

THE BLUE COAT CHURCH OF ENGLAND (AIDED) INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS' FEDERATION

BELIEVING, CELEBRATING, SUCCEEDING

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Swimming Policy

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Why we provide swimming lessons at Blue Coat Junior School

The Department for Education understands the importance of learning to swim – it is the only physical activity which can save your life.

Many children learn to swim outside of school. But for some, primary school will be the only opportunity they have to learn these vital lifesaving skills.

The government has recognised the importance of teaching our young people swimming and water safety by including it in the national curriculum. The **three key outcomes** within the physical education curriculum all children are expected to achieve by the end of year six are:

- swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25 metres
- use a range of strokes effectively [for example, front crawl, backstroke and breaststroke]
- perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations



Why is this so important?

Swimming isn't just about being able to have fun in the water with family and friends (although it is and you should!). It's also about knowing what to do if someone gets into trouble. Or if a strong current takes your friend away from the edge. Or you fall in when running by a river or canal.

Drowning is the third most common cause of accidental death in children. At Blue Coat Federation, we believe all children should have the opportunity to learn how to swim and be taught how to stay safe in and around water.

Swimming is also incredibly good for physical and mental health and wellbeing – it's the only activity you can do at any age and at any ability.

We have an opportunity to ensure every generation is taught basic water safety skills. But we have to work together to make it happen.

Risk management

Before any lesson takes place at the pool, it's essential to plan ahead and think about the safety of all involved. Risk assessments should be continually carried out in the classroom, and playground, and swimming pools. As part of your planning you should ensure risks are managed properly by:

- Identifying potential causes of injury.
- Taking steps to reduce the likelihood of injury

Maximum Numbers

The building design of swimming pools varies greatly as do specific circumstances, thus each class will be very different. Therefore, definitive sets of ratios are not always appropriate.

For example, shallow-depth learner pools are much easier to supervise than large public pools where the presence of public swimmers can present problems.

Risk Assessment based on:

- Numbers of 'qualified staff',
- Numbers of 'non-qualified' adult helpers who are on poolside in a supervisory/spotting role,
- Pupil ability,
- The facility, including water depth and un-programmed activities taking place at the same time,
- Pupil behaviour,
- Pupils with additional needs and disabilities.

Class ratios

The following recommended ratios are starting points for determining actual pupil-teacher ratios, which will depend on the outcome of a risk assessment designed to ensure high quality, effective swimming lessons are delivered.' These ratios can be found in 'Safe Supervision of programmed swimming lessons and training sessions (2018)'.

Non-swimmers and beginners (Learners with or without floatation aids that cannot swim 10m comfortably)	12:1
Improving swimmers (Learners who have mastered stroke technique and have the ability to swim 10m comfortably and safely.)	20:1
Mixed ability groups (not including beginners) all should be able to swim 25m minimum. Mixed ability groups are often a necessity in managing school groups	20:1
Competent swimmers (those who can swim at least 25 metres competently and unaided and can tread water for 2 minutes)	20:1
Swimmers with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) Each situation must be considered independently as people with disabilities are not a homogenous group	1-1 upwards

Irrespective of the Teacher: Pupil ratio, there must always be at least 2 qualified members of school staff present at the poolside during the swimming lesson.

If a swimming teacher does not hold a lifesaving qualification, a qualified lifesaver must be present on poolside at all times.

Roles and responsibilities

The role of the PE subject leader:

- To undertake a risk assessment of the school's swimming provision annually and monitor its implementation on an ongoing basis;
- To ensure that the law relating to SEND is followed whereby schools take all reasonable steps to avoid discriminating against pupils on the grounds of their disability.
- To maintain and keep a record of the pupils' swimming achievements inside and outside of school. To report to the governing body annually on the impact of the school's swimming provision.
- Ensure the recommended teacher ratios are adhered to. (See RA)
- To ensure annual briefing sessions take place with all staff

Swimming Teachers

- The responsibility of the swimming teacher begins when the school teacher, or other school representative, has handed over the group of pupils and informed them of the number of pupils swimming, together with any additional information about a pupil's specific needs.
 - Possess DBS clearance.
 - Have full ASA Teachers Award or an STA equivalent as well as a life-saving award recognised by Health and Safety Unit. A classroom teacher may also take a swimming group where appropriate.
 - Possess a relevant First Aid certificate.
 - Make sure all children and teachers know safety drills.
 - Have all equipment ready and in the correct place in the teaching area
 - Consult with the accompanying teacher and agree arrangements to be made about the provision for children with special needs and confirm risk assessment.
 - Ensure children know the procedure for the start/end of lesson, their grouping and assigned area of pool and teacher.
 - To assess and record pupil progress.
 - Organise classes according to:
 - Class numbers.
 - Pupil ability.
 - Numbers of teachers/adult helpers
- The duty of the swimming teacher ends when the pupils leave the water and, whilst still on poolside, are returned to the care of the school teacher or other school representative. However school staff must stay on poolside at all times.
- Swimming teachers must ensure they are aware of the national curriculum requirements and have attended the relevant training.
 - Swimming teachers should lead on the creation of the programme and lesson plans, in consultation with the school. These should be adapted during the programme to reflect the progress made by the individual pupils.

