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Headteacher Mr Kevin Moloney

CHANGES TO SCHOOL SWIMMING PROVISION FROM SEPTEMBER 2017

Dear Parents and Carers

The swimming provision at Hipsburn School has been under close review from our Governors for the past few years. Willowburn have made changes to their school swimming contract from September 2017 and due to the fact that we are now a primary school we have decided to further review our swimming provision.

The National Curriculum, in reference to swimming and water safety, states that "all schools must provide swimming instruction either in Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2. In particular, pupils should be taught to:

- 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)
- perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations (lifesaving)"

As a high percentage of children in school can already swim competently - many well in excess of the 25 metre requirement even at a very young age, the Governing Body has had to make a decision on the future of swimming lessons.

It has therefore been decided that from next term (September 2017) swimming and lifesaving lessons will be offered initially for a half-term to upper Key Stage 2.

Year 5 children will be taken to Willowburn for an initial free session so that their ability and proficiency can be assessed by one of the independent instructors. Children deemed able to swim 25 metres using a range of strokes will not be required to have further swimming lessons, but instead will concentrate on 'lifesaving' activities in the following weeks. Those children who cannot swim 25 metres will be taught throughout the half-term; once they are able to swim 25 metres they too will move to the 'lifesaving' lessons. A contribution will be requested to cover the costs of transport and lessons. An additional benefit in taking only the Year 5s will be that they can come together weekly from their two split-year classes to enjoy a joint activity.

We ask parents to cover the cost of swimming and other school trips. Any unpaid amounts have to be met from the remaining wider school budget, which in turn affects the amount of money we have available for other resources (including teachers) and equipment for all of the children in our school. Governors have always considered it most important that children are confident around water with the school located close to sea and rivers so we hope you will support us in enabling the children to learn to be water safe without having a determinate on other learning and opportunities. If you feel you cannot meet payment of the whole requested weekly amount, please contact the school office to discuss the level of contribution you can make.

Yours sincerely,

Governing Body of Hipsburn Primary School

