**Gilmer County Schools**

**Bed Bug Procedure**

**Overview**

The common bed bug *(Cimex Lectularius)* is a small, flat insect that is reddish-brown in color, wingless, and ranges from 1 to 7 millimeters in length. Bed bugs are visible to the naked eye and are categorized as blood-sucking ectoparasites similar to head lice. They feed on the blood of people and animals, but they can survive for weeks to months without feeding. Bed bugs do not transmit diseases. They are a nuisance and infestations can cause negative effects and financial burdens. Infestations usually occur in areas where people sleep. Bed bugs are known to hide during the day, and they can travel to different areas by being a “hitchhiker” on clothing, book bags, and personal items.

**General Considerations**

* Bite marks are similar to that of a mosquito or flea bite and may appear on any part of the body. The bites generally appear as slightly swollen red bumps. They are itchy and look irritated.
* Secondary skin infections can arise from excessive scratching.
* If a bed bug infestation is suspected, a licensed extermination company should be consulted.
* Temperatures below 0 degrees Fahrenheit for at least four days can eliminate some infestations.
* It is recommended to wash and dry bedding/clothing at high temperatures to kill bed bugs. Temperatures of at least 113 degrees Fahrenheit for one hour can kill bed bugs.
* Using covers on mattresses, box springs, and pillows can help confine bed bugs.

**School Considerations**

* Students with suspected bed bug bites **should not be excluded** from school.
* Bug bites should be kept clean and students should be discouraged from scratching.
* If bites appear to be infected, the student’s parents should be contacted and a referral made to follow-up with their primary health care provider for treatment.

**Environmental Control Measures**

* If a suspected bed bug is found at school, the insect should be carefully preserved (placed in a plastic Ziploc bag or taped to a piece of white paper) until it can be properly identified.
* The contained specimen should be delivered to the School Nurse, Administrator, or the Administrator’s Designee. After talking with the Facilities Director/Superintendent, it will be decided the best option to identify the specimen.
* The WV County Extension Office or the county’s contracted Pest Management Company will be used for the identification of the insect.
* If the insect is identified as a bed bug, the area in which it was found will be inspected for signs of an infestation.
* If signs of an infestation are found, it will be treated by our Pest Management Company.
* If the bed bug was found on a student or their belongings, the student’s family will be notified. School procedures will be explained and educational information will be given.
* The family will be advised to obtain professional assistance in eliminating the bed bugs, and the student will be instructed not to share personal items.
* Take steps to ensure the student’s privacy.
* The student’s personal belongings (book bag, coat, etc.) should be separated in a plastic tote or plastic bag for 5 consecutive days. If no evidence of bed bugs are found, then containing their belongings may be discontinued.
* If bed bugs continue to be present, the student’s belongings will continue to be contained.
* It will be the collaborative decision of the School Nurse, Administrator, and Facility Director to determine the need to send a class/school letter home.

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