



# School Swimming Policy



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<b>CHAIR OF TRUSTEES:</b>	
<b>CEO:</b>	

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## About this policy:

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The purpose of this document is to set out the policy and provide guidance on Safe Practice in School Swimming and Water Safety. It aims to keep everyone involved in school swimming safe. Referenced are the policies and procedures of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), based on current national guidelines in relation to School Swimming and Water Safety lessons and swimming pool safety, which may include water-based activities.

The policy is for all EPA Trust Schools.

Where schools use Leisure Provider pools, partnership working is vital, not only to keep students and staff safe, but also to ensure the inclusion of a breadth of aquatic opportunities, which meet the needs of all students.

Physical Education including Swimming is a National Curriculum Foundation Subject and thus Statutory. All schools must provide Swimming instruction in either Key Stage 1 and/or Key Stage 2. In particular, pupils should be taught to:

- Swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25m
- Use a range of strokes effectively, such as front crawl, backstroke and breaststroke
- Perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations.

Swim England recommend that pupils will receive a minimum of 25 hours of School Swimming and Water Safety before the end of Key Stage 2.

## Responsibilities:

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### School Responsibility

The Trust holds the responsibility for ensuring safety in swimming in each school. The Headteacher must ensure that a nominated member of staff is delegated the responsibility of Teacher in Charge of School Swimming and Water Safety and applies the Primary School Swimming Policy to all aspects of School Swimming. This will incorporate the proper operation of the school's own swimming facility or use of a third-party pool. The Headteacher/Delegated member of SLT should meet with the Teacher in Charge of School Swimming and Water Safety to ensure the policy and procedures contained within this document are being applied. These include:

- Completing Risk Assessments – member of staff carries a copy of this with them, together with emergency contact numbers in the School Swimming folder (with copy held centrally in the school).
- Ensuring staff accompanying pupils to School Swimming have read, understood and signed the current Normal Operating Procedure (NOP) and Emergency Action Plan (EAP).
- Ensuring staff accompanying School Swimming are qualified to support the delivery of School Swimming and Water Safety and comply with the EPA Safeguarding Policy.

- Ensuring relevant training for School Swimming is in place for staff.
- Understanding what School Swimming qualifications allow staff to do and ensure staff are confident and competent to carry out their role in School Swimming.
- Maintaining a central record of staff qualifications and training.
- Keeping current copies of the “Conditions of Hire” and Leisure Provider Insurance details within the school swimming folder.
- Ensuring that all relevant and up to date medical and health information is maintained within the School Swimming Folder.
- Consideration will be made to ensure that schools are compliant with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 so that schools efficiently develop the culture, processes and documentation required to be compliant with the strengthened legislation and effectively manage the risks associated with data management.

### Teacher in charge of School Swimming and Water Safety

- Maintain the School Swimming Folder (see School Responsibility section above).
- Undertake Risk Assessments, signed by all staff involved (including Headteacher). This will include written information on pupils with medical conditions and/or additional needs and **must** be shared with the Specialist Swimming Teacher prior to the School Swimming and Water Safety programme commencing. This information needs to be updated where necessary.
- Complete and share relevant documents with Leisure Providers.

### Accompanying School Staff (including teachers and other staff)

School staff have overall DUTY OF CARE that applies for any activity in which children are involved and they cannot transfer their duty of care to anyone else. This applies to all activities within the school curriculum and extra-curricular activities organized by the school during and outside of school hours, whether on or off school premises.

School staff  
must:

- Be given a clear role and understand the limits of their role.
- Be confident on poolside.
- Communicate effectively and appropriately with each other and Leisure Provider staff on safety issues.
- Be suitable dressed for their role.
- Ensure children are appropriately supervised when changing.
- Ensure children are under control at all times.
- Enforce the NOP and EAP; all staff on poolside should be aware of the emergency procedures of any external provision, ensuring that children are aware of what to do in the event of an emergency evacuation.

- Remain on poolside to provide an assisting role to support the School Swimming Lesson (they must hold a minimum Swim England Support Teacher of School Swimming Certificate).
- Be aware of the additional needs or medical conditions of the pupils they are teaching so that correct measures/precautions can be put in place with guidance from the Specialist Swimming Teacher.

When public pools are used for School Swimming, the **duty of care remains with the school** staff. Specialist Aquatics Teachers may be employed to assist with the teaching of the lesson, but it is essential the school staff remain on poolside.

