

Dear Sacred Heart Lower School Families,

We are very pleased about how our inaugural year in the new pool went this year! With any new experience, there are lessons learned along the way I'd like to note. These points will further equip your family with knowledge of how to enhance your child's experiences in swim class, the After School program, and all aquatics offerings.

Fear about water. It is not unusual for a child to have fear about the water. Swimming is an activity we offer where students exercise in and out of the pool, and members of our staff are professionally trained to teach and ensure safety for students who may be uncomfortable putting their faces in the water. It may take your daughter a little longer to overcome her fear or nervousness about being in or under the water. There are also times when a child who up to this point has been comfortable with the water may suddenly experience reservations that cause the child to feel anxiety. These reactions are normal, and the teachers will work with the families to provide steps to overcome these feelings.

Water temperature. Because each child's body is different, some swimmers may be more sensitive to the temperature of the water. At Sacred Heart, we keep the water temperature in the pool at 83 degrees Fahrenheit. Years of experience and research conclude that this is a good temperature because it is not too cold for young children's swim lessons and not too hot for competitive swimmers' training. If your daughter tells you she is cold in the water, there are three possible solutions. One is for her to move more; as the body moves, it heats up. Another solution would be for the swimmer to wear a rash guard or swim shirt. These act as insulators and help warm the swimmer's body more. Finally, if the swimmer is implementing these two techniques without improvement of body temperature or comfort, then it may be helpful to consult a physician because some children could have extreme sensitivity or allergies.

Rest. Finally, swimming is more of a full-body activity than most other offerings at Sacred Heart. Because of this, the students need more rest. Do not be discouraged if your daughter isn't swimming the entire class time. Students also progress through their lessons at different rates. Because every child is unique, it is very natural for students to respond differently in classes and programs. What may be easy for one student might be very challenging for another, and many children at this age need to take more rest on the wall between laps. So if you do attend class one day, it would not be uncommon for you to see your daughter on the wall between laps. Rest helps solidify lessons being learned while preparing them emotionally and physically for what is coming next.

I am happy to discuss how to make your daughter's experiences at 406 even better and I especially hope to continue educating everyone on water safety and swimming facts in the future. Please do not hesitate to call me with any questions or concerns you may have. Having swimming as a key component in a school's physical education program is indeed an enrichment and one we want every student to experience and enjoy with confidence. Thank you for supporting aquatics at Sacred Heart!

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