

What is the swim offer at Richard Hill CE Primary School?

Experience over the years has enabled us to fine tune swimming lessons to meet statutory requirements, whilst balancing competing factors. We have made sure that the location is suitable to ensure that non-swimmers feel confident in a pool where they can touch the bottom. We choose to take Years 3 and 4 for one whole term of the year. This is booked a year ahead with the swimming pool. When we book these sessions we review this rationale to ensure that it meets the needs of our children.



Are school swimming lessons compulsory?

Yes, swimming is part of the National Curriculum. It is in fact the only named sport within the Physical Education curriculum. All primary schools must provide swimming and water safety lessons in either Key Stage 1 or 2.

The objectives include:

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

Nationally only half of all Year Six pupils fulfil this requirement. The Government has tasked schools to improve this picture as child drowning remains of significant concern.

Can parents withdraw their children from swimming lessons?

No. The only subject where parents may exercise their right to withdraw their child is Religious Education.

Can schools charge for swimming lessons?

Schools cannot charge for swimming lessons because they are a statutory part of the National Curriculum. At Richard Hill CE Primary School we fund the cost of pool hire, swim teachers and lifeguards out of our central budget. We do, however, ask for a voluntary contribution towards the costs of transporting pupils to swimming lessons. Due to being a small school those transport costs are higher than schools that may be two or three form entry.

My child is an able swimmer, they do not need school swimming lessons.

As with all learning in school, we assess each child's starting point in that area of learning and then take them on from there. Children are not withdrawn from maths because they are able, for example, and the same is true of swimming lessons. Swimming lessons are one of two physical education lessons that children receive on a weekly bases in the term that they attend. By not attending swim lessons, they will not be receiving this entitlement. All children are carefully assessed during the first week of swim lessons. Where we have a group of children who are gifted in swimming, we will meet their needs by providing an extended offer. This could include: water safety or water games including water polo.

What will happen if my child does not go swimming?

Richard Hill is a small school and running swimming lessons takes significant staffing resources. We do not have an alternative curriculum as it is not permissible for parents to withdraw children from swimming lessons.

What happens if I choose not to pay a voluntary contribution for swimming lessons?

Richard Hill will still have to meet the commitments for this statutory part of the P.E. curriculum. Where parents choose not to pay a contribution towards the cost of coach transport, the school budget will meet this and funds will be diverted from other resources. Therefore, this may mean that the children go without the additional things that they enjoy, but are not statutory for example rewards, at other points across the year as the funding can only be spent once. If parents need support in paying for the lessons there is no judgement by the school. We will always do what we can to support families where meeting this cost is difficult. We can organise payment plans and support applications to local charities if needed.

Can I use childcare vouchers for paying for the cost of the coach to swimming?

No. Childcare vouchers can only be used to pay for qualifying childcare which is registered or approved. Vouchers can be used to pay for approved childcare on school premises, provided it is outside of school hours for children who have reached compulsory school age. Swimming lessons inside school hours are not deemed to be childcare.