Fundamentals and Aquatic Skills Of School Swimming

About this Learner Guide

This Learner Guide has been developed to support candidates undertaking the ASA Certificate for Teaching School Swimming. It does not cover every aspect that makes up the syllabus for this certificate and is designed to be used in conjunction with all Modules of the training programme, or as a self-paced learning tool. In addition, some aspects not covered on the course are included for future reference.

The Learner Guide will be used to support the taught programme. The exact way in which it will be used will depend upon your tutor and the particular needs of each candidate. The learner guide can be used during the course as a means of enabling you to check your understanding. The learner guide can also be used as an ongoing teaching resource to assist you after you have completed the programme.

NOTE: Teachers who intend to complete all modules are expected to retain this learner guide throughout the course .

Disclaimer Clause:

Whilst all care has been taken in the development of this resource the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) takes no responsibility for errors, omissions or inaccuracies. This information is designed to assist teachers to operate safely, however it cannot identify all possible risks or risk management strategies and does not purport to provide legal advice. Any legal matters, insurance or liability issues arising from information outlined in this resource should be referred to a solicitor.

Introduction to Working in a Pool Environment

This section will cover:

- ☑ Health and Safety including Pool Safety Operating Procedures (PSOPs)
- ☑ Roles, Responsibilities and Relationships
- ☑ Safeguarding and Protecting Children
- ☑ Organisation of the Learning Environment
- ☑ Swimming and Water safety in the National Curriculum
- ☑ Practical Teaching Guidelines
- ☑ Equipment and Swimming Aids

Health and Safety

All teachers working in a swimming pool environment have the responsibility for the health and safety of colleagues and pupils. The ultimate responsibility rests with the manager of the pool who will set certain standards covering all aspects relating to the operation of the facility within which the session takes place. This is, however, very much at the contract level and, in practice, the responsibility lies with the teacher working on the poolside and in particular, the person in overall control of the session. Any effective health and safety policy relies upon all parties being familiar with the procedures adopted for the pool in which the teacher is working. A core responsibility of all teachers is to provide their pupils with a safe learning environment in which they can develop their skills and achieve their goals. There must be a collective responsibility to safety.

The main considerations in any aquatic health and safety policy are:

- Requirements for life guarding
- Teaching and coaching qualifications appropriate to the role
- Requirements relating to Teacher : Pupil Ratios
- Organisation and management of the class
- Pool depths in relation to activities being undertaken
- Procedures for dealing with an incident and accident

All teachers should ensure that the pool being used has a well-established Normal Operating Procedure (NOP) and Emergency Action Plan (EAP) collectively known as Pool Safety Operation Procedures (PSOPs). Pupils should be aware of the implications of these and the actions which they would need to take in the event of any emergency.

The following check list will provide the basis for safety within the swimming pool.

- Has the NOP and EAP been read and understood?
- Is the life guarding requirement being met?
- Are the teachers plus assistants appropriately qualified to perform the role?
- Is the number in the group appropriate?
- Is there sufficient number of teachers, assistants or helpers on the poolside?

The Emergency Action Plan (EAP) will provide the basis for dealing with unforeseen difficulties and problems in the swimming pool. Every teacher working on poolside should be familiar with:

- The emergency signal
- The action which the pupils should take in an emergency
- The back up support available from the pool centre staff
- The location and use of the life-saving aids
- The procedures for contacting the emergency services
- The procedure for the recording of accidents

In addition to an awareness of PSOPs teachers should also be aware of guidelines provided by the National Governing Body in relation to.

- Teaching from the poolside
- Diving and jumping into shallow water
- Safe supervision for teaching and coaching

Life-guarding

There is a statutory requirement for a 'lifeguard' to be available whenever a school swimming lesson is taking place. Ideally this will be a designated person with an appropriate nationally recognised lifeguard qualification. At the very least this should be a designated person trained to carry out a rescue and to carry out basic life support. The 'Management of Health and Safety in the Swimming Pool' states that in certain circumstances a swimming teacher can also be the 'lifeguard' for his/her group subject to holding the appropriate qualifications and or training. This only applies to 'programmed' swimming.
Programmed activity is defined as;

- with a formal structure
- disciplined
- supervised or controlled
- continuously monitored from the poolside

The minimum national qualification for the life-guarding of a single group engaged in programmed activity is the National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches. Where the lifeguard function is being provided for a whole class the recommended national qualification is the RLSS Pool Lifeguard qualification.

Rescue Equipment

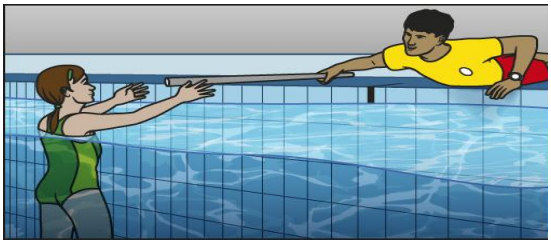
Although the requirements regarding life-guarding can be met in a variety of ways (see 1.1.1) some understanding of the types of rescue equipment commonly found in a swimming pool may be helpful and all teachers are encouraged to ensure familiarity with that equipment which is provided in the pool in which they are working. Commonly found pieces of equipment are:

- Reaching pole
- Throw bag
- Torpedo buoy
- Throwing rope

In addition, simple equipment such as floats and balls can be used to provide effective support to anyone who may be in difficulty. One of the main advantages of using this type of equipment is that the teacher can avoid entering the water to affect a rescue. This not only reduces the risk of the teacher getting into difficulties but also permits a measure of control to be maintained over the rest of the group.

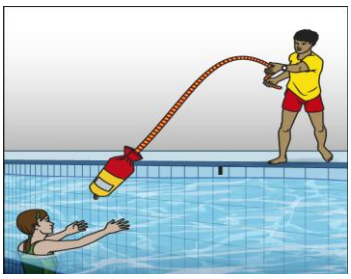
Reaching pole

Short reaching poles are particularly useful for weak or non-swimmers in difficulties close to the side. Longer reaching poles are sometimes available but these can be difficult to use in confined spaces. Regular and frequent practice is required if this type of rescue aid is utilised in the swimming pool where the teacher is operating.



Throw bags, torpedo buoys, throwing ropes

These are non-rigid rescue aids and are increasing used in swimming pools. They are particularly useful for rescues which are some distance away form the side of the pool and have the advantage of being able to be used in confined spaces. They do, however, require a degree of expertise in terms of throwing the aid accurately to the swimmer in difficulties. One major disadvantage is that if the swimmer in difficulties and is unable to reach the aid which has been thrown, the rescuer will be required to recoil the rope before having another attempt. As with the reaching pole regular and frequent practice is required to ensure that, if required, the rescue could be carried out effectively.



In both cases the rescuer should:

- Attract the attention of the casualty and give reassurance
- Keep the casualty under close observation
- Attain a comfortable secure position
- Reaching – Keep the centre of gravity as low as possible (lying down or kneeling)
- Throwing – Avoid standing too close to the edge of the pool
- Reach out or throw the aid and instruct the casualty to hold on to it
- Pull the casualty to safety with a steady movement

Pool Rules

It is important to establish clear pool rules with the pupils. The rules should not only set a standard for the session but also reinforce good practice whenever they visit the swimming pool

In school swimming safety considerations may be discussed as a classroom activity. If this is the case it is still important for the teacher to outline procedures again as some pupils may have missed that classroom session or forgotten elements of it.

