

SCHOOL SWIMMING

South Gloucestershire

# Guidance Pack

A partnership between



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*This pack has been produced and endorsed by the Strategic Swimming Group. The pools listed on the contact form at the back will adhere to the principles and practices in this guidance pack. If other pools are being used for school swimming, you are advised to check any queries directly with the pool management.*

## Introduction

### School swimming is bigger and better than ever!

School swimming has been a part of the primary curriculum for generations. However, national OFSTED reports have queried the effectiveness of current arrangements for teaching children to swim in school. The government has made school swimming a priority and has set aside resources to support this.

In response to these developments we have been working hard to improve the standards, effectiveness and uptake of school swimming in South Gloucestershire. This pack has been designed to explain how the school swimming provision works, what we offer, what you need to know and what you need to do to help.

As well as improving swimming lessons we are now also preparing to roll out government funded Top-Up schemes to help those children not meeting the KS2 requirement. In addition, we are delivering an enhanced CPD programme to help school staff even more.

One of the first changes is to introduce this guidance pack, bringing all the information you need together into one place.

### Further Help and Support

Call any of our **Swimming Coordinators** to talk through any aspect of swimming provision - find their contact info on page 16.

South Gloucestershire Council provides support through the **Community Sport and Active Lifestyles** department and via the **Teaching & Learning Adviser (PE)**, Jeanette Quinn - find contact info on page 16.

More information can be found on school swimming at:  
**[www.sgleisure.org/swimming/schools](http://www.sgleisure.org/swimming/schools)**

#### KEY POINTS:

- Swimming is a Key Stage 2 requirement:
- Minimum of 25m with a recognised stroke
  - Water safety knowledge

## Who are we?

### School Swimming Strategy Group

Our group was established in 2006, bringing together the various people involved in school swimming: school teachers, swimming teachers, sports development officers, traded services, pool operators, PE Advisors, Transport Services.

This group is driving forward the provision of quality school swimming in the following areas:

- Improved standards of teaching and learning.
- More effective access to pool time.
- Smaller group sizes.
- Improved communications streams.

### South Gloucestershire Leisure (SGL)

South Gloucestershire Leisure is a charitable Trust that operates leisure facilities in South Gloucestershire on behalf of the Council. Our overarching aim is to increase participation in physical activity in South Gloucestershire.

#### Our Swimming Pools

We operate 5 swimming pools (and Leisure Centres) in **Bradley Stoke, Kingswood, Longwell Green, Thornbury and Yate**. That is around 4 million litres of water for us to teach in. Bradley Stoke and Longwell Green offer state of the art modern pools and changing facilities while Kingswood has the biggest pool in the wider Bristol area.

#### Our Teachers

We employ qualified swimming instructors who teach in accordance with the Amateur Swimming Association's (ASA) National Teaching Plan (NTP). All swimming teachers undergo continuous professional development and are committed to teaching people of all ages to swim. We have been teaching on behalf of the schools for over 30 years in South Gloucestershire.

### Filton Sport and Leisure Centre (formerly known as the Dolphin Pool)

Run independently by Filton Town Council, the pool has been providing school swimming lessons since 1971. The swimming pool underwent a £1.4million refurbishment 5 years ago resulting in the addition of a 12-metre learner pool to complement the original 25-metre main pool. All school swimming lessons are taught by ASA level 2 or above qualified teachers with schools having access to exclusive use of the learner pool and half of the main pool when they use the leisure centre.

**KEY POINTS:** School swimming in South Gloucestershire is organised, consistent and well supported.

## Help with planning swimming for your school

### Changing Room Supervision

Our leisure centres have a variety of changing facilities. You will need to send enough male/female support staff to satisfy your supervision criteria.

**Bradley Stoke / Filton / Kingswood / Longwell Green:** Segregated male and female group changing rooms are provided for schools. The rest of the changing area is village style (private cubicles in a unisex changing area), meaning that other customers use individual cubicles to change.

**Thornbury:** Separate male and female changing is provided as part of the general customer changing rooms. There is no segregated school changing area. The disabled changing area can be made available by arrangement to alleviate the changing issues.

