

St Edmund’s Catholic Primary School

16th November, 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

School is a very particular environment that is physically and mentally tiring for the children and the adults. The children have to concentrate for long periods of time throughout the day, using the learning skills that they are being taught and showing the knowledge that they have acquired. The environment is often noisy, although we always control the noise levels, so concentrating becomes trickier, but is still called for by the adults. The children have to work together, in pairs or groups, at certain times throughout the day and the children are having to speak and listen to each other, learn to negotiate and also learn that not everyone will listen to them – and that not everyone has to. Playtime is a rambunctious, noisy affair when the children come streaming (and screaming) out of the building and run around as if they have never been let out before – and that is every playtime. Lunch is eaten in a large echoing hall with dozens of children all talking at once and then back to class for more concentration and production of work. So all children need to be resilient and operating at full speed.

We are now entering the time of year when we all get sick. We now have a constant stream of parents telling us that their child was ill last night, but can come to school today, but can we keep an eye on them? We keep an eye on every child all day long. But some of you are sending your children to school when they are unable to cope with everything I have mentioned above. When we call and ask you to come and collect them, we are met with resistance, even though I do try to keep every child in school for the whole day, every day. The children then tell us that they were given calpol or other medicines before they came to school – which will wear off throughout the morning. We have to accept that your child is well enough for school, even when they so clearly are not. Please keep your children at home if they cannot cope with everything that they have to deal with in the school day. We have no sick bay, nowhere to look after ill children. There are now several viruses going around, as well as coronavirus – so to say that they have tested negative for coronavirus does not mean that they do not have the other viruses.

Each time you send your child to school you are saying that they are well enough to attend. That means they have to take part in all activities – including swimming – as they are all part of the statutory National Curriculum. There are no excuses for children not taking part in the lessons, unless you have medical evidence to the contrary.

Please keep the staff, children and parents safe and keep your child at home when they are unwell.

Gail O’Flaherty