



Wednesday 18th September 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

Year 3 are going swimming every Friday until February half term. After this, Year 4 will go swimming until the summer holidays. Please make sure that your child brings **trunks or a swimming costume, goggles, a swimming cap** and a **towel** every Friday. Please give your child a **plastic bag** to put all wet items in to take home.

swimming costume	swimming cap	goggles	towel	plastic bag
				

Please ensure children wear their PE kit on Fridays as this is easier to change out and into. This term the classes will be going at the following times:

Class	Teacher	Time
Edinburgh	Ms Holmes	9:00-10:00
Hatfield	Ms Eades- Jones	10:00-11:00
Birmingham	Ms Harrison	11:00- 12:00

All children are required to swim every Friday. If your child cannot swim they need a doctor's note to explain why. If your child forgets their kit, they will be given school swimming kit. If your child is well enough to be at school, they are expected to go swimming. Learning to swim is an important skill for life. Children are expected to learn to swim at primary school; therefore absences on a Friday should be avoided. Please turn over for answers to some frequently asked questions.

Swimming will begin on Friday the 20th September. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or your child's teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Ms Matthews
Assistant Principal - Years 3 and 4

Why do pupils go swimming in Year 3?

The National Curriculum: Since 1994, swimming and water safety has been a statutory element of the national curriculum for physical education in England. Every 11-year old child should leave primary school with the skills to keep themselves safe while enjoying swimming with friends and family. All primary schools must provide swimming and water safety lessons in either Key Stage 1 or 2. Each pupil is required to be able to do the following:

- *Perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations*
- *Swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25 metres*
- *Use a range of strokes effectively, for example, front crawl, backstroke and breaststroke.*

It is in everyone's interest for children to learn to swim as soon as possible so they can manage themselves in water, in a pool or on holiday at the beach. We have been running swimming in Year 3 on the Younger Years Site for 10 years with wonderful success and children become able and strong swimmers. By the age of 7 children are able to independently dress and undress themselves but have not yet developed inhibitions about their body. This lack of self-consciousness means all the focus with the swimming instructor is on developing their skills as a swimmer and therefore attendance is excellent, and progress is swift.

Why are we only providing 6 months for the children to learn to swim?

Last year APG pupils learnt to swim in Year 3 and at KSA in Year 4. This means that this year's Year 4 pupils from KSA have not yet met the curriculum requirement to swim. We therefore want to ensure that both Year 3 and Year 4 pupils have swimming lessons to ensure they meet the national curriculum expectation. We requested provision for both year groups for the whole school year, but Westminster City Council were only able to offer us lesson times for three classes due to capacity to offer lessons for other primary schools in our area. We will only need to do this for one year. In 2020-21, Year 3 pupils will have swimming lessons all year.

Why do we go swimming throughout the school year, in winter, spring and summer?

The changing seasons should never prevent anyone from physical exercise. The chance to learn to swim in a heated pool must be the priority. You cannot catch a cold or the flu simply from being outside with wet hair during winter. What puts you at risk is exposure to germs. Touching surfaces that may have virus-causing germs, and then touching your mouth, or nose transfers the germs into your system. For children who have a medical condition that would prevent them from getting into a pool, we would simply need this recommendation in writing from your child's GP or specialist doctor.

How can my child avoid colds in the winter months?

It is compulsory for children to swim in a water-tight swimming cap. This means children will get very little wet hair in the pool and therefore will not need to dry their hair or walk back to school with damp hair. In the colder winter months, children should always come to school every day in a warm coat, hat, scarf and gloves to ensure they stay warm during all times they are outside over the course of the school day. The most effect prevention of getting a cold, flu or virus is to train your child to wash their hands regularly and thoroughly

Who will help children get changed before and after swimming?

There is a KSA member of staff in the changing rooms with the children supporting them to get changed. Children wear their KSA PE kit on Fridays. This is to help pupils to independently dress themselves as the trousers are simple pull up trousers and PE polo shirts have fewer buttons than shirts. Occasionally, a sock is lost or an item is left behind by mistake. We have a good relationship with the pool, who look after all lost property or we will put it in the lost property containers near the school office.

As children leave Year 2, it is important for them to start building independence when dressing themselves. You can practice this at home every morning and evening. A good way to start is by focusing on changing one item of clothing at a time. Tying laces

is often the part of changing children find most difficult. Please try to teach your child how to tie laces or consider trainers without laces, such as Velcro straps.

What if my child cannot swim yet?

The first week is an assessment week. Children will be assessed in the pool by qualified swim instructors and grouped based on their prior experiences. This means swimming lessons will be matched to your child's current swimming ability and will progress at the correct pace for them.



is often the part of changing children find most difficult. Please try to teach your child how to tie laces or consider trainers without laces, such as Velcro straps.

What if my child cannot swim yet?

The first week is an assessment week. Children will be assessed in the pool by qualified swim instructors and grouped based on their prior experiences. This means swimming lessons will be matched to your child's current swimming ability and will progress at the correct pace for them.