**Yate:** Segregated male and female group changing rooms are provided for schools within the existing customer changing rooms. These rooms are adjacent to open changing areas.

### Teaching Ratios

The Amateur Swimming Association guidelines state that up to 20 children can be taught by one swimming teacher. In order to achieve high quality teaching we prefer to have lower ratios. The information below shows the suggested ratios to allow you to assess how many helpers you need to send with your classes to ensure an effective learning environment.

Our experience indicates that it is more effective to bring Year 4 pupils and upwards rather than Year 3. At this age a much larger proportion have learnt to swim in out-of-school lessons and this greatly improves the way we can split the children up in the school lessons: teaching non-swimmers is the most space-critical element. Their increased maturity also helps us. We teach a maximum of 40 children in a class using half of the space in our main pools. We recommend 12 children per teacher, so for a full class we would recommend 3 assistants from the school. Should you only have a few non-swimmers, it may be possible to effectively teach this number with only 2 assistants from the school. Teaching ratios and group arrangements will be confirmed with the swimming teacher, after the initial swimming lesson.

All school swimming includes provision for Special Needs, but this will impact on the relevant ratios. Our swimming coordinators can offer extra advise about all of this.

#### KEY POINTS:

We will work with you to ensure a safe environment. Maintaining appropriate ratios improves swimming outcomes.

## What we do to help you

Our job is to develop your childrens' swimming abilities. We follow the ASA's National Teaching Plan (NTP) to provide a high quality and consistent approach to swimming across the region. This has the advantage of linking school swimming development directly with our other lessons in the evenings, weekends and school holidays. This also directly links into the way swimming clubs teach their competitive swimmers and supports a joined-up approach to swimming in South Gloucestershire.

### **We look after you on poolside**

All school swimming lessons are overseen by our qualified swimming teachers, and we also have NPLQ qualified lifeguards on poolside for added safety. All our centres are staffed by fully trained first-aiders and we operate extensive, regularly audited emergency procedures.

### **If you have special needs**

We pride ourselves on our provision for people with special needs. There is extensive equipment for accessing the pool. Our lifeguards are all trained to operate this equipment so we can help at any time. Please speak to the Swimming Coordinator about specific issues before lessons are planned.

### **On your first lesson**

Our teacher will carry out an initial assessment of all the children in the lesson. Based on this, as well as the size of the pool, they will work with you to decide on the most appropriate split into groupings. At the end of this lesson, children will be evacuated from the water and shown where to stand in the event of an emergency.

### **At the end of the term**

Our teacher will carry out badge testing and a Key Stage 2 Assessment for all the children. This will allow you to see who has achieved the KS2 target of swimming 25m with a recognised swimming stroke. It will also be used to help in preparing for additional programmes that will support the provision of swimming.

### **Badge testing**

The testing of distance badges takes into account stamina, strength as well as the ability to swim front crawl, back crawl and breast stroke with good style and in an environment without undue stress. The teachers will stop a test if they feel the child is under stress or is incapable of finishing the distance safely. The children love to get the badges so this is an important part of the lesson structure for building fun as well as confidence.

#### **KEY POINTS:**

**Our swimming teachers are fully qualified and follow the National Plan for the Teaching of Swimming.**

## What you need to do

Help and support from you is required so that we can provide the best swimming experience possible and maximise every child's opportunity to learn.

### **Wearing the right swimwear**

Girls should wear a one-piece costume and boys should be in trunks (not Bermuda shorts). Experience shows that the incorrect style of costume could hinder their learning. For safety reasons no jewellery is allowed.

**Please ensure that your parents are aware of this information.**

### **Be ready on poolside**

All children must have a shower and go to the toilet before waiting quietly on poolside. Each lesson lasts for 25 minutes, so we need the children changed and standing on poolside ready to start the lesson at the allocated time.

### **Assessment sheets**

In order to reduce the amount of time taken up in lessons with paperwork, we would be grateful if, once groups are organised, you could complete the childrens' names per group on the assessment sheet (electronic copies are available from our Swimming Coordinators). This sheet is required to be completed so that we can monitor the success of the school swimming programme in South Gloucestershire and they can also be used by schools as evidence for SEF and OFSTED.

