PORTICO
ACADEMY TRUST

Portico Academy Trust

CEO: Mrs C. Woolf

23 June 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

RE: Hamstel Swimming Pool

We have exciting, great news for you!

Portico Academy Trust has taken the decision to re-open the swimming pool.

We worked really hard to access grants of various kinds, to appeal for funding from individuals (including asking for help from the two Southend MPs), but all of our attempts to raise funding streams resulted in failure. Finally we wrote a bid to the DfE (Department for Education), but that was unsuccessful too. The pool is important to us as it has always been our vision that our children learn to swim so that they are safe in the water in our seaside town and they can enjoy hours of fun, so it really saddened us to close it last year.

We send our sincere and grateful thanks to the Parents' Association of the schools who also tried to raise funding.

So, we went back to the drawing board and looked at our own finances. Once we identified that we could probably fund the renovation ourselves, if we made some alterations to the plans, we approached all the leaders of our other schools to check that they were prepared for us to spend the funds at Hamstel – given that we funded the big dining area rebuild at Hamstel Junior. They all supported the renovation.

We hope to start some of the works in the summer break, aiming to complete the work and re open for the spring term. School swimming should start again in January 2027. Mr Roche and Mrs Farrell will keep you informed.

In January '27 we also hope to open a swim school, running classes after school and weekends, pool parties at weekends too and hopefully toddler lessons. If you are a swimming teacher and would be interested in working with us, please call 01702 987890 ext 317 (HR).

We are very excited about this decision and we hope you are too.

Thank you so much for your support, understanding and patience

Yours faithfully

Cheryl Woolf.

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