

Monday 8th March 2021

Dear Councillor Simon Tagg and Mr Aaron Bell MP,

I am writing to you on behalf of the school community of St Mary's Catholic Primary School to express our concerns regarding the impact of Whalley's Quarry Landfill, located at Cemetery Road, Silverdale within our school community.

The landfill site is situated a mere one mile away from our school grounds. Each day, our children are subjected to working in an environment which is extremely unpleasant and unhealthy. The effects of the landfill site can be detected long before the children enter the school building. As someone who commutes into Newcastle-under-Lyme each day, it is of great concern that the strong smell can clearly be identified on exiting the A500 at Cliff Vale. Therefore, can you imagine the conditions which our children, staff and parents experience when arriving at school? In short, it is appalling.

Once inside the school, the smell within our main entrance area, main office, corridors, classrooms and inside store cupboards is overwhelmingly repellent. Part of our daily routine each morning is to open all of our windows so that we are operating in line with our Covid 19 Risk Assessment. When we open the windows, to create air flow around the building to assist in mitigating the spread of Covid 19, we are ventilating our school with the foul smelling air which is outside the building. This simply adds to the pungent, stale air that is already circulating our school.

The children have been very excited about the full opening of the school this week. The greatest excitement being around reuniting with their friends in playing outdoors at break and lunchtime. Unfortunately, playing outside is not a pleasant experience for them as they are unable to play in 'fresh air'. Following a national lockdown, when children haven't had the ability to play and socialise with their friends, it is yet another disappointment for them as well as an obvious health risk.

The main role of us as educators is to form the next generation of citizens who will sustain our environment and who will make well informed decisions when doing so. Our children are already questioning the impact of the landfill site on their local environment and on their own health. Covid has made our children acutely aware of their own health and that of their families. To subject them to such unhealthy conditions is indefensible. Our children have had enough worry in their young lives over the last 12 months to last them into adulthood. Their families have had to





CTKCC
Christ the King
Catholic Collegiate
Together as one community
with Christ at the centre

Headteacher: Mrs D Mellor
stmarycatholicprimary.co.uk
01782 619685
office.stm@ctkcc.co.uk

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School
Silverdale Road
Newcastle under Lyme
Staffordshire, ST5 2TA



contend with a significant amount of stress and anxiety, which has been beyond their control, without subjecting them to any further stress. We are also working to develop our children as citizens with strong moral values. Again, our children are questioning how the site is allowed to continue to cause such disruption. I am sure that they are not alone in asking these questions.

I am sure that the site owners have, no doubt, made changes to the site in order to reduce the impact on the local community. Unfortunately, any measures that they have put in place have not been successful.

Please share the views of our school community with the organisations and individuals who can effect positive change for our local area and particularly our children.

Your Sincerely,
Mrs Denise Mellor
Headteacher at St Mary's Catholic Primary School