### **Special Needs**

If you are bringing pupils with special needs please tell us in advance of the lessons so that we can notify our swimming teachers and lifeguards. We can then talk to you about planning appropriate teaching and support.

### **Dehydration**

As swimming is a physical activity, schools should ensure that children have access to additional drinking water. Children who need to drink more because of some specific requirement should have actions agreed by the school that are reasonable / manageable and held within a framework.

#### KEY POINTS:

Being fully prepared before you come ensures we can provide the highest quality lessons possible.

## Transport

Transport arrangements are made by the Council's Integrated Transport Unit (ITU) through Traded and Support Services when you book your swimming lessons. If you cancel a lesson through Traded & Support Services, it is helpful if you can also inform ITU to ensure that no charge is made.

Guidance when using transport:

The school is responsible for ensuring that all children are ready to board the vehicle (at both the pool and school ends) at the agreed time.

**If a school is late** coming out to meet the vehicle, the vehicle may have left. This is due to the wider transport arrangements where a provider is booked to collect another school immediately after. Delaying your vehicle will have a knock on effect on other schools. Where this occurs and it is the school that is late out, the cost of the bus and pool will be expected to be paid for by the school.

**If the transport is late** the school should call ITU directly on 01454 86394/5/6 so it can be chased. If the swimming session is subsequently cancelled, the cost of the pool will be borne by the transport provider.

The school must ensure that the previously agreed passenger numbers are adhered to. On occasions the provider may use a larger vehicle, but this does not mean that a larger vehicle will always be used unless booked formally through Traded & Support Services.

Transport for pupils with **special needs** can be arranged when booking swimming lessons through Traded & Support Services.

It is worth noting when booking swimming lessons, that transport for lessons at the start and end of the school day usually incurs a higher cost as this is when the transport providers are most in demand.

**KEY POINTS:** Both the transport providers and the children should be ready at the agreed times

## General Guidelines on Managing School Swimming

This Guidance Pack is written following the best practice recommendations from the association for Physical Education (afPE). Further, more detailed information, guidance and advice can be obtained from their publication: **“Safe Practice in Physical Education and School Sport”** or by following the links on their web page: [www.afpe.org.uk](http://www.afpe.org.uk)

Swimming is a statutory part of the National Curriculum. It is about learning, having fun and enjoyment. We provide fully qualified lifeguards and duty staff, but you can really help by following the guidelines below, ensuring a safe environment conducive to learning.

- 1 The area offered to schools varies at each site. Please refer to your relevant pool information.
- 2 If you wish to use the small (learner) pools, arrangements must be made with the swimming co-ordinator in advance, as it may not always be available.
- 3 A maximum of 40 children can be accommodated in the main pool. Any number exceeding this is to be negotiated with the Swimming Co-ordinator prior to attendance. At Filton Pool, the children are split between the main and small pool.
- 4 Each group of swimmers must have an adult in charge, preferably on the poolside. All teachers and helpers should be with their children at all times.
- 5 For safety reasons no jewellery (including earrings) should be worn and hair must be tied back.
- 6 For reasons of hygiene, all swimmers should shower and go to the toilet before swimming and all helpers should note that outdoor shoes are not permitted on poolside.
- 7 Goggles may be worn – we strongly suggest they are labelled with the child’s name and their school.
- 8 Pupils may swim with a verruca, provided they wear protective socks, unless their doctor advises otherwise.
- 9 Children who are not swimming are welcome on poolside with appropriate behaviour and supervision.
- 10 All teachers and helpers should carry a whistle to alert pool staff to any incident with two sharp blows, and also wear suitable clothing and shoes for working on poolside.
- 11 At the start of every session schools should declare to the lifeguards on duty and the swimming teacher, any relevant medical conditions (e.g. Epilepsy) that a pupil may be known to suffer from.
- 12 The Leisure Centre will give schools as much notice as possible if their swimming lesson has to be cancelled for any reason.
- 13 Diving – should only be taught by a fully qualified Swimming Teacher.
- 14 Badge Testing - should be completed by a qualified Swimming Teacher, NOT helpers or unqualified staff.

