



AN ACADEMY | PART OF THE INSPIRE TRUST

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Dear Parents,

You will no doubt have heard in the news that the NHS is facing intense pressure over the forthcoming winter months as it tackles record levels of demand. The winter months can be an incredibly busy period for people accessing NHS services so people are being asked to help by freeing-up appointments for those who need to see their doctor the most by making use of local pharmacies for help and advice on colds and winter wellness.

It has also recently come to the attention of NHS Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group (RCCG) that several practices have reported being inundated with appointments for children who are not well enough to go to school and are being asked to provide a doctor's note.

As winter is traditionally the NHS' busiest time of year, RCCG wish to relay the following message to all parents;

"All children get coughs and colds. This is a normal part of growing up and no medicines can prevent them. The best way to look after your child is to make sure they have plenty to drink and if they have a temperature some paracetamol will help. Most doctors don't recommend cough medicines and antibiotics won't help a cold. If your child is absent from school your doctor won't give you a letter to say they are ill, so please don't contact your GP practice or make an appointment to ask for one. It's important that patients who need the most help can access services."

Sitwell Junior School will only request medical proof from parents as a matter of course where there are concerns around the child's attendance, if the child's attendance has fallen into the Persistently Absent category or where the case is progressing through the Local Authority attendance enforcement process.

Parents should notify school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness. School will authorise absences due to illness unless we have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, we can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness and can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness – we will always advise parents of our intention.

Yours faithfully

Dean Fenton, Head of Service – School Planning, Admissions and Appeals, Rotherham Council
Jacqui Tuffnell, Head of Co-commissioning, NHS Rotherham CC



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