- Approach each lesson with a degree of flexibility to ensure every pupil is engaged during the lesson and encouraged to make progress.
- At the end of each lesson, feedback progress to the school teacher so they can update the school and parents.
- At the end of the swimming programme, provide evidence to support the school to accurately reflect their pupils' attainment against the three national curriculum requirements.

Primary School and Accompanying Teachers/Adults

- The school is accountable for their pupils' attainment and progress. Therefore, regular dialogue should take place between school teachers and swimming teachers to ensure both are aware of the progress made.
- The school should be aware and agree the overall programme and lesson plans to ensure they fit with the national curriculum requirements.
- School teachers are required to provide up-to-date, accurate registers of those attending the lessons. They should also advise about any individual medical treatment needs or special requirements.
- School teachers are responsible for highlighting any concerns about the pace or content of the lessons, and how the pupils are responding.
- School teachers/accompanying teaching assistants/support staff are responsible for general order and discipline. Together, they should maintain high levels of supervision in the changing rooms, on poolside and while pupils are in the water.
- School staff should play an active role supporting learning and dealing with behaviour and welfare issues.
- At the end of each lesson, the school teacher should discuss the progress made by the class and report back to the school/parents.
- At the end of the swimming programme, schools must publish details of how many pupils within their year 6 cohort have met the national curriculum requirements. Therefore, good communication between the swimming teacher/ provider is important.
 - The welfare of specific children in changing room. Supervision and oversight of designated child, ensuring the child understands and follows instructions.
 - Consult with the member of staff in charge and agree arrangements to be made about the provision for children with special needs and confirm risk assessment.
 - Adhere to health and safety requirements.

Overview of what to teach

As with other national curriculum subjects, swimming and water safety lessons should have purpose and good pace throughout. Every lesson should be organised, structured, controlled and continuously monitored from the poolside.

Warm up and contrasting activities should also be programmed, structured and controlled.

To meet the three national curriculum requirements for swimming and the wider physical activity requirements, school swimming and water safety lessons should focus on developing some or all of the following skills and strokes in different water-related contexts:

- how to enter and exit the water
- floatation
- submerging
- rotating from back to front and front to back and regaining an upright position
- pushing and gliding and an understanding of streamlining
- aquatic breathing
- moving effectively and efficiently through the water using alternating and simultaneous strokes on front and back, such as front crawl, back crawl, breast stroke, side stroke
- swimming longer distances and for increasing amounts of time
- using swimming skills and strokes for different purposes such as water polo and synchronised swimming
- survival and self-rescue skills: treading water, Heat Escape Lessening Position (HELP) and Huddle positions, floating and resting in the water, attracting attention, sculling and swimming in clothes/buoyancy aids
- water safety: knowledge and understanding of different water environments, how to stay safe when playing in and around water including recognising flags and warning signs and understanding national and local water safety advice
- what to do if others get into difficulties: stay safe, shout, signal, throw, do not go into the water, raising the alarm 999
- play competitive games such as water polo and apply basic principles suitable for attacking and defending.

Teaching qualifications

All those that teach curriculum swimming and water safety, whether employed by the school or through a third party, must have up-to-date knowledge and competence to do so safely and effectively.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) recognises that competence can be demonstrated:

- with a relevant qualification
- through in-house training, initial teacher training or in-service training
- through previous experience. In addition, regular professional learning should take place to ensure knowledge and working practices are up-to-date.

All swimming teachers should hold the following qualifications:

- Up to date Level 2 Teaching Swimming Qualification.
- Specific training for teaching primary school swimming and water safety
- Relevant training and CPD on supporting swimmers with additional needs.
- Current DBS check.

Teaching swimming to pupils with special educational needs and disabilities

Teachers should be aware that pupils may have a combination of disabilities or impairments and careful planning and delivery of adapted tasks may be required. Teachers should consider what impact some impairments may have on a pupil's ability in the water, for example balance, breathing, buoyancy, need for additional floatation equipment, support in the water and length of lessons etc.

