivers when cases have been identified and urging vigilance at home.

- g. If tenant/landlord conflicts impede timely treatment, parents should be advised to talk with local agencies responsible for housing and code enforcement, human services, or the local health region.
 - h. Protecting staff and students.
- 4. **Refer to the attached appropriate targeted intervention procedures.**
- 5. **Exclusion**

Exclusion of a student for insect pests is generally not recommended. In some cases, this option may need to be considered or utilized for resolution of the situation. Exclusion alone will not solve an insect pest infestation but may serve to prompt stronger or more effective measures.

Targeted Intervention Procedures for Insect Pests Found on Student

1. If the insect pest was found on a student or a student's belongings, the student should be discreetly removed from the classroom so that a qualified individual can examine the student's clothing and other belongings. Any insect pests found should be removed and collected for identification. Try to keep the specimens as intact as possible, by using scotch tape and enclosing in a plastic bag.
2. **Confirm the type of insect pest before proceeding.**
3. The school principal should contact the Controller of Plant and Accommodation Services who will recommend a pest management service to assist in identifying the specimen(s).
4. If a confirmed bed bug or cockroach was found on a student, then the school principal should contact the child's parents or guardian by phone. An inspection report should be sent home with the student and completed promptly. (See *Sample Parent Inspection Report for Schools*) Educational materials should also be provided to the family and located on the division website.
5. The specimen is confirmed to be a bedbug or cockroach, and then the school principal should notify the affected class or classes. (See *Sample Parent Notification Letter for Schools located in Education Services*).
6. Students should not be excluded from school unless repeated efforts have been made to remedy an infestation. Schools should not be closed due to insect pests' presence; if pest management is necessary, it will normally be targeted to certain areas of the school. This will be determined in consultation with the Controller of Plant and Accommodation Services and the Education Services Superintendent.
7. For children/students who repeatedly come to school with insect pests care for clothing and school item sanitation should involve:
 - a. **At home:** backpacks, lunchboxes, and other items that travel back and forth to school can be inspected daily and stored in sealed plastic containers or bags.
 - b. **At school:** the student could be provided with plastic bags or bins in which to store his/her belongings to prevent any bed bugs or cockroaches from spreading.
8. If a student repeatedly reports to school showing evidence of bed bugs or cockroaches despite previous notification, education and counseling with parents, further investigation is needed. Repeated bed bug or cockroach presence may be due to the following:
 - a. Inability of parents/caregiver to organize the treatment of an infestation at home.
 - b. Failure to effectively treat a recognized infestation – this might be due to pest management failure, landlord/tenant dispute, lack of financial resources, repeated re-infestation from outside of the home, non-vigilance, or lack of concern on the part of the parent.
 - c. Failure to adhere to recommended clothing and school item sanitation recommendations.
 - d. Investigate other sources of bed bugs or cockroaches on school property such as lockers, buses, common areas or other areas where students routinely congregate.

Other Options in Rare or Extreme Cases May Include:

- a. Notifying Child Protection Services in instances of suspected neglect.
- b. Notifying Public Health Inspection at Saskatchewan Health Authority.

While decisions to act through Children's Protection Services or Public Health Inspection should be a last resort, every effort should be made to assist the family with control of bed bugs or cockroaches before taking this action.

Targeted Intervention Procedures for Insect Pests Found in School Facilities

If the procedures outlined prior in this application are unsuccessful, targeted intervention may be necessary:

1. This may include treatment of school facilities and property if an infestation is found in the school.
2. Investigative work may be required to figure out where repeated insect pests' findings are originating. If a parent is or claims to be diligently dealing with an infestation and the student continues to come to school with insect pests, there may be an alternative source or reason that the parents have not been successful. Things to consider are:
 - a. Where the child spends time after school, before school, or with other family members. Any of these places could have an infestation and the child may be bringing insect pests from this location or bringing them back home to the detriment of control efforts.
 - b. Cars and other modes of transportation can become infested. Inspect all the modes of transportation the child uses.
 - c. While insect pest treatment is ongoing, it is important to remain vigilant in keeping insect pests out of clothing and personal items brought to school. Schools may want to suggest or require having a spare set of clothing sent for the child in a sealed plastic bag. If insect pests are found, have the child change into the clean clothes and place infested clothes into the bag.
 - d. In cases where tenant/landlord dispute is delaying effective treatment, parents should be directed to contact the local housing or bylaw enforcement.
 - e. **In rare or extreme cases, a school may have to confront a situation where a parent or caregiver is incapable or unwilling to remedy an insect pest infestation in the home.** These cases are difficult because a school must weigh several important factors:
 - i. Providing a healthy, pest-free environment for students to learn is a prime responsibility of the school.
 - ii. Providing a healthy, pest-free environment for staff is also a responsibility of school administrators.
 - iii. Repeated insect pest introductions by a student constitute a risk to other students and staff. While the insect pests do not transmit disease, they are a health issue because they are blood-feeding, human parasites. Once established in a home they can cause physical and psychological symptoms and present a significant economic investment to eradicate. These facts are also true at the school level. Repeated inspections and potential treatment by pest management professionals, anxiety, frustration and lost instructional time on the part of staff, and administrative efforts constitute a serious cost both economically and in educational efficiency.