



### **What is the swim offer at Astley School?**

Experience over the years has enabled us to fine tune swimming lessons to meet statutory requirements, whilst balancing competing factors. We have moved our swim lessons from a morning to a Friday afternoon, ensuring that core subjects are prioritised in the school day. We have also moved locations to ensure that non-swimmers feel confident in a pool where they can touch the bottom. We choose to take Years 1 to 4 swimming during the summer term when the weather is warmer. We choose not to take Reception as they are in their first year of schooling when they may lack water confidence. Nor do we take Oak Class many of whom are fully independent swimmers. We regularly 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 Astley 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.

### **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 Children are not withdrawn from maths because they are able, for example, and the same is true of swimming lessons.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 weekly at Astley School in the summer term. 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?**

Astley 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?**

Astley School 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.

### **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.