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Halling Primary School

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Dear Parents/Carers,

***IMPORTANT MESSAGE***

It is with a heavy heart that I write this letter to you, as it concerns the future of our swimming pool.

For as long as I can remember, we have had the unique privilege of having our very own swimming pool, from the very basic “splash pool” at our old site to the enclosed, heated pool that we have now. However, this privilege comes at a price and is very much an agenda item on our annual budget meetings. We do not receive any funding from the Local Authority for the upkeep of our pool and as such have to bear the cost from our usual budget allocation. We have been extremely fortunate in the past in receiving donations from our PTA and from the legacy of a local villager. We even took the step of asking for parent contributions to help with its maintenance and we currently let the pool to Starfish, which provides some additional income.

The main drive for keeping this amazing facility open has always been for the benefit of our own children at school and as such, we have always felt proud that we have been able to offer this extra service. Unfortunately we have now reached a point whereby maintaining our pool to the required PWTAG Treatment and Quality Standards is no longer possible and an independent pool specialist company, who we recently commissioned to conduct a thorough survey, has found some very major findings. Their report has concluded that our existing filtration system is insufficient and requires additional skimmers, sumps and return fittings as well as refurbishing our existing plant room to include a commercial grade filter and two commercial grade pumps. The cost of the actual replacement items isn’t so much of an issue, but when you factor in the associated decommissioning of the pool, excavation and refurbishment works and re-commissioning, the cost is simply staggering. We would have to find approx £50,000 to complete the works and comply with current regulations as well as finding the additional expense for the pools upkeep and maintenance.

Unfortunately this is not an option and as such we have decided to decommission the pool at the end of the summer term. In the mean time our site management team will endeavour to continue their efforts in ensuring the pool is fit for swimming, but they do fight a constant daily battle to maintain the balance of the pool with additional chemicals and it has been due to their hard work and dedication that we have been able to use the pool at all. However, in light of recent findings and so that we can continue to provide swimming sessions for our own children, we have reluctantly informed Starfish that their swimming club will no longer be able to continue after this term. Having additional bathers significantly adds to the demands put on

the filtration system, as well as maintaining the chemical balance and as such, is simply not cost effective.

As part of the curriculum, the school must offer swimming lessons to KS2 so that children can become proficient in the water and understand water safety. We will be looking into nearby leisure facilities to arrange lessons which meet the curriculum. This will incur costs for travel and the use of another pool plus additional time out of school. As we all know, school budgets are not overly generous so we will have to ask parents to contribute towards these costs. More details will follow once further research and costings are known.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those, past and present that have made the provision of swimming on site a possibility and pleasure for our children. It has been a great asset to the school and a facility which we thought would continue forever. I for one feel very sad that future generations won’t have the same luxury that your children and indeed my own have had.

Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

Mark Tickner

Chair of Governors