

Tuesday 2nd June 2026

Dear Year 3 Parents and Carers,

Educational Visits and Swimming Provision

Following a couple of conversations with Year 3 parents over the last few days, I wanted to clarify the school's position on educational visits and how we decide where to go and what to do as this can change on a yearly basis. I also need to share some news about changes to our swimming curriculum.

As a school, we heartily support the benefits of educational visits and opportunities. They enrich the curriculum in a way that is incredibly difficult to replicate otherwise and they live long in the memory for both pupils and staff. However, when investigating the value of educational visits, there are a wide range of things that must be considered, including:

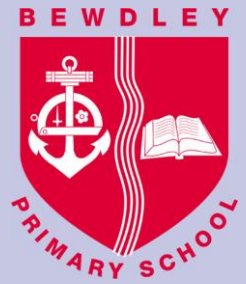
- Does the educational value link with the curriculum objectives?
- Will children learn from the activities, rather than 'just' have fun?
- Can we justify asking parents and carers to contribute that amount of money?
- Does the cost of the visit offer value for money?
- Is it logistically viable and practical?
- Is it inclusive and accessible for all pupils?
- What's the timing and availability of the visit?

As you know, the current Year 3 cohort did not visit Warwick Castle as part of their Kings and Queens topic in Year 2. This is because it would have cost around £40 per child, largely due to the cost of the coach travel. We did not think that this was a reasonable amount to ask parents to pay and therefore arranged an immersive day in school which the children really enjoyed and for a fraction of the cost. This year, the Year 2 children did visit Warwick Castle as the total amount was £20 per pupil – half that of the previous year.

Historically, in Year 3, the children have visited Blists Hill as part of their Victorians topic which we absolutely love and really adds to our history curriculum. Unfortunately, this year, Blists Hill aren't taking school bookings as part of its transition to National Trust. We therefore investigated visiting The Black Country Museum however the coach costings were exceptionally high again and we could not book a coach at a reasonable price to take us on the dates offered by the museum. Hartlebury Museum also offer Victorian sessions but the children will visit the museum as part of their Second World War topic in Year 4 so we did not want to duplicate this.

We would have loved to have taken the children off-site but, due to factors beyond our control, this has not been possible. So that the children aren't completely missing out, we've planned an immersive day in school so that they can still experience some of the activities that they would have done elsewhere.

Unfortunately, the current economic climate does not always support some of the 'extras' that we, as a school, used to be able to provide. This is also the case



for many of our parents and carers who are unable to support the school in the way that they may have done previously.

For example, only 55% of Year 3 parents were able to contribute to our Toscana Strings concert. For the recent Worcester Cathedral visit, around 1/5 of Year 3 parents were unable to contribute towards the cost of the trip. I do not share this information to attribute fault, but to give an honest picture of the financial impact on the school and the challenges this creates for future provision.

Following on from this, it is with a heavy heart that I must also inform parents that swimming will no longer continue in its current format, from September. This is a purely financial decision as we can no longer afford to subsidise the sessions in their current format. We only ever ask for contributions towards the cost of the coaches to and from Wyre Forest Leisure Centre and ask parents to only pay what they are able to. Sadly, this year, only 19% of Year 3 parents have been able to make a contribution.

With coach, pool and instructor costs, the school currently spends approximately £15,000 a year to send one year group swimming.

Therefore, we have had to look into a range of options to ensure that swimming remains a valued part of our curriculum. The school will be hiring a pool to come on site for two weeks every year and provide intensive daily lessons, which can often accelerate progress. Children in Years 3 and 4 will be prioritised with regards to the sessions, swimming daily for those two weeks whilst in both year groups. Children who are not able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 4 will also be given the opportunity to swim when they are in Years 5 and 6. Having recently visited a school which already covers their swimming curriculum in this way, I was incredibly impressed by the set up and think that it will be a positive compromise for our school.

We are certainly not alone in having to make this difficult decision and I'm aware of 3 other local schools which are having to do the same this year. These changes will help to ensure that swimming remains financially sustainable for future pupils whilst continuing to teach children this valuable life skill.

I hope that this explains the school's perspective but we always welcome any additional feedback if you think that there is something that we're missing.

Kind regards,



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