Staff should have the opportunity to express a lack of confidence or ability before being deployed in a poolside role. Staff should not be deployed in a poolside role however if they:

- Lack confidence in the role
- Cannot swim
- Are reticent about being on poolside.

### Normal Operating Procedure:

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For some children, School Swimming and Water Safety could be their first experience of being in a swimming pool. It is important that they know and understand the rules of the pool, pool layout and the possible hazards of this new environment.

All school staff must have read and signed to show that they understand the Normal Operating Procedure (NOP) for the pool being used for School Swimming, to ensure that they are clear on their role and responsibilities during normal operations to maintain safety.

### Emergency Action Plan:

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#### Using a Leisure Provider Pool

The Emergency Action Plan is the responsibility of a Leisure Provider when a third-party pool is being used. The responsibility for maintaining a safe swimming pool and building lies with the Leisure Provider when this is the case and all staff must receive an induction on the EAP to ensure that they understand their role and responsibilities during an emergency. This must be recorded by the school, signed by the person delivering the training and kept on file. All pools need to have a clear procedure for removing **pupils with physical disabilities**. Where a pool has a spinal board/special recovery stretcher, staff should receive training in this.

A variety of teaching and flotation aids should be available. Equipment should:

- Conform to British Standards.
- Be checked before the lesson to ensure it is safe to use.

- Be close at hand for ease of access during lesson but be kept tidily on poolside to minimize trip hazards.
- Be used appropriately to avoid over-reliance.
- Not be given to non-swimmers to allow them into water out of their ability depth.
- Be appropriate and safe for the needs of students.
- Be correctly fitted or held according to design an purpose of the

aid. Any electrical equipment on the poolside needs to be:

- Designed for use in an aquatic environment.
- Of low voltage or battery operated.
- Located so as not to create an additional hazard.
- Have current circuit breakers attached.
- PAT tested annually.
- Checked regularly.

No-one in the water should handle any electrical equipment.

<b>NOPs</b> Normal Operating Procedure	<b>EAP</b> Emergency Action Plan
<p>These are the day-to-day organizational systems based on Risk Assessment, and would typically include information relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pool design and depth</li> <li>• Potential areas of risk</li> <li>• Arrangements for lessons</li> <li>• Responsibility for safety</li> <li>• Staffing levels and qualifications</li> <li>• Supervision and student conduct</li> <li>• Arrangements for students with particular needs (e.g. very young children, or those with SEND or medical conditions)</li> <li>• Pool's safety equipment</li> <li>• Clothing and personal equipment</li> <li>• Maximum numbers</li> <li>• First aid provision</li> <li>• Water quality</li> </ul>	<p>This should establish who assumes leadership in managing emergencies and the action to be taken in relation to such issues as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serious injury to the bather</li> <li>• Dealing with casualties in the water</li> <li>• Sudden overcrowding in a public pool</li> <li>• Sudden lack of water clarity</li> <li>• Disorderly behaviour</li> <li>• Vomit</li> <li>• Blood contamination</li> <li>• Emergency action due to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire alarm</li> <li>• Bomb threat</li> <li>• Power failure</li> <li>• Structural failure</li> <li>• Toxic-gas emission</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Guidance on Pool Temperatures can be found via the following link:

<https://www.pwtag.org.uk/faqs/index.php>

## Risk Assessment

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Risk Assessments must be carried out for all swimming activities. If you have your own pool the Risk Assessment must include the following:

- Pool design (including security)
- Depth of the pool
- Water Quality
- Pool organisation
- Staffing
- Pupils and ability (including medical needs)
- Supervision of changing rooms
- The use of goggles
- Staff clothing and equipment
- Pupil's swimwear
- Factors if staff in pool

**All pools should be able to be locked off and isolated to prevent unauthorized access.**

Accompanying school staff are expected to undertake a dynamic Risk Assessment in situ each time they attend the pool. Staff should take action to control any identified changes such as:

- Water quality and temperature
- Integrity of pool enclosure/building
- Availability and condition of rescue/emergency equipment
- The age, range of ability and numbers of children in each class
- The activities they will be undertaking
- The qualifications of the people leading and supporting the session
- Known additional needs/medical conditions
- Weather conditions

**If any doubt about the safety of the lesson, don't proceed.**

## School Staff Accompanying Pupils to their School Swimming and Water Safety Lesson

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For all School Swimming and Water Safety lessons, at least 2 members of school appointed staff, who know the children, should accompany the class to the swimming pool (this applies to both school pools and Leisure Provider Pools). In order to ensure that School Staff understand their role and are confident and competent, 2 or more members of accompanying School Staff **MUST** have undertaken, as a minimum, the Swim England Support Teacher of School Swimming and Water Safety (formerly ASA Fundamentals of School Swimming) prior to taking their pupils to School Swimming lessons.