### KEY POINTS:

We are committed to continuous improvement and you can help by talking to us about ideas, concerns and issues.

## Risk Management

### People

**Pupils should share in the assessment and management of the risks involved.**

School staff/swimming teachers should be suitably qualified and experienced.

School staff/swimming teachers should have a sound knowledge of pupils':

- ability
- behaviour patterns
- medical conditions
- confidence levels

Effective communication between school staff/swimming teachers and pool staff is essential.

### Context

School staff/swimming and pupils should be familiar with the layout of the facilities being used.

The water clarity and temperature should be checked before the start of swimming lessons.

Pool depths and any potential risks should be clearly signposted and pupils' attention drawn to them.

Rescue equipment and teaching aids should be readily accessible.

### Organisation

Group sizes should be appropriate.

Additional supervision should be provided where necessary.

Activity levels should be appropriate for the pupils involved.

The same high level of supervision required in structured swimming lessons should also apply to informal play activity sessions.

Regular head counts should be carried out (ie onto and off the poolside, and during swimming sessions).

School staff/swimming teachers should regularly scan the whole pool.

Teaching positions should enable observation of maximum numbers and maximum space.

School staff/swimming teachers should be able to see the bottom of the pool at all times.

Pupils should be monitored for signs of fatigue, stress, fear and cold.

Emergency signals, procedures and equipment should be known and applied by everyone involved.

School staff/swimming teachers should walk around the pool at the end of the swimming session.

## Emergency Procedures - Bradley Stoke Leisure Centre

### There are 2 ALARMS IN THE SWIMMING POOL

- (a) Both alarms, when sounded, will ring continuously.
- (b) FIRE ALARM – Flashing red beacons are also located at the deep end of the main pool, the teaching pool (next to First Aid Room) and in the Changing Village.
- (c) POOLALARM – a red light flashes over the alarm located at the teaching pool end of the pool hall

### Procedures to follow for any incident:

1. The alarm will sound. The Lifeguards will ask all users to vacate the pool.
2. The children will leave the water and assemble with their teacher and await further instructions.
3. FIRE ALARM – the teacher will accompany children to the Emergency Exit located adjacent to the teaching pool.
4. When the children are assembled the teachers should count their groups to ensure no one is missing.
5. No one must go into the changing area to collect clothing – Leisure Centre Staff will check changing rooms.
6. Leisure centre staff will advise on any further action necessary.
7. If instructed to leave the building via the fire exit, foil blankets will be issued.
8. POOLALARM – should there be an emergency in the swimming pool and the alarm is sounded, everyone will be instructed to leave the pool and stand well back. Any further instructions will be given, depending on the situation.
9. ALL Leisure Centre poolside staff are qualified lifeguards and any rescue will be carried out in accordance with their National Pool Lifeguarding training.
10. All minor accidents must be reported to a member of staff who will take the appropriate action.

## Emergency Procedures - Filton Sports & Leisure Centre

### There are 2 ALARMS IN THE SWIMMING POOL

- (a) FIRE ALARM – a siren will sound continuously throughout the building
- (b) POOL ALARM – a siren will sound in the pool hall and at reception

### Procedures to follow for any incident:

1. The alarm will sound. The Lifeguards will ask all users to vacate the pool.
2. The children will leave the water and assemble with their teacher and await further instructions.
3. FIRE ALARM – the teacher will accompany children to the emergency exits located at the shallow end of the main pool and the exit in the learner pool.
4. When the children are assembled the teachers should count their groups to ensure no one is missing.
5. No one must go into the changing area to collect clothing – leisure centre staff will check changing rooms.
6. Leisure centre staff will advise on any further action necessary.
7. If instructed to leave the building via the fire exit, foil blankets will be issued.
8. POOLALARM – should there be an emergency in the swimming pool and the alarm is sounded, everyone will be instructed to leave the pool and stand well back. Any further instructions will be given, depending on the situation.
9. ALL Leisure Centre poolside staff are qualified lifeguards and any rescue will be carried out in accordance with their National Pool Lifeguarding training.
10. All minor accidents must be reported to a member of staff who will take the appropriate action.