Some areas a teacher should be addressing in the rules are:

- Pupils not to enter the water without direct permission
- Pupils not to leave the class without permission
- Any whistle code that may be used for signalling
- The importance of wearing appropriate swimwear
- Procedures relating to jewellery
- Safe methods of entry and exit
- Respect for other pupils in the class
- Checking that the path is clear before swimming (particularly on their backs)

Hygiene and Cleanliness

Establishing good habits in relation to hygiene and cleanliness in the early stages of the pupil's introduction to the swimming pool environment will contribute significantly to the enjoyment of all visitors to the pool. It is important to stress:

- Visit the toilet before entering the swimming pool
- General cleanliness of the whole body, particularly the nose, hands and feet
- Cleanliness of the swimwear used during the session
- Use the shower before and after swimming

The teacher should also advise young swimmers of circumstances when it might not be advisable to swim. This would include:

- Open wounds
- Infectious diseases
- Coughs, colds and related infections such as catarrh and sinusitis
- Ear infections

Other common ailments such as verruccas and athlete foot are easily transmitted to other swimmers but recent medical advice has suggested that it is not necessary for swimmers to be excluded from the pool.

There are a number of medical conditions which do not prohibit a pupil from taking part in a session but which the teacher should be aware of prior to taking the swimmer. Awareness of these conditions will allow the teacher to plan the session accordingly taking into account individual circumstances. Some examples of such conditions are:

- Epilepsy
- Diabetes
- Asthma
- Joint injuries

Roles, Responsibilities and Relationships

Duty of Care

The delivery of a school swimming programme may involve a number of partners including school teachers, classroom assistants and swimming teachers. Whilst issues related to delivery are transferable the duty of care must remain the responsibility of the Head Teacher of the school. The Head Teacher must ensure that all staff are competent to carry out the role requested of them.

Where the swimming programme is delivered by an external partner the school has a responsibility to ensure that the designated person(s) is appropriately qualified in the aspects being taught. In addition the school teacher must ensure that the programme is appropriate to the needs of the pupils and the school. An ongoing dialogue between both parties will help to ensure that this requirement is met. Some school teachers may also hold recognised national qualifications and can, therefore, assume responsibility for all aspects of the programme.

The delivery model recommended by the ASA includes a specialist swimming teacher working alongside, and with, the teacher provided by the school. This will enable the skills and expertise of both parties to be combined to best effect.

Qualifications

The Head Teacher has to ensure that any teacher responsible for the delivery of swimming and/or its associated disciplines is appropriately qualified to carry out this role effectively and safely.

School Teachers – it is recognised that all qualified school teachers have a range of skills and experiences which enable them to deliver a variety of curriculum areas. However there are obvious health and safety issues inherent in the teaching of swimming and its associated disciplines and it is therefore recommended that where the school teacher has specific responsibility for a group or groups of swimmers the teacher should also hold an appropriate specialist qualification. It is wise for staff to be able to demonstrate that they are suitably **trained, experienced and qualified** to undertake the activities in which they engage with students. Those teaching aquatics should hold a recognised and current qualifications e.g. ASA national Curriculum Training programme.

Swimming Teachers – where an external specialist swimming teacher is utilised by the school to take a lead role in the delivery of the swimming programme the minimum recommended qualification is the ASA Level 2 Certificate for the Teaching (Aquatics) or equivalent. Swimming teachers should, however, familiarise themselves with the requirements of the National Curriculum

Working with a Qualified Swimming Teacher

In those situations where the school teacher does not hold a recognised swimming teaching qualification the delivery model recommended by the ASA is a partnership between the school teacher and an appropriately qualified swimming teacher.

Where this partnership exists the roles of both parties must be agreed and each must be aware of their respective responsibilities.

Regular dialogue is required between both parties to ensure that the skills, expertise and experience are fully utilised for the benefits of the pupils.

Where an unqualified (in respect of swimming teaching) school teacher is involved in the delivery of swimming careful consideration should be given to the role which the school teacher fulfils. In many instances the school teacher agrees to work with those pupils who may be at the non-swimmer or beginner stages. Consideration should be given to the appropriateness of this role as the qualified swimming teacher may be better equipped to work with the pupils who require particular help in order to assist them to overcome the initial learning stages.

It is wise for staff to be able to demonstrate that they are suitably **trained, experienced and qualified** to undertake the activities in which they engage with students. Those teaching aquatics should hold a recognised and current qualifications e.g. ASA national Curriculum Training programme.

Anyone teaching a physical education lesson should be **competent** to do so safely. This involves having the necessary skills, knowledge, understanding and expertise to plan, deliver and evaluate a physical education programme.

The Health & Safety executive highlights four means of demonstrating competence:

- To hold a relevant qualification
- To hold an equivalent qualification
- To have received appropriate in-house training
- To be competent through experience

However theses are not totally discrete alternatives. Qualifications, experience and training overlap to produce expertise in a particular aspect of PE.

Risk Management

Risk management is not a complex process and teachers can easily provide a safe and fair learning environment for their pupils. Steps in the Risk Management Process include:

Step 1 - Identify the hazards

- First you need to work out how people could be harmed

Step 2 - Decide who might be harmed and how

- For each hazard you need to be clear who might be harmed: it will help you identify the best way of managing the risk . This can be done by groups i.e non swimmers

Step 3 - Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

- Having spotted the hazrads, you have to decide what to do about them. The law requires you to do everything "reasonably practicable" to protect people fopr harm.

Step 4 - Record your findings and implement them

- Putting the results of your risk assessment into practice will make a difference when looking after pupild an d staff

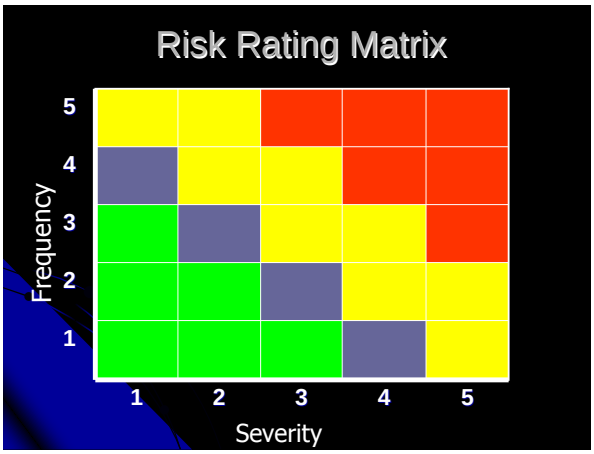
Step 5 - Review and update as necessary

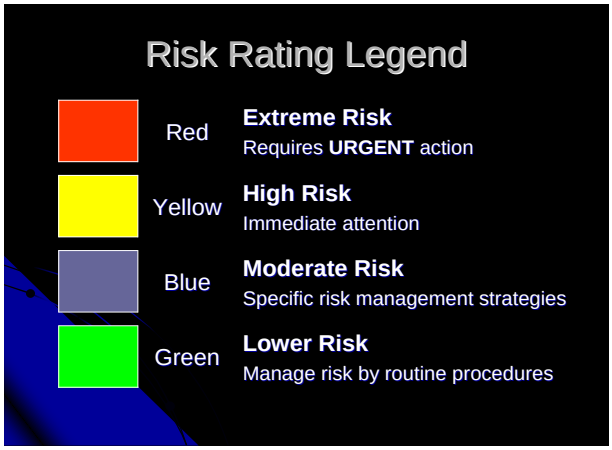
- It is essential you review what you are doing on an ongoing basis. Every year review where you are to make sure you are still improving, or at least not sliding back

Risk assessment

Once you have identified the risks associated with your teaching, you need to assess these risks and place them in order of highest to lowest (priority), considering the type of risk, its impact (severity) and the likelihood of it occurring (frequency).