Our SEN co-ordinator will have detailed information on a pupil's condition, but It's essential to advise the lesson provider and the swimming teacher in advance about any pupils with additional needs. Teachers should consult the parents of pupils with SEND and, crucially, the pupils themselves. In some cases, there may also be support staff from local support agencies.

Behaviour

The swimming pool is a place of work and should be treated as a classroom with the same rules regarding behaviour.

It is essential to have an adequate staffing ratio both in the changing rooms and in the pool.

Attendance

All parents must ensure that their children attend all allocated lessons. As swimming is a statutory part of the National Curriculum. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from this statutory element of the National Curriculum, unless the child has an EHCP (Education Health Care Plan).

Older children are encouraged to be independent in terms of organising their swimming kits. Children who forget their swimming kits or cannot participate in the lesson for any reason will be required to attend and observe the lessons from the side of the pool. This is in line with the other aspects of the PE curriculum delivery.

Parents of children returning from an illness that would prevent them from swimming for a short period of time must provide the school with medical evidence of the illness in order that they may be excused from the lesson. Should a child not be able to swim for an extended period of time, a Doctor's note must be provided.

Attendance will be monitored by the school administration team in the first instance. If any patterns occur, the school will work with parents to ensure their child has access to swimming provision.

Swimming Kit

Girls should wear a one-piece swimsuit and boys should wear swimming trunks (not baggy 'board shorts'). All children should wear a swim hat, with girls ensuring that their hair is tied up. Provision must be made for alternative attire for minority ethnic pupils when a request is made. We do not encourage beginner swimmers to wear goggles. Please see the exemplar parent information letter below:

Delivering a school swimming and water safety programme

Despite being a statutory part of the national curriculum for Key Stage 1 or 2, schools can struggle to ensure all their pupils reach the three required outcomes. This can be due to a number of factors including access to facilities, costs associated with delivering the programme or the quality of the programme.

Schools are aware that, as a national curriculum requirement, swimming and water safety provision must be free to all pupils and costs should come out of the school's core budget. This includes costs associated with facilities, swimming teachers and transport. However, primary schools can access the PE and Sport Premium to provide additionally.

The premium can be used to fund the professional development and training that are available to schools to train staff to support high quality swimming and water safety lessons for their pupils. The premium may also be used to provide additional top-up swimming lessons to pupils who have not been able to meet the national curriculum requirements for swimming and water safety after the delivery of core swimming and water safety lessons.

Assessment

As part of the accountability requirements for the PE and Sport Premium, schools are required to publish the swimming and water safety attainment levels of your current Year 6 cohort. This should be published on your school website and should state what percentage of pupils meet the national curriculum swimming and water safety requirements. The reporting deadline is the end of the summer term.

It's important schools share these attainment figures for parents to be aware of their child's abilities. In place of a more formal reporting method, it also allows secondary schools the ability to access the information.

Schools are responsible for collecting the data for each pupil. If school swimming and water safety lessons are provided by a third party, such as a pool operator or swim school, teachers should request this information at the end of each swimming term or block of lessons.

Children who wish to wear goggles in a swimming lesson

Goggles are not needed for everyday swimming. It should be remembered that in the event of your child being involved in a hazardous water situation it is extremely unlikely that he/she would be wearing goggles.

It is highly desirable therefore that your child learns to swim without being dependent on goggles. Goggles may cause injuries even resulting in blindness if a child is knocked on the goggles when swimming or diving or putting them on and removing them. Poorly fitting goggles do not keep water out of the eyes. Because children frequently, take the goggle on and off during a lesson, this can become a problem.

Goggles often steam up for the first few minutes after putting them on. School swimming lessons usually last for about 30 minutes. The children swim in large numbers and sometimes in crowded conditions.

Beginners do not always have full control of arm and leg movements. These factors may increase the possibility of being hit on the goggles.

Goggles are held in place by tight elastic and are made of hard plastic.

The use of goggles is advisable only when there is excessive reaction to the chemicals in the water and where the swimmer is involved in lengthy training sessions. In these cases goggles may reduce the effect of contact of the eyes with the water a little.

If goggles are used they should not be made of glass or breakable plastic. It is recommended that such goggles be purchased from a recognised sports equipment retailer or from local baths/leisure centres.

Your child will need to be taught how to put on and remove the goggles and how to empty the water out safely:-

“The goggles must be held firmly with both hands each gripping the outside corner where the straps are attached. The goggles must then be pushed upwards and NEVER pulled out away from the face.”

If you wish your child to wear goggles in the school swimming lessons please make this request in writing to the school.

GOGGLES

I, as parent/guardian of

I acknowledge that I have received and read the notes of Advice To Parents Whose Children Wish To Wear Goggles In A School Swimming Lesson.

Signed

.....Date.....