### KEY POINTS:

Contact: Gareth Hughes  
T: 01454 866687  
E: [gareth\\_hughes@filtontowncouncil.co.uk](mailto:gareth_hughes@filtontowncouncil.co.uk)

## Emergency Procedures - Kingswood Leisure Centre

### There are 2 ALARMS IN THE SWIMMING POOL

- (a) FIRE ALARM – Intermittent warning sound.
- (b) POOL ALARM – High pitched like an attack alarm.

### Procedures to follow for any incident:

1. The whistle is sounded with one long blast. The Lifeguard will ask all users to vacate the pool.
2. The children will leave the water and assemble with their teacher and await further instructions.
3. FIRE – the teacher will accompany children to the Emergency Exit at the deep end of the swimming pool.
4. When the children are assembled the teachers should count their groups to ensure no one is missing.
5. No one must go into the changing area to collect clothing – changing rooms will be checked by Leisure Centre Staff.
6. Leisure centre staff will advise on any further action necessary.
7. If instructed to leave the building via the fire exit, foil blankets are available by the fire exit door.
8. DROWNING – should there be an emergency in the swimming pool and the alarm is sounded, everyone will be instructed to leave the pool and stand well back. Any further instructions will be given, depending on the situation.
9. ALL Leisure Centre poolside staff are qualified lifeguards and any rescue will be carried out in accordance with their National Pool Life guard training.
10. All minor accidents must be reported to a member of staff who will take the appropriate action and complete necessary forms.

## Emergency Procedures - Longwell Green Leisure Centre

### There are 2 ALARMS IN THE SWIMMING POOL

- (a) Both alarms, when sounded, will ring continuously.
- (b) FIRE ALARM – Flashing red beacons are also located at the deep end of the main pool, the teaching pool (next to First Aid Room) and in the Changing Village.
- (c) POOL ALARM – a red light flashes over the alarm located at the teaching pool end of the pool hall .

### Procedures to follow for any incident:

1. The alarm will sound. The Lifeguards will ask all users to vacate the pool.
2. The children will leave the water and assemble with their teacher and await further instructions.
3. FIRE ALARM – the teacher will accompany children to the Emergency Exit located adjacent to the teaching pool.
4. When the children are assembled the teachers should count their groups to ensure no one is missing.
5. No one must go into the changing area to collect clothing – Leisure Centre Staff will check changing rooms.
6. Leisure centre staff will advise on any further action necessary.
7. If instructed to leave the building via the fire exit, foil blankets will be issued.
8. POOL ALARM – should there be an emergency in the swimming pool and the alarm is sounded, everyone will be instructed to leave the pool and stand well back. Any further instructions will be given, depending on the situation.
9. ALL Leisure Centre poolside staff are qualified lifeguards and any rescue will be carried out in accordance with their National Pool Lifeguarding training.
10. All minor accidents must be reported to a member of staff who will take the appropriate action.

#### KEY POINTS:

Swimming Coordinator: Tracey Mallet  
T: 01179 616895  
E: [tracey.mallet@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:tracey.mallet@southglos.gov.uk)

## Emergency Procedures - Thornbury Leisure Centre

### There are 2 ALARMS IN THE SWIMMING POOL

- (a) Both alarms, when sounded, will ring continuously.
- (b) FIRE ALARM – a red light also flashes at both the deep and shallow end.
- (c) POOL ALARM – a blue light flashes over the alarms

### Procedure to follow for any incident:

1. The whistle is sounded with one long blast. The Lifeguard will ask all users to vacate the pool.
2. The children will leave the water and assemble with their teacher and await further instructions.
3. FIRE – the teacher will accompany children to the Emergency Exit at the deep end of the swimming pool.
4. When the children are assembled the teachers should count their groups to ensure no one is missing.
5. No one must go into the changing area to collect clothing – Leisure Centre Staff will check changing rooms.
6. Leisure centre staff will advise on any further action necessary.
7. If instructed to leave the building via the fire exit, foil blankets are available by the fire exit door.
8. DROWNING – should there be an emergency in the swimming pool and the alarm is sounded, everyone will be instructed to leave the pool and stand well back. Any further instructions will be given, depending on the situation.
9. ALL Leisure Centre poolside staff are qualified lifeguards and any rescue will be carried out in accordance with their National Pool Lifeguarding training.
10. All minor accidents must be reported to a member of staff who will take the appropriate action.