Refer to the Risk Rating Matrix below:





Risk reduction

Once risks have been identified and prioritised, you need to develop some basic and practical strategies that you can use to reduce the likelihood and severity of the risks. These are called risk reduction strategies.

An example of such a strategy may be to ensure all pupils are aware of the rules of the venue at which they are being taught.

Implementation

Now it is time to use your risk reduction strategies – i.e. put them into practice (literally). There is no point developing strategies and then not using them.

Review and modification

It is important for you to know whether your risk reduction strategies are working or not. You will need to keep records of all injuries and incidents that take place and then compare this information over time. If your strategies are not effective, try something new.

Safeguarding and Protecting Children

Supervision of Changing Areas

The supervision of changing rooms can present difficulties for some schools, particularly small schools that may not have both female and male teachers. However, where possible separate school changing areas should be made available and where this is not possible changing times and/or facilities separate from the public are recommended. Whatever the circumstances, changing rooms should be adequately supervised. Ideally, a male and female member of staff should accompany each class in order to supervise fully the changing areas. Staffing pressures may mean that a known adult volunteer of the opposite gender is used. He/she would need disclosure and Independent Safeguarding Authority (barring and vetting) clearance due to the situation of supervising children whilst undressing. Where this level of staffing is not available it may be possible to enlist the co-operation of pool staff to supervise the other changing room. This arrangement, through the pool management, needs to be assured and consistent. If only one suitable adult is available he/she would need to establish procedures to deal with any emergency in the other changing room. If these arrangements are not to the school's satisfaction it may be necessary to combine classes and take single gender groups where appropriate staffing allows this.

As good practice the asa recommend the following:

Work in pairs if classes or groups of children have to be supervised in the changing rooms
If it is necessary to do things of a personal nature for children who are young or disabled, make sure that a second adult is in attendance and get the child's consent if it is at all possible and certainly get consent from the parent or carer. Let the child know what you are doing and why.

Manual Communication

In this context, manual communication refers to the physical manipulation of limbs in order to allow the pupil to "feel" the correct movements. This is potentially a difficult area due to the risk of injury to the pupil and also the sensitivity of a "hands on" approach. It is recommended, therefore, that manual communication should only be considered by experienced qualified teachers.

Manual Support

In swimming this might be assistance given to a non-swimmer or beginner to achieve a horizontal position and to aid movement through the water. When manual support is being provided care must be taken to avoid embarrassment to the teacher or the pupil. It is recommended that where manual support is provided other adults and pupils should be in attendance.

Good practice in relation to manual communication

Ascertain the child's and the parent's/carers views about manual support for children who need this kind of help, particularly when they are in the water.

Organisation of the Learning Environment

When taking pupils swimming for the first time it is important that the teacher makes a personal check on their ability. Information from other sources can be misleading (i.e., badges on swimwear, parents or carer opinions etc)

Issues relating to safety procedures permeate all aspects of planning. This will be reflected in the organisation of the pupils and also the organisation of the teaching space. Equipment being used during the session should be readily available but stacked in a manner which does not clutter the teaching space. The teacher tripping over a float and falling does not contribute towards a good and safe working environment.

The organisation of the working area, equipment and pupils is a primary feature in the establishment of a safe learning environment and should be given careful consideration during the planning stages. This will include addressing questions such as:

- How many pupils are in the group?
- What is the ability of the pupils?
- How much and what equipment is required?
- What is the aim of the session?
- What depth of water is required?
- What is the most effective use of the space available?
- How will the area to be used be designated, e.g., pool dividers
- How much time is available?
- How should the session be structured to give an appropriate balance between work and rest?

Careful consideration of all the points in this section, at the planning stage, will help to ensure that the learning environment is organised in a way which will allow the session to take place safely.

Organisation Methods

The following influences will affect organisation:

The teaching area - when teaching there will normally be an allocated amount of space in the pool. The shape and size of this space will influence the organisation of the pupils.

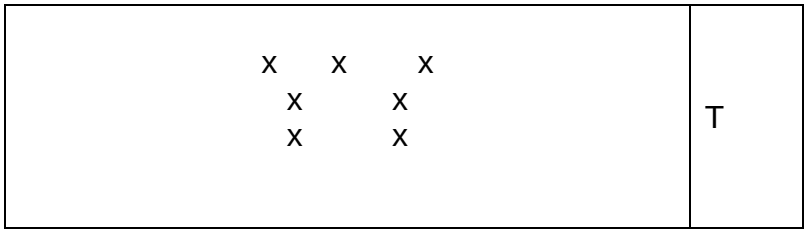
The number of pupils – class size can differ considerably from only small numbers to large classes. (see Teacher – Pupil Ratios). This will inevitably influence the organsiation.

Ability of pupils – the class may have pupils of similar ability or they may be quite different ability. This will influence the grouping and activities.

Safety - above all the safety of the pupils needs to be considered and the pupils organised accordingly.

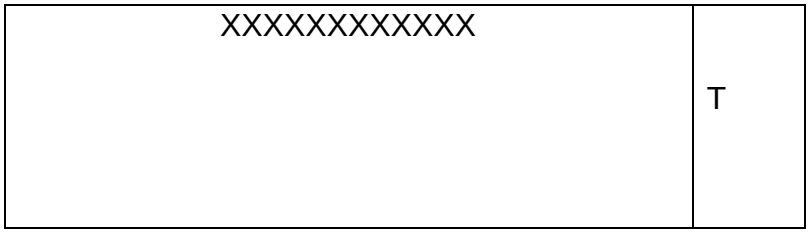
The most commonly used methods for organising the pupils are as follows;

Random spacing



The diagram shows the teacher working with a group as a whole but in a random format. This is most appropriate for the teaching of early confidence practices and underpinning skills

Working with a group – all swimmers carrying out activities at the same time. If outside influences permit the group to be worked as a whole this presents little organisational difficulty.



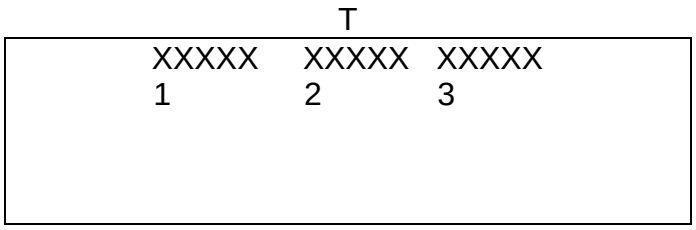
The diagram shows the teacher working with a group as a whole

Key points

- The pupils can see the teacher
- The pupils have necessary equipment to hand
- The pupils each have their own swimming area

Working with a number of ability groups – swimmers divided into groups in accordance with their ability

If pupils within one class have different ability levels the session should be organised in ability groups to ensure all individuals have an appropriate lesson.



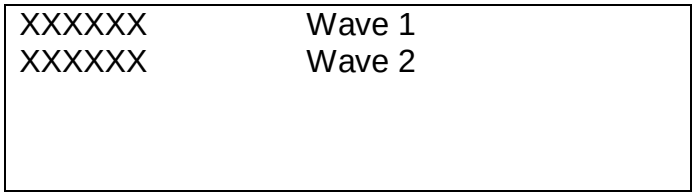
The diagram shows the teacher working with three ability groups and changing position according to the needs of the group

Key points

- The teacher initially assesses pupils and places them in to ability groups
- Each group will work on activities appropriate to its ability
- The teacher will circulate around all groups giving instructions and feedback

Wave swimming – swimmers organised in to ones and twos.

This is often used when space is limited and working the class or group as a whole would be unsafe and unproductive.



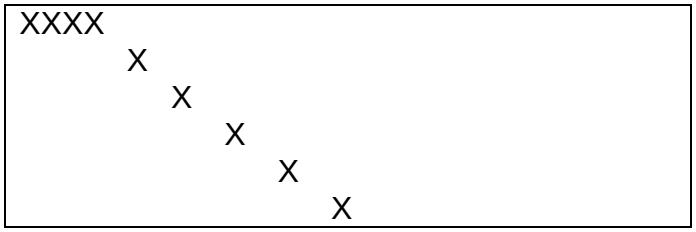
The diagram shows a class organised in wave formation

Key points

- Teacher initially numbers or names each wave
- Swimmers may be carrying out the same or different activities
- 2nd wave follows at a reasonable distance after the 1st. The distance can be initiated by the teacher , by a signal, by the pace clock or marker
- 1st wave returns when either all of the 2nd wave have finished, when the other swimmer in their pair has finished or the teacher signals
- Each pupil has his/her own swimming space

Cannon swimming - each pupil follows on at a reasonable interval

This is often used to finish off an activity and allows the pupil space to swim plus the teacher has chance to observe pupils individually in more detail.



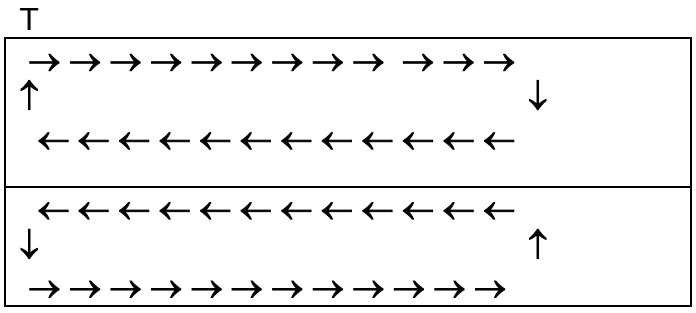
The diagram shows a class organised in cannon formation

Key points

- The teacher sets pupils off one at a time
- All swimmers carry out the same activity
- The first pupil can return as the last finishes
- Each pupil has their own swimming space

Lane swimming – the session is conducted over the length or the width of the pool

The organisation in lanes is normally either wave or chain formation. Swimmers are set off by use of the pace clock normally at 5 second intervals.



The diagram shows a class organised in chain formation using the pool lengthways

Key points

- The teacher sets off pupils one at a time
- The interval between swimmers is normally 5 seconds
- Lanes as organised clockwise, anti-clockwise formation
- Lanes are normally organised in ability order

Swimming and Water Safety in the National Curriculum

Statutory Requirements

The provision of a swimming and water safety programme is a statutory requirement at Key Stages 1 and/or 2. At Key Stages 3 and 4 swimming and water safety can contribute to a balanced physical education programme.

Swimming is only one of the aquatic disciplines, the others being:-

- Water Polo
- Synchronised Swimming
- Diving
- Aquafit

The range of aquatic disciplines can assist schools to meet the requirements in several areas of physical education. For example:-

- Games – Water Polo
- Dance – Synchronised Swimming
- Health & Fitness – Aquafit

in addition to offering a range of opportunities for curriculum activities.

The ability to swim is an essential life skill and a knowledge of safety in and around water can contribute to the overall safety of young people.

Swimming as part of the Physical Education Programme

Swimming and Water Safety KS1 and/or KS2

All school must provide swimming instruction either in Key Stage 1 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

    * Competently – having the basic skill or ability to do something well
    * Confidently – the belief that you have the ability and skill to succeed
    * Proficiently – to be competent and have a high level of skill to carry out the task

By the end of each Key Stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

Key Stage 1

Pupils should be taught to:

- master basic movements such as running, jumping, throwing, catching, as well as developing balance, agility and co-ordination, and begin to apply these in a range of activities
- participate in team games, developing simple tactics for attacking and defending
- perform dances using simple movement patterns

Key Stage 2

Pupils should be taught to:

- use running, jumping, catching and throwing in isolation and in combination
- play competitive games, modified where appropriate, such as football, netball, rounders, cricket, hockey, basketball, badminton and tennis, and apply basic principles suitable for attacking and defending
- develop flexibility, strength, technique, control and balance, for example through gymnastics and athletics
- perform dances using a range of movement patterns
- take part in outdoor and adventurous activity challenges both individually and within a team
- compare their performances with previous ones to achieve their personal best.

General Aspects to be taught at Key Stage 1 and/or Key Stage 2
Key Stage 1

Mastering basic fundamental movement literacy skills		
Long term planning	**Medium term planning**	
Master basic movements such as running, jumping, throwing, catching Become competent and confident Access a broad range of opportunities to extend their agility, balance and coordination Explore and use skills, actions and ideas individually and in a combination Engage in competitive and co-operative activities and team games in challenging situations	Encourage children to:- Enter the water safely Help each other travel in different directions Develop aquatic breathing and open their eyes under water. Develop floatation using different shapes Learn to put their heads in the water and move short distances without touching the ground Use their arms to pull and push the water and to use their legs in kicking actions Develop team games	By:- Using games and fun activities:- Enter the water by steps, ladders, swivel entry Move in different directions around the pool i.e. walking, running, hopping, skipping Float on front and back, individually and making letters, words in pairs and groups Move on and below the surface, showing confidence and enjoyment in the water Travel using arms and legs in any experimenting with different arm and leg actions
Apply the skills for different tasks		
Choose and use skills for different swimming tasks Improve the control and coordination of their bodies in water	Feel how the water supports their bodies. Use their arms help to stay upright and balanced. Use different types of leg kicking action to help them move. Listen to other children's ideas on ways to travel in the water, and their ideas on what challenges to set themselves Discuss ways of putting simple skills together to make movement patterns	Talking about what their body feels like in water and describe how it feels different when moving in the same way in water and on land Using different arm and leg actions to propel themselves through the water Gradually coordinating theses actions, so they remain balanced and in control of their bodies Stretching out and keeping afloat, using a number of body shapes Using simple skills learnt to make a dance sequence

Engage in competitive and co-operative physical activities		
Participate in competitive games and activities against themselves and others games	Develop simple tactics for attacking and defending Develop rules for team games	Mini polo games/Rounder's Tag games Push & Glides (Traffic Lights) Describe the outcome of team games/activity Describe the rules of the game/Activity

Pupils should also have an understanding of fitness and health.

Pupils should know that being active is fun and good for them; they can recognise what their bodies feel like during different activities. This can be done by asking the children to describe how their bodies feel when they are swimming, what happens to their breathing? How the temperature of the water makes them feel?

Key Stage 1 and/or 2

Developing a broader range of aquatic skills		
Long term planning	**Medium term planning**	
Swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at LEAST 25 metres Use a range of strokes effectively such as front crawl, backstroke and breaststroke Perform safe self-rescue in different water based situations	Encourage the children to:- Show how they use their arms and legs to propel themselves through water. Explore what types of strokes they can use on or under the water. Perform combination of strokes, swimming actions and skills Swim front crawl, back crawl and breaststroke, combining leg and arm actions to make their strokes smoother and coordinated, and to breathe when they swim. Use skills such as surface dives and retrieve objects. To perform survival skills with control. HELP and HUDDLE positions, survival stroke Understand how the skills learnt can be used to self rescue To float on the surface in a number of positions, scull and tread water; gain a streamlined body position	By:- using games and fun activities Swimming front crawl, backstroke and breaststroke, using arm and leg actions together smoothly and coordinated Developing and controlling their breathing. Swimming with control and confidence when using back crawl, front crawl and breaststroke over a distance of at least 25metres Using personal survival skills, including floating, sculling and surface dives
Using the skills learnt in different ways and linking them together to make actions and sequences		
Choose, use and vary strokes and skills, according to the task and the challenge	Show how far they can swim with and without aids on their front and on their back Meet set targets relating to distance and time, choosing a stroke to suit them. Pace themselves to meet challenges. Talk about their ideas for challenges in a self rescue situation they could set themselves and others Develop games and set their own rules	Using a variety of strokes and personal survival skills to suit the needs of a task Planning how to meet set challenges on their own and in groups Recognising their own ability and the demands

Evaluating and recognise their own and other success		
Describe and evaluate the quality of swimming and to recognise what needs improving, evaluate and recognize success in self rescue situations	Plan in pairs and small groups. Encourage them to watch and describe the swimming actions of others Talk to other children about the language they can use to describe parts of a stroke. Discuss what makes a good swimming stroke. Recognise what they need to concentrate on to improve their own swimming.	Using a range of language to describe what they see and give concise explanations of what they do well Identifying aspects of their work that need improvement and suggest ways to practice Realising that smooth swimming requires good control of arms, legs and breathing
Enjoy communication, calibrating and competing with each other		
Play competitive games	Discuss strategies for defending and attacking Develop and set rules. Develop a points system	Water Polo Relays Synchronised swimming sequences Tennis Basketball etc

Progression in Physical Education

To ensure pupils make progress in PE as they move through the key stages, teaching should provide opportunities for pupils to progress:

- from early movement explorations to acquiring and developing a range of skills that show improved control and coordination, and then to refining and extending these skills and being able to perform them with some accuracy, consistency and fluency
- from the simple selection and application of skills in a series or in combination to the planning and use of more complex sequences, games strategies and compositional principles
- from being able to describe what they see being performed to making simple evaluations of performance and being able to use this information to improve the quality of their work
- from knowing that exercise makes them hot or out of breath to developing an understanding of why activity might be good for them and how important it is to their general health and wellbeing, and how different types of fitness affect their performance.

Making a judgement

At the end of a key stage, teachers should judge which level best fits the pupil's performance. Each description should be considered alongside descriptions for adjacent levels. When making a judgement at the end of a key stage, you may wish to note the following points.

- You will arrive at judgements by taking into account strengths and weaknesses in performance across a range of contexts and over a period of time, rather than focusing on a single piece of work.
- A single piece of work will not cover all the expectations. It will probably provide partial evidence of attainment in one or two aspects. If you look at it alongside other pieces of work covering a range of contexts you will be able to make a judgement about which level best fits a pupil's overall performance.

Range of teacher's knowledge about attainment

- Because of the nature of physical education your judgement on a pupil's attainment will be made by taking into account work from four, or sometimes more, areas of activity, and possibly many more specific activities. You will need to consider how far pupils are able to adapt their knowledge and skills and apply them for different purposes in a range of activities with different concepts and types of outcome.
- Evidence of attainment can be found both in lessons and out of lessons. However, teachers must be sure that the evidence they have is secure.

Giving pupils opportunities to demonstrate attainment

- Your pupils will need to use a range of forms of communication to show what they can do.
- In planning units of work and classroom approaches, you will need to provide opportunities for pupils to display their achievements in different ways, and to work in a range of situations.

- Opportunities should exist for pupils to show what they know and understand through question and answer, written work where appropriate and by planning activities such as:
    - warming up and cooling down
    - using video to analyse performance and select targets for improvement
    - leading and organising others in practices and performances
    - refereeing or umpiring
    - organising competitions or performances.
- Lessons are not the only places in which attainment can be demonstrated. Many pupils take part in clubs and other organised physical activity where they demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding.

Recording Attainment

Although you will want to be able to explain why you have awarded particular awards to pupils at the end of the key stage, there is no requirement for judgements to be explained in a particular way or to be supported by detailed collections of evidence for each pupil. Decisions about collecting information, about its purpose and how it should be used are matters for teachers working within an agreed school policy.

The initial assessment of all pupils should be undertaken as a group activity to build confidence, this can be carried out as a game e.g. Simon Says. Pupils need ongoing assessment to monitor their achievements throughout the course of lessons. One final assessment at the end of the course alone does not give the pupil the best opportunity to demonstrate as well in a pressured environment and assessing in this way can be an ineffective use of pool time. Pupil's achievements should be recorded against the national curriculum outcomes. Teachers must keep in mind that swimming 25 meters unaided is the minimum target for children to reach at Key Stage 2. Assessments should be carried out by the teacher who normally conducts the swimming lesson and assessment records reported to the Headteacher as per all other areas of the curriculum. The schools method for reporting to parents is at the discretion of the school, but where pupils have not met the minimum national curriculum standards in swimming parents should be informed and provided with details on how to further develop their child's skills.

Water Safety and Self Rescue

In the previous section great emphasis was placed on the development of water confidence and movement in the water. At the same time, there is a need to develop a clear understanding of the principles of safety in and around water.

Much of this can be delivered in the classroom as a stimulus for key skills of:
Reading
Writing
Listening

Water can be fun and enjoyable however water presents unknown hazards. Young people who drown are often victims of their own misjudgement of their swimming ability. Although learning to swim may help children who find themselves in difficulties in water, it does not follow that swimming ability makes children safe. Water safety issues should be addressed along with other safety issues in developing the pupils' awareness of dangers they may encounter in their home and other locations.

An understanding of the circumstances of how and why people drown will help to prevent accidents occurring in the future. The SAFE code (also called the water safety code) applies to all water types. It is useful tool when teaching the most basic water safety guidance as it is short and easy to remember. This also makes the SAFE code particularly useful for young children to learn.

The water safety code:

- Needs to be understood by children
- Needs to be implemented by children
- Covers the different danger areas, e.g. home and garden, the beach, rivers, lakes etc.

Safety Message

SPOT Spot the dangers

- Check for hazards such as tides or currents
- Consider what could be hidden under the water
- Be careful of unsafe banks, stay well back from the edge

ADVICE Take safety advice

- Always read the signs
- Only swim where there is a lifeguard
- Wear buoyancy aids and life jackets

FRIEND Always go with a friend

- Swim with your family and friends
- If one person gets into difficulty the other can get help
- Never swim alone

EMERGENCY Learn how to help in an emergency

- Find the nearest phone and call 999 or 112
- Shout loudly to attract attention
- NEVER enter the water to save others

Safety – Swimming Pool versus Other open water sites

The swimming pool is:	**Rivers, reservoirs and canals, etc are unsafe:**
• Warm • Lifeguarded • Clean	• They are cold • They may have currents • They may lack clarity

Additional considerations

- Tuition in swimming and water safety complement each other.
- Water safety should be taught as a integrated part of a swimming lessons to ensure that children have an understanding of how to stay safe near water.
- Children need to understand that the swimming pool is a safe place to swim

THE DANGERS OF COLD WATER IMMERSION

Most children's experience of emersion in water comes through experiences in the home in baths, showers, play pools and swimming pools. In all of these the water is relatively warm. Immersion in cold water is known to be a major factor in most drowning in British waters. This applies throughout the year, as sea temperatures rarely raise above 15˚C and in winter fall to 5˚C or below. In very cold water (around 5˚C), even strong swimmers are unable to keep afloat for more than a few minutes. This is because 'cold shock' brings about rapid breathing, which leads to difficulty in co-ordinating breathing with swimming. Many fatalities in inland water are probably caused by the victim's inability to get out because of steep sloping sides.

