School Swimming Guidance
2020-2022

For all schools and school swimming providers in Dorset & BCP

Active Dorset
Dorset boasts the Jurassic coastline, stunning beaches, stretches of open water and three main rivers which all flow into the sea. Given that we live in a beautiful area surrounded by water, it is crucial for our children and young people to be safe, competent swimmers from a young age.

We are fortunate that the Government requires children to achieve the following minimum standards whilst in primary education: to be able to swim 25m confidently and competently; to perform a range of strokes effectively; and, to perform self-rescue in open water. These requirements form part of the National Curriculum for Physical Education and schools are required by the Department of Education (DfE) to publish their data for Year 6 pupils by the 31st July on an annual basis.

Nationally however, the statistics for school swimming in England are a concern. The latest figures suggest that 1 in 4 children will leave primary school unable to swim 25m or perform self-rescue in open water.

As the picture in Dorset maps the national one, Active Dorset established a Swimming Development Network Group in 2019 to influence change. The network has worked collaboratively with Swim England to raise the profile of swimming lesson provision and the support that exists locally for schools. The network has produced this guide with the aim of providing one set of advice to those involved in organising and delivering school swimming lessons across all areas of the county – i.e. inclusive of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

Active Dorset would like to thank Swim England and the swimming lesson providers who have contributed to the network, and to the development of this guide.
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1. Swim England support for primary school swimming and water safety
Swim England support for primary school swimming and water safety

*Swim England has worked with the Department of Education (DfE) to ensure that they provide the latest information to support Primary School Swimming and Water Safety.

The Swim England website provides the latest information about school swimming requirements for school staff, swimming teachers and (leisure) providers of school swimming. Clear guidance is available from there to read, watch or download. It is specifically designed to support curriculum planning and delivery, and to help with report writing about curriculum swimming and water safety.

The Swim England ‘School Swimming and Water Safety’ Charter provides an additional level of support for school and providers, which helps to boost their delivery and outcomes for all children.

For the most up-to-date information, simply go to the Swim England website to access high quality resources and information for free: https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/teaching-swimming-hub/
2. National Curriculum requirements for swimming and water safety
2.1 - To swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25m

To achieve this requirement, children should be able to demonstrate the following:

- A continuous swim for 25 metres or more.
- Strokes which are as strong at the end of the swim as at the start.
- Completing part of the 25m swim in *deep water.
- Strokes recognisable to an informed onlooker

*Deep water is classed as water greater in depth than shoulder height for the swimmer.*
2.2 - To use a range of strokes effectively

Children should be able to use a range of strokes to achieve different outcomes and be certain of success. To do this they need to do the following:

- Make choices about the strokes they use
- Experience both alternating and simultaneous strokes.
- Adapt the strokes for a range of purposes and intended outcomes.

Key Message

Strokes do not have to be perfect they simply need to be effective for the intended outcome.
2.3 - To Perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations

Children should demonstrate the following:

● Knowledge and understanding of water safety key messages.
● Know how and when to use appropriate survival and self-rescue skills.
● Knowledge and understanding of local and national water hazards.
● Knowing what to do if others get into trouble.

Key Messages:

● Always swim in a safe place
● Always swim with an adult
● Float breath relax
● Ability to call 999 or 112 and stay out of the water
3. What schools should expect from school swimming providers
What schools should expect from school swimming providers

From the Provider

● Signposting to the Swim England Swim School Charter and knowledge of the benefits to schools

● Support with achieving the National Curriculum (NC) requirements for all primary school swimming – including assessment of the three NC requirements

● Level 1 & 2 qualified staff with appropriate experience in teaching Key Stage 1 & 2 children to swim

● Potential to share costs of instructors, pool time and lifeguards if sharing the same session time with another school or schools

● Offer to upskill school staff with Level 1 & 2 qualifications and/or a lifeguarding qualification
What schools should expect from school swimming providers

From the Provider

● Advice/guidance on required *staff/pupil ratios for the full range of abilities – *see ratio listings on p.17 of the Swim England Guide for Providers [https://www.swimming.org/schools/resource-pack/](https://www.swimming.org/schools/resource-pack/)

● Tailored swimming programme to ensure that it is inclusive and meets the needs of all learners

● Assessment of all pupils linked to the NC requirements – see pages 12-14 of the Swim England Guide for Primary Schools [https://www.swimming.org/schools/resource-pack/](https://www.swimming.org/schools/resource-pack/)
What schools should expect from school swimming providers

From the Facility

● Exclusive use of pool or pool section/area
● Exclusive use of *changing areas, or an ability to appropriately zone communal changing areas – *providers are open to discuss how best to segregate changing areas to meet the individual needs of a school
● Use of the facility for swimming lessons and more – e.g. water confidence sessions, health and wellbeing sessions, swim safe sessions and competitions/galas
4. What school swimming providers should expect from schools
What school swimming providers should expect from schools

- To sign up to the School Swimming Charter
- To confirm bookings for their school swimming programme in April/May - so that it is planned for the following academic year
- To provide a clear idea of what the school wishes to achieve through swimming – e.g.:
  - Swimming lessons for pupils to fulfil the National Curriculum (NC) requirements
  - Top-up sessions for Year 6 pupils who do not meet the NC requirements
  - Festivals experiences for KS1 pupils – to boost water confidence
  - *Festival experiences for Year 6 pupils – to boost safety skills/Swimsafe (*could form part of a transition day)
What school swimming providers should expect from schools