## Emergency Procedures - Yate Leisure Centre

### There are 2 ALARMS IN THE SWIMMING POOL

- (a) Both alarms, when sounded, will ring continuously.
- (b) FIRE ALARM – a red light also flashes at both the deep and shallow end.
- (c) ALARM – a blue light flashes over the alarms.

### Procedures to follow for any incident

1. The whistle is sounded with one long blast. Lifeguards will ask all users to vacate the pool.
2. The children leave the water and assemble with their teacher.
3. FIRE – the teacher will accompany children to the Emergency Exit which is adjacent to the small pool at the far side.
4. When the children are assembled, teachers should count their group and inform pool staff of any missing children.
5. Children must not go into the changing area to collect clothes, etc.
6. Staff will advise on any further action necessary.
7. Should the emergency be in the small pool area, Leisure Centre staff will advise on an alternative exit.
8. DROWNING – should there be an emergency in the swimming pool and the alarm is sounded, everyone will be instructed to leave the pool and stand well back. Any further instructions will be given, depending on the situation.
9. ALL Leisure Centre poolside staff are qualified lifeguards and any rescue will be carried out in accordance with their National Pool Life guarding training.
10. All minor accidents must be reported to a member of staff who will take appropriate action.

## Help and Advice

### South Gloucestershire Leisure

**Bradley Stoke Leisure Centre - Swimming Coordinator: Gill Johnson**  
Fiddlers Wood Lane, Bradley Stoke, South Gloucestershire. BS32 9BS  
T: 01454 867072, F: 01454 867051 E: gill.johnson@southglos.gov.uk

**Kingswood Leisure Centre - Swimming Coordinator: Tracey Mallet**  
Church Road, Staple Hill, South Gloucestershire. BS16 4RH  
T: 01454 867012, F: 01454 865699, E: tracey.mallet@southglos.gov.uk

**Longwell Green Leisure Centre - Swimming Coordinator: Tracey Mallet**  
Aspects Leisure Park, Leisure Road, Longwell Green South Gloucestershire. BS15 9LA  
T: 01179 616895, F: 01179 677961, E: tracey.mallet@southglos.gov.uk

**Thornbury Leisure Centre - Swimming Coordinator: Gill Johnson**  
Alveston Hill, Thornbury, South Gloucestershire. BS35 3JB  
T: 01454 865778, F: 01454 865775, E: gill.johnson@southglos.gov.uk

**Yate Leisure Centre - Swimming Coordinator: Holly Payne**  
Kennedy Way, Yate South Gloucestershire. BS37 4DQ  
T: 01454 865813S, F: 01454 865805, E: holly.payne@southglos.gov.uk

### Filton Town Council

**Filton Sports and Leisure Centre**  
Elm Park, Filton, South Gloucestershire BS34 7PS  
T: 01454 866687, F: 01454 866698, E: garth\_hughes@filtontowncouncil.co.uk

### South Gloucestershire Council

David Rae - Trading Manager - Traded and Support Services  
T: 01454 863582 E: david.rae@southglos.gov.uk

Jeanette Quinn - Teaching & Learning Adviser (PE)  
T: 01454 865823 E: jeanette.quinn@southglos.gov.uk

Philip Tranter - Health & Safety Manager - Children & Young People  
T: 01454 863223 E: philip.tranter@southglos.gov.uk

**Amateur Swimming Association:** [www.britishswimming.org](http://www.britishswimming.org)

#### KEY POINTS:

School swimming is provided through a partnership between the Council, schools and the leisure centres.