Lightweight everyday clothing can substantially reduce heat loss by preventing the continuous movement of cold water around the body.
If you find yourself in cold water:

- Keep calm. You will probably experience "cold shock" which affects the breathing and coordination. It is possible that you will be able to regain control after a short time.
- Float on your back and adopt the HELP (Heat Escape Lessening Posture) position which will prevent the loss of body heat (see below).
- If there is more than one of you, adopt the HUDDLE position to retain body heat communally (see below).
- Hold on to support or float quietly facing away from the waves to prevent the water splashing on your face.
- If you can find some way of getting out of the water as quickly as possible – onto a floating object – or the shore/side.

HELP Position

Huddle Position

Try and keep your head above water. Intermittent submersion of the head will increase heat loss.

- **Do not** swim unless you are forced to do so to keep afloat or to get clear of danger.
- **Do not** try to swim for the shore, unless you are a good swimmer and the shore is within reasonable distance e.g. 200 metres in cold water, 50 metres in very cold water.
- **Do not** move more than is absolutely necessary.
- **Do not** attempt to exercise to keep warm.
- **Do not** remove clothing, except items that interfere with flotation
- (e.g. heavy overcoats, boots).

Practical Teaching Guidelines

Teaching from the Poolside/in the Water

In the situation where a teacher has responsibility for groups comprising more than 2 pupils the recommended teaching position is from the side of the pool as this provides the best position to oversee the whole group in terms of safety and to provide appropriate feedback on the performance of each person in the group.

This does not preclude a support/assistant teacher or teacher being in the water to assist pupils either on a 1:1 or 1:2 basis or as a support to the class teacher. In fact for groups of more than 2 pupils a fully qualified teacher on the poolside supported by a support in the water may be ideal.

It is recognised, however, that in some circumstances the lead teacher will have assessed the risk and may feel it is more appropriate to have a support teacher teach from within the water. For groups of more than 2 pupils this should only be considered after the lead teacher has carried out a risk assessment giving careful consideration of all the potential factors.

At all times the support teacher must be able to clearly see all pupils they are working with and be close enough to provide physical support should this be required. In this way it may be practicable to supervise up to 4 pupils, ratios greater than this should not be considered unless additional helpers are available in the water.

Jumping into Shallow Water

Jumping into a swimming pool is an important skill which is invariably taught by swimming teachers and teachers of other aquatic disciplines. It needs to be recognised, however, that impact with the pool floor can result in injury to, for example, the ankles and lower spine. It is essential, therefore, that the activity is taught with care taking into account the following factors:

- The depth of the water where the entry is being made
- The height of the freeboard (height of the poolside above the water)
- The size and weight of the pupils making the entry
- The age of the person making the entry (older people may suffer from brittle bones)

All those performing a jumping entry should be taught how to land correctly and how to recover themselves if over balancing occurs. In addition the importance of bending the knees on impact should be stressed.

Recommended minimum depth for jumping entries:

- Children who are water confident and in the early stages of learning to swim and normally up to 8 years of age - minimum depth 0.9m/1.0m
- Those children who are confident in deeper water (between 0.9m - 1.5m) and are normally aged 8 years plus or adults in the early stage of learning to swim - minimum water depth of at least level with the arm pit of the individual when standing on the bottom of the pool

The above guidance relates to feet first entries and not specific jumps which require the person involved to gain additional height from the poolside. In situations where this is required a minimum depth of 1.8m is recommended.

Pupil – Teacher Ratios

Pupil to teacher ratios must not exceed 20:1 and in the vast majority of cases in primary school swimming should be less than this.
The following ratios are based on Health and Safety considerations and Quality delivery of the lesson.

	Health & Safety	Quality Delivery
Non Swimmers and Beginners – Young children, normally primary school age, being introduced to swimming who are unable to swim 10metres unaided on back and front	12:1	8:1
Children under the age of seven – Irrespective of their swimming ability, group size should be restricted	12:1	8:1
Improving swimmers – Swimmers of a similar ability to each other who can swim at least 10metres competently and unaided on their back and on their front. It is recommended that the lesson be confined to an area in which the children are not out of their depth.	20:1	12:1
Mixed ability groups – Pupils with a range of ability (from improving to competent) where the least able and least confident are working well within their depth. Swimmers techniques, stamina and deepwater experience should be considered	20:1	12:1
Competent swimmers – Those swimmers who can swim at least 25metres competently and unaided on front and back, and can tread water for 2 minutes	20:1	15:1
Swimmers with disabilities – each situation must be considered individually as people with disabilities are not a homogeneous group. Care must be taken to ensure that there are sufficient helpers in the water to provide a 1:1 ratio for those needing constant support and a sufficient number of other helpers to provide the degree of support required by the range of disabilities within the group.	8:1 with 1:1 support in the water where required	6:1 with 1:1 support in the water where required

Having taken into account the safety and other guidelines already dealt with, the recommendations here should be helpful in determining actual ratios for programmed swimming activities. The ratios given are for pupils in the water. Where the teacher is also responsible for pupils not in the water but on the poolside, then the ratios may need to be smaller.

Equipment and Swimming Aids

Throughout the world of pool based aquatics there is a vast range of equipment used, from the simplest swimsuit to the complex machinery used in operating the pool facility itself.

Toys, play equipment and other useful objects

In this category are included items which act as a useful distraction during the initial orientation stages especially for younger children, such as balls, floating animals and other colourful objects.

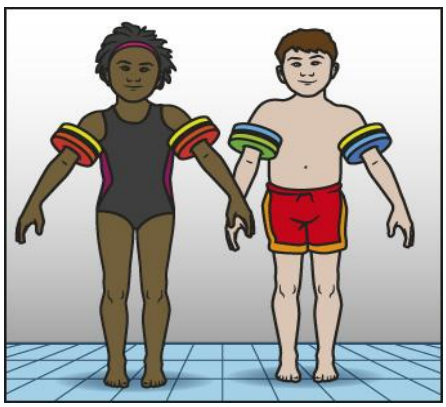
These can provide an alternative focus for the child and assist in adjustment to the water environment, but care is required to ensure that indiscriminate play does not interfere with the main objective of learning to swim and developing fundamental aquatic skills.

Following the initial orientation stage, immersion is a high priority, and this can be greatly assisted by the use of a number of toys and objects which are brightly coloured and specifically designed to sink and to be picked up from the pool floor. There is a vast array of these available including small sticks, rings, small hoops, frogs, fish and flower.

Buoyancy aids

Whatever the age of the learner, a variety of inflatable aids should be available. While not all learners require them, these provide a sense of security during the early stages and also help the learner to move from the initial vertical to the desired horizontal position in which it is possible to try out some simple swimming movements.

A view does persist among some swimming teachers that aids are counter-productive as the learner so easily becomes too dependent on the support given, and will be extremely reluctant to forego their use. This of course can occur in some circumstances but if so, it is probably a necessary stage for the individual learner in any case, and with good developmental skill teaching this is normally a most unusual occurrence. In any case for activity without any aids should, if possible, be included in every session, with learners being encouraged to explore their own buoyancy capability, even if for the very timid, this initially involves only a limited amount of activity.



