

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FAQ about swimming lessons at Meridian Primary School.



Which year groups go swimming and when?

As a school we have decided that children will have swimming lessons in Year 3 and Year 4. In the Autumn term Year 4 will go swimming and Year 3 will go swimming in the Spring term. We will aim to keep these set times but these are dependent on availability at Newhaven Swimming pool. This year (2017/2018) swimming lessons will be on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for Year 4 and on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays for Year 3.

Who supervises the children?

The children are supported by adults from school throughout the swimming lessons and these adults accompany them back to school on the bus so that there is adequate supervision throughout. This year the children's class teacher is the member of staff overseeing the children at the swimming pool and on the journey back to school and there is a rota of Teaching Assistants who support over the weeks. The children are taught by qualified swimming teachers provided by the swimming pool.

Why are the children going swimming during school time?

The National Curriculum is a statutory document and P.E., which includes swimming and water safety, is part of this document. It states

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.*

We are required to offer a broad and balanced curriculum and we organise swimming lessons to honour this and also to support the government recommendations. Swimming is also a great form of exercise which promotes a healthy lifestyle. At Meridian Primary, we also believe that as we live so close to the sea, it a vital skill all children need. Apart from all this, most children really enjoy the swimming sessions and come back buzzing – which is great to see!

Why are parents asked to make a contribution for an activity taking place during the school day?

Schools are not able to charge for curriculum activities during the school day; however, we are able to ask for a contribution to cover the cost and support the school in offering swimming to all children. If the contributions are insufficient to cover the costs, and there would be huge implications for the school budget, the school would need to consider cancelling the activity. For more information, please see our Charging and Remissions policy which is available either from the school office or website. The total cost is partially subsidised by the school (from the school sports grant) and covers both the swimming lessons and travel back to school by bus. This may vary from year to year, however for the academic year 2017/2018 the cost will be £3.00 a week, £30 for the 10 week course.

What happens if I am not able to afford the contribution towards the cost of swimming?

No child will be stopped going swimming if you are not able to afford the contributions. If you would like to discuss how the school may be able to support you, please make an appointment to speak with the Headteacher.

What happens if I refuse to contribute towards the cost of swimming?

Your child will still be able to take part in the swimming lessons. However, if lots of parents make this decision and the cost of swimming lessons was having a detrimental effect on the school budget, we would have to consider cancelling this wonderful experience for all the children. We ask for contributions so that the school budget can



be used to support resources and learning in school to help raise standards for all children.

Why can't the school pay for a coach to take children swimming?

The school has investigated transport to and from the pool but it was far too expensive – we would have had to ask for weekly contributions of around £12.00! We will continue to look at different options, but in the meantime the overwhelming support from parents to drop children off at the pool is greatly appreciated.

If I can't get my child to the swimming pool can you sort a lift out for me?

We would like to suggest that parents share lifts down to the pool or individuals volunteer to run children down to the pool if they have a big enough car. If you are unable to get your child to the pool please let your child's class teacher know before the swimming day, so we can make alternative arrangements for your child. Please make sure you do this as soon as possible as it is extremely difficult to arrange transport when we are notified on the day.

I thought the school received additional funding from either the Local Authority or the Government to support swimming

The school does not receive any additional funding to support swimming lessons from either the Local Authority or the Government. There is a Sports Funding Grant in school but that cannot be used to pay for swimming lessons only as it needs to be used to develop sustainable teaching and learning opportunities for the whole school community. This year we have used some of the funding to subsidise the lessons.

My child can already swim 25 metres do they have to still go swimming with the school?

Yes. In Year 3 and Year 4, swimming will form part of the P.E. curriculum so all children will need to attend. When children are already strong swimmers, the teachers work on improving their technique and noticeable improvements are made. The children are organised into groups depending on their confidence and ability in the water. They are then taught in these groups. It is important that as a school we offer a wide range of physical activities so that children can find a form of exercise that they enjoy and possibly excel in.



Why does the school use Newhaven swimming pool?

We have investigated using other swimming pools in the local area, including at Telscombe Cliffs Primary School and Peacehaven Heights Primary School, however it was not possible to offer the same opportunity and quality of swimming lessons that are provided at Newhaven swimming pool. At Newhaven, they are taught by a qualified swimming coach and are in the pool throughout the session.

My child is feeling unwell and does not want to go swimming.

If your child is not well enough for swimming, then they are probably not well enough for school so please follow the usual absence procedures. If there is a medical reason why your child cannot go swimming, we would need a note from your GP to confirm this. It is an expectation that if a child is well enough to be in school, then they will need to attend swimming lessons.

I hope that you now understand that at Meridian Primary School we all believe that swimming is such a vital and important life skill, especially as we live so close to the sea, and we want to be able to support all the children achieving this skill to the best of their ability.



I also hope that you realise that the contributions we are requesting are a way that you can support Meridian in providing the best possible education opportunities for your child and that we have explored many ways in which to keep the cost to a minimum.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you for support with this matter.