● To provide the leisure provider with the following information about what they wish to achieve
  ○ Year group(s)
  ○ Ability levels of all children
  ○ Any additional needs
  ○ Group sizes/numbers of children to receive swimming lessons

● For schools to follow the agreed cancellation policy of the leisure provider – e.g. swimming lesson cancellations in writing with 7 days' notice for an individual session, or 4 weeks' notice in writing for a block booking cancellation
5. Class Ratios

Class ratios are recommended starting points when determining actual pupil-teacher ratios for individual sessions.
Class Ratios

These class ratios are recommended starting points when determining actual pupil-teacher ratios for individual sessions. These may alter slightly, depending on outcomes from a risk assessment completed by the provider. This is designed to ensure that high quality, effective swimming lessons are delivered with safety in mind.

12:1  Non-swimmers and Beginners
Learners with or without flotation aids that cannot swim 10m comfortably.

20:1  Improving Swimmers
Learners who have mastered stroke technique and have ability to swim 10m comfortably and safely.

20:1  Mixed Ability Groups – *Not Inclusive of Beginners*
All learners should be able to swim 25m as a minimum. Mixed ability groups are often a necessity in school groups.

20:1  Competent Swimmers
Learners who can swim at least 25m competently and unaided and can tread water for 2 minutes.

1:1 Upwards  Swimmers with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
Each learner with SEND must be considered independently as children with disabilities have individual needs.
6. How schools can finance swimming lessons
How schools can finance schools swimming lessons

1. *Additional or ‘top up’ sessions can be funded by the PE and School Sport (PESS) Premium for all children*

2. *Pupil Premium (PP) funding*

3. Parent Teacher Association (PTA) fund raising – to subsidise costs

4. Parental contributions

*NB – Both funding streams mentioned in numbers 1&2 apply to all children i.e. inclusive of those categorised as SEND pupils.*
7. Swim England’s inclusive 2020 offer for children with additional needs
Swim England’s inclusive 2020 offer for children with additional needs

- Swim England have been proud to be involved in Inclusion 2020 – a project funded by DfE and led by Youth Sport Trust that aims to increase participation of SEND pupils in school sport. Recent work has seen the release of a new School Swimming Assessment Tool.

- This is a free, downloadable tool designed to help schools and swimming lesson providers across the country work together to identify barriers to participation for SEND pupils and implement changes to improve the SEND provision in their local area. You can use the tool to guide joint discussions, create solutions and then implement those solutions successfully.

- [www.swimming.org/schools/inclusion-2020/](http://www.swimming.org/schools/inclusion-2020/)
8. Enabling access to swimming lessons outside of school hours for pupil premium children
Enabling access to swimming lessons outside of school hours for pupil premium children

Schools have the option to use Pupil Premium funding to enable children to access additional swimming, outside of school hours. This enables:

- Discounted rates for Pupil Premium children who access a swim school outside of school hours.
- Increased access through a block of multi-skill sessions which may include pool time – e.g. *aqua fit, aqua wellbeing and free swim options.*
9. Guidelines around safe supervision
Guidelines around safe supervision

**School Focus**

- School staff are advised to observe safe provision guidance outlined in the School Swimming Charter
- School staff should monitor the behaviour of children at all times – both in the water and on poolside
- Schools should provide sufficient staff to support the swimming instructor(s) with adult-child ratios, both in the water and on poolside

**Leisure Provider Focus**

- To provide schools with exclusive use of the pool and changing rooms
- To ensure that all lead instructors are Level 2 qualified, delivering high quality lessons
- To ensure that staff/pupil ratios are appropriate for all ages and abilities, for all learners
- To provide schools with clear guidance on safe behaviour/conduct, both in and near the pool
10. The Swim England ‘school swimming and water safety’ charter
The Swim England ‘school swimming and water safety’ charter

Charter Content

Swim England encourages schools and school swimming providers to sign up to the School Swimming and Water Safety Charter. This is simply to ensure they have best information available, with access to the following physical resources:

- Passports, stickers sets, pin badges and free downloadable awards
- Waterproof syllabus cards & lesson plans
- Digital resources, banners and logo
- Cross-curricular resources for school teachers
- Templates to help schools to deliver lessons & record pupil achievements
- Templates for schools to use in communications with parents, swimming teachers and lesson providers
- Water safety presentation for pupils for use in assemblies or in the classroom

www.swimming.org/schools/school-swimming-water-safety-charter/
11. Swim England’s National Campaigns
Swim England’s National Campaigns

- Big School Swim
- Aquasplash and School Games
- School Swimathon
- Swim Safe
- Drowning Prevention Week
- Inclusion 2020
- National School Sport Week
12. Useful Links
Useful Links

General Information; https://www.swimming.org/schools/

School Swimming Charter; https://www.swimming.org/schools/school-swimming-water-safety-charter/

Training opportunities; www.swimming.org/ios/school-swimming/

Swim safe; www.swimsafe.org.uk/

Drowning Preventing Week; www.rlss.org.uk/drowning-prevention-week

Aqua Splash Information; www.swimming.org/schools/aquasplash

Big School Swim; www.swimming.org/schools/big-school-swim/

Swimming and the national curriculum; www.swimming.org/schools/swimming-national-curriculum

Educating young people about how to keep safe, in on and around water; Water Safety from Home Resources.

RNLI & MCA’s Beach Safety Campaign and beach safety resources