



3rd December 2024

Dear Parents/Carers of Birch Class,

Swimming Lessons at Fairfield Leisure Centre – Birch Class

As an introduction to swimming at school, we are pleased to have been able to secure swim lessons for our Reception class, this will be for half an hour, every Thursday afternoon for 6 sessions, in the teaching pool at Fairfield Leisure Centre, Lowfield Street, Dartford, DA1 1JB. The children will have two swim teachers from Fairfields, as well as two staff members from St. Paul's, with one staff member getting into the pool with them each week. The first session for Birch class children, will be on **Thursday 24th April 2025** and the last session will be on **Thursday 5th June 2025**. We will travel to and from Fairfield, via the school minibus. Our school minibus DOES NOT require your child to use a booster seat, as the seatbelts are fully adapted to move up and down and sit in the correct place on a child's shoulder, which isn't the case in a regular car.

Please note that all children need to wear a swimming hat to take part in swim lessons. These will be provided by Fairfield Leisure Centre, on the first lesson that the children have with them. Staff will help the children to put on their swim hats. A great tip for making this easier for your child, is to put talc inside your child's dry swim hat each week before their lesson, as this helps the hat to glide on more easily.

Reception children are entitled to a free school meal. On swim days, the children will have their lunch when they return to school, which will be slightly later than their normal lunchtime, by the time they return from their swimming lesson. Caterlink will provide the children with a packed lunch of a cheese or ham roll, carrot and cucumber sticks and a cookie with a piece of fruit. **There will be no hot lunch served for Reception children on swimming days. Please let Mrs Doherty know if your child would like a school packed lunch of a ham or cheese roll and this will be provided for the duration of the 6 weeks of swimming.** If your child does not require a school packed lunch, the alternative is that you provide your child with a packed lunch on swim days.

The cost of the sessions will be **£25.00** per child, which covers the hire the teaching pool, two swimming instructors and transport to and from the Centre. The children will receive a total of 6 swim lessons, which equates to approximately £4.17 per swim session, including travel. **Payment should be made via our School Gateway platform, under 'Birch Class Swim Lessons April-June 2025'.** To ease the cost, we have set-up the payment to be paid in increments for you, with a minimum amount of £5, but you must pay for all 6 sessions even if your child does not attend all of them, as school will be charged. We will leave the payment open until Friday 30th May 2025, which gives you five months to spread the payment.

Please note that it is a national curriculum expectation that all children 'must swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25 metres'. Therefore, the expectation is that ALL children should attend swim lessons. Please let Mrs Doherty in the school office know as soon as possible, if there is any reason why your child cannot attend.

At the end of their swim lessons, children will quickly rinse under the shower with water, no shampoos or shower gels are allowed. Please ensure your child brings the following items in a suitable bag:

- **Boys** – swimming trunks, a towel, and a swimming hat are mandatory. Goggles are recommended.
- **Girls** – a one-piece swimsuit, a towel and swimming hat are mandatory. Goggles are recommended.

Closer to the start date of the swim lessons, please let Mrs Doherty know your child's swimming ability. However, they will be assessed during their first lesson at Fairfields and grouped accordingly.

Yours faithfully

Mr James Johnson
Head of School