## Teacher to Pupil Ratios

Ability/Age/Activity	Ratios
<b>Non-swimmers and beginners – young children</b> , normally primary school age, being introduced to swimming who are <b>unable to swim</b>	8:1
<b>Children under the age of seven</b> – irrespective of their swimming ability,	8:1
<b>Improving swimmers</b> – Swimmers of a similar ability to each other who <b>can swim at least 10 metres competently and unaided on their back and on their front</b> . It is recommended that the lesson <b>be confined to an area in which the children are not out of their depth</b> .	12:1
<b>Mixed ability groups</b> – pupils with a range of abilities (from improving to competent) where the <b>least able and least confident are working well within their depth</b> . Swimmers' techniques, stamina and deep-water experience should be considered. <b>They should not include beginners</b> .	12:1
<b>Competent swimmers</b> – those swimmers who can swim <b>at least 25 metres competently and unaided on front and back and can tread water for two minutes</b> .	15:1
<b>Swimmers with disabilities</b> – <b>each situation must be considered individually</b> , as people with disabilities are not a homogenous group. Care must be taken to ensure that there are sufficient helpers in the water to provide <b>1:1 ratio for those needing constant support</b> , and a sufficient number of other helpers to provide the degree of support required by the range of disabilities within the group.	6:1 with 1:1 support in the water where required.

## Diving

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Diving can only be taught by an appropriately qualified swimming teacher with a diving specific qualification. At no point must anyone without this qualification be allowed to teach diving.

## Teaching Self-Rescue and Water Safety

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Self-Rescue and Water Safety skills are an important element of School Swimming. Pupils need to understand the effects and dangers of cold water. They should be taught to recognise a range of scenarios and respond safely and appropriately.

Pupils should be given opportunities to wear clothing in water as part of an understanding of a potential situation. They need to be taught how to regulate their breathing in cold water and efficient forms of flotation. Key skills that children should learn are:

- Entry with full submersion and resurface (fall-in or step-in entry)
- Float (to regulate breathing)

- Signal for help
- Swim 15m out, then turn and swim 15m back
- Tread water
- Maintain HELP and Huddle
- Climb out unassisted (without use of the steps where the freeboard is sufficiently small)
- Show understanding of local and national water safety sites and be able to identify when the above skills may be needed.

Swimming teachers and School Staff need to be particularly aware of swimmers tiring when swimming in clothing due to the resistance present in the water.

## Pupils' Swimwear

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Pupils should wear appropriate costumes for swimming that conform to safety, cultural and teaching requirements. Swimming hats must be worn and all jewelry removed. Where children may not be able to remove earrings, these must be taped.

It is important that swimming clothing is relatively tight fitting e.g. Lycra costumes/shorts.

Please also refer to document "Meeting the Needs of Muslim Pupils in State Schools,

pages

31 & 38: <http://www.religionlaw.co.uk/MCBschoolsreport07.pdf>

## Goggles

Parents are responsible for requesting permission that goggles be worn by their children and schools are responsible for collecting and recording such requests. School staff should not fit or adjust a student's goggles.

## Safeguarding

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The Leisure Pool Provider will have their own Child Protection Procedures. It is important that the pool procedures relate to those of EPA Trust. A school using a pool, other than their own, should establish a protocol identifying the relationship between their respective procedures.

The school should assure themselves by checking that the contract with the Leisure Pool Provider, has carried out appropriate DBS checks and undertaken any other relevant safeguarding vetting checks and that any staff members working in "regulated activity" are not barred from working with children.

## References

Oxfordshire "Safe Practice in School Swimming" Policy June 2018

Swim England Guidelines for School Swimming

All schools with a pool should download the free Managing Health & Safety in Swimming Pools  
4<sup>th</sup> edition: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg179.pdf>

Meeting the Needs of Muslim pupils in state sch