Floats and kick boards

These come in a range of sizes with some slight variation in shape and grip. Their use by younger beginners must be carefully supervised as the learner can easily let go of them with unfortunate results. Their main function is to develop efficient and effective movements of the feet and legs.

To achieve this, the manner in which the boards are held can be critical. This will depend upon whether the purpose is to assist with upper body buoyancy, as for early learner, and for practice of such skills as treading water, or to constrain the use of the hands while keeping the face clear of the water, as in stroke kicking practice.

Teachers must consider these uses carefully and ensure the intended purpose is being achieved. It is important also for this reason to provide a range of sizes and shapes, in terms of length, width and depth. Teachers and pupils should experiment and always be ready to change in order to help bring about development.

Fins

There has been an increasing tendency in recent years with the increased popularity of scuba diving and snorkelling to use different types of fins, not only by advanced swimmers, to develop leg power, but also by learners to provide the sensation of propulsion. While this may be of some motivational benefit, its practice in the early stages should not be prolonged as different types of movement and control are involved.

Another fairly common use is in learning the undulation movements of the dolphin butterfly stroke. Again this can be useful to initiate the actions involved and develop the key concepts of the stroke, but to develop the actual control of the precise action, it should be done using only the feet.

Goggles

While swimming goggles may make a child feel comfortable in the pool while they are learning to swim, if they accidently fall into the water it is likely they will not be wearing them.
It is vital children are comfortable swimming with or without goggles so they don't panic in an unexpected situation. To do this they need to learn to swim without goggles.

- The decision to allow swimming goggles during lessons is down to the school's PE policy and communication with the school swimming provider.
- Parents need to be informed of the reasons to not wearing goggles and children encouraged to take lessons without them
- If pool water is maintained in a good condition it should not be necessary for children to wear goggles at all. Medical and other associated reasons some children need to wear goggles – such as prescription goggles. If this is the case then:-
- Choose a pair with BSI instruction on the package for the correct way to put them on and take them off
- Choose a pair that fit properly. Leaking goggles could affect the child and waste valuable lesson time
- Ensure the child knows how to fit and adjust them properly
- Schools and teachers to adopt a policy with regards to the responsibility for fitting children's goggles.

Swimwear

Swimwear should be suitable for the purpose. For reasons of safety swimwear should be sufficiently tight fitting so as to allow freedom of body and limb movement without causing unsafe water resistance. For reasons of culture or religion sensitivity is required to ensure that the correct balance between safety, cultural requirements and the need for staff to be able to see the limb movements of pupils to ensure appropriate learning and safe practice. In the first instance the staff and the pupil should make themselves aware of the effects of swimming whilst wearing additional clothing. Liaison with community leaders can do much to minimise any problems that may arise.

Once a reasonable degree of swimming competence has been attained there is of course a sound case to be made for actually including the wearing of certain item of clothing in relation to some of the Challenges and Personal Survival Awards and to 'simulate real survival situations'.

Swim caps

Wearing a swim cap is advised, not only for reasons of safety, but also in relation to skill learning as the hair will inevitably interfere with vision and the flow of water across the eyes and face, causing erratic and inefficient head and body movements to be made. Modern swim caps are available which fit comfortably, can be put on and taken off with relative ease, and can be used to signify standards and classes, or even for programme identification. If the policy is not to wear swim caps then as a minimum, long hair should be tied back

Use of electrical equipment

Music can enhance the learning process and many learners respond positively to this stimulation. The reference to electrical equipment is, therefore, particularly important in that context. However, all electrical equipment in the swimming environment should be treated with the utmost care.

- All mains electrical equipment, including portable, should be kept in a dry area at least 3.5 metres from the poolside
- All mains electrical equipment should be protected by a residual current devise (RCD)
- Trailing cables, etc., must be specifically designed for the purpose
- All electrical equipment should be properly supported
- Under no circumstances should swimmers in the water touch electrical equipment
- Pool managers should be consulted before any electrical equipment is used on/near the pool surrounds and any policies should be adhered to

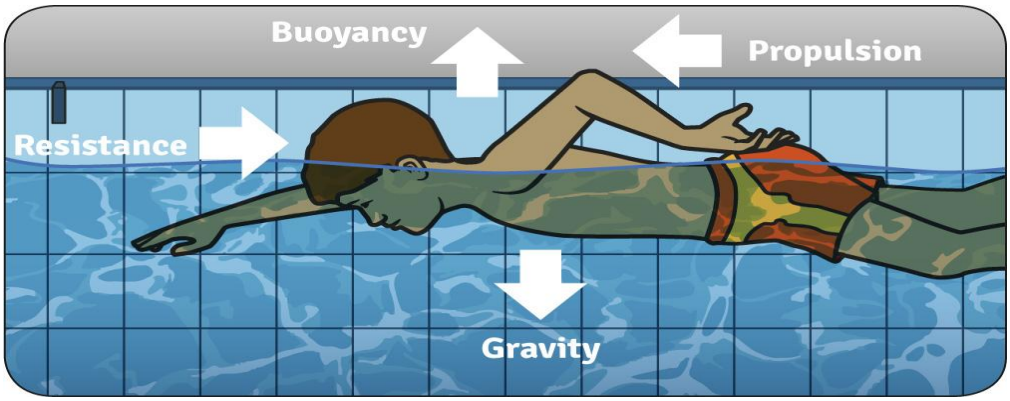
Working with Non Swimmers and Beginners
This section will cover:

- ☑ The principles of movement in the water
- ☑ FUNdamentals and aquatic Skills
- ☑ Introduction to the strokes

The Principles of Movement in the Water

A basic understanding of how the body moves in water is needed for teachers to be able to plan effective activities for their swimmers.

Figure 1 – The water principle



Buoyancy and gravity

Buoyancy - can be described as - the power of a fluid to exert an upward force on a body placed in it.

Gravity – can be described as - the force that attracts objects towards the earth.

Resistance

Water creates more resistance to a person than air does. It is very important that every effort is made by teachers and their swimmers to **minimise resistance when swimming!**

Types of resistance

Profile resistance (frontal)

- This resistance is influenced by the shape of the body, a swimmer with a large cross sectional area will create more resistance

Examples –

- a swimmer with a poor body position in any stroke presents a very large surface area to the water, causing greater resistance.
- a swimmer who performs a push and glide with one hand on top of the other, elbows straight and body horizontal will be subject to only a small amount of resistance

Frontal or Lateral Resistance (form / wave drag)

- This resistive force acts where the air and water meet and has a large impact on the overall resistance experienced by the swimmer. When a swimmer moves a wave is created at the water's surface, the force exerted on the swimmer as a result of this water is known as wave drag.

Example –

- a swimmer performing front crawl enters the hand palm down, and presses straight down, instead of thumb, first finger first with the arm extended forwards

Skin Resistance (surface/viscous drag)

- As the body moves, the water exerts a frictional force on the layer of fluid next to the body which slows it down.

Example –

- a swimmer wearing long baggy shorts will experience more viscous drag

Eddy Resistance (tail drag)

- Movement of water has a tendency to create eddy currents which are caused by the water filling in behind the swimmer as they move forwards, this tends to pull the swimmer back.

Example –

- a swimmer performing front crawl with the face out of the water creates a large hole behind the body and legs causing eddy currents to work in opposition to the swimmer

There are a number of ways to reduce resistance

- Horizontal body position
- Streaming
- Smooth controlled actions
- Well fitting swimwear
- Wave reduction

Teaching Implications

- ☑ Head position is the key factor in determining a streamlined position.
- ☑ All sound stroke technique is based on a streamlined body position.
- ☑ Have your learners acquire a good streamlined position early in the learning phase of each skill / stroke and maintain this through to performance.

Propulsion

- This is the force that drives the swimmer forward
- It is generated by all parts of the swimmer's body
- The body will move forward when propulsion is greater than resistance

FUNdamentals and Aquatic Skills

Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD)

Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) is a sports development framework that is based on human growth and development. All young people follow the same pattern of growth from infancy through adolescence, but there are significant individual differences in both the timing and magnitude of the changes that take place. This has led to the notion that young people should be exposed to specific types of training during periods of rapid growth and that the types of training should change with the patterns of growth. These have been used by Dr Istvan Balyi to devise a five stage LTAD framework that has been adapted to swimming

Five stages for LTAD

1. FUNdamentals – Childhood (Basic Movement Literacy)
2. Swim Skills – Late childhood (Building Technique)
3. Training to Train - Adolescence (Building the engine)
4. Training to Compete – Early Adulthood (Optimising the Engine)
5. Training to win – Adulthood (Maximising the Engine)

FUNdamentals - basic movement literacy

The FUNdamental stage should be structured and fun with an emphasis on developing a wide base of skills and competencies in pupils whilst ensuring delivery is based around fun.

Age (a general guide only): Female 5 to 8 years;
Male 6 to 9 years.

The FUNdamental stage should be structured and fun. The emphasis is on developing basic movement literacy and fundamental movement skills in an aquatic environment. The skills to be developed are the ABCs (Agility, Balance, Coordination, Speed), RJT (Running, Jumping, Throwing), KGBS(Kinaesthetics, Gliding, Buoyancy, Striking with the body) and CKS (Catching, Kicking, Striking with an implement). In order to develop basic movement literacy successfully participation in as many sports as possible should be encouraged.

Swim skills – Late childhood
During this stage the nervous system is almost fully developed and there are rapid improvements in the co-ordination of movement skills Young people should be learning how to move, train and develop sport specific skills on land and in water. A game based, multi stroke approach should be adopted to ensure that lessons are fun and varied. Swimmers should also be developing the basic technical and tactical skills which include:-

- Warm up and cool down
- Stretching
- Hydration and nutrition
- Recovery
- Relaxation and focusing

Physical Literacy
To create an active and healthy swimming population all children must be given a solid foundation in basic movement, sport and aquatic skills to build on later in life, this foundation is called “Physical Literacy”
Research shows that without the inclusion and development of basic movement lieracy skills, many children and youths withdraw from Physical activity and sport and turn to more inactive/or unhealthy choices during their leisure time.

Getting off to the right start
Physical Literacy is the development of Fundamental Movement Skills and Fundamental sports skills that permit a child to move confidently and with control in a wide range of physical activity. Developing Physical Literacy also means increased awareness of what is going on in an activity setting and the ability to react appropriately.

Aquatic Physical Literacy
Aquatic Physical Literacy is the development of water based Fundamental Movement Skills, Taking part in a combination of swimming and other sports enables a child to develop skills in a wide range of physical activities. Aquatics Physical Literacy also refers to a child’s understanding of the pool environment.
“Attaining aquatic Physical literacy gives children the skills they require to confidently and safely enjoy water based physical activities for health, fun, enjoyment and for potential swimming performance achievements. Physical literacy is a key factor of the swimmer pathway and Participant Development Model.

Developing Skills
Teachers need to be aware of the stage of learning their swimmers are working at in order to employ specific, relevant and effective teaching. Each stage of learning has individual characteristics and teachers need to use specific strategies to produce skill improvement.
It is important that all teachers have a good understanding of some basic principles of skill learning before teaching sport specific skills to their pupils.

Beginner stage is often characterised by;

- Parts of the skill are missing
- Some parts of the skill are exaggerated
- Coordination of movement is poor
- Poor decision making ability (options)

What the teacher can do;

Allow pupils to explore and experiment.
Modify equipment and standards / rules to allow an outcome to be achieved.
Delay feedback, allowing experimentation and self-learning to occur.
Reinforce positively.

Improver stage is often characterised by;

- Movement is better controlled
- Some parts of the skill are restricted or exaggerated
- Overall results are OK

If pupils are instructed poorly in this stage and develop "bad habits" and inefficient motor patterns, these patterns can be very hard to change. Get it right from the start!

What the teacher can do;

Teach one component of the skill at a time, adding new components when the participant is ready.
Teach "specific" skills in their context (use modified games – the *Games-Based Approach* to skill development).

Advanced stage is often characterised by;

- Mechanically efficient and coordinated movements
- Automatic performance (pupils don't need to think)
- Can think of tactics and make decisions well under pressure
- Confident and purposeful movements
- All components of the skill are correctly performed

What the teacher can do;

- Challenge the participant and make them solve problems
- Structure complex activities that represent the pressures and demands of intense competition
- Have the participant self-analyse their performance
- Use video analysis and extensive questioning

Key Underpinning Skills

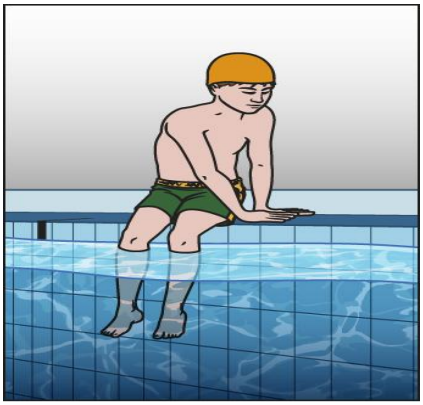
There are a number of key underpinning skills, without which learners will struggle to enjoy many aquatic activities, and as a result, their progress will be negatively affected. It is the role of the teacher to focus on these core skills and ensure that all learners develop these skills. The key underpinning skills are:

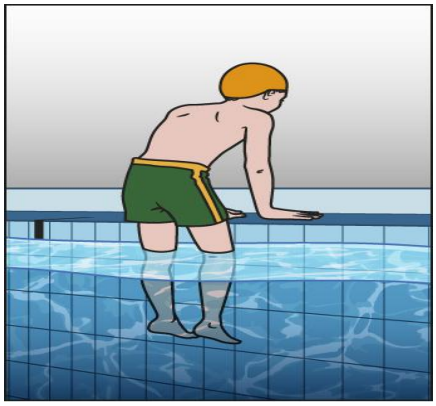
- Entries and Exits
- Aquatic Breathing
- Streamlining
- Balance and Buoyancy
- Rotation and Orientation
- Travel and Coordination (resistance and propulsion)
- Sculling

Entering the water

Teaching the non-swimmer to enter the water safely is an important starting point. This can be achieved through a variety of methods and must be appropriate to the needs of the individual and the environment.

Entry method	Teaching points	consideration
Ladder entry	Face the steps Hold rails with both hands Take one step at a time	Useful for the nervous swimmer Can be time consuming for large groups
Sitting/swivel entry	Place both hands to one side Turn to face the wall Lower the body carefully	Saves time on entry Pupils can do this all together
Jumping entry	Toes grip side of pool Face forwards Bend knees on landing	Not suitable for shallow water Fun Saves time on entry
Ramp/ gradient steps entry	The learner walks down, holding onto a rail or the side of the pool The learner can feel the water and find their 'feet' as they enter; The learner can assess the depth of the water as they enter.	Saves time on entry Suitable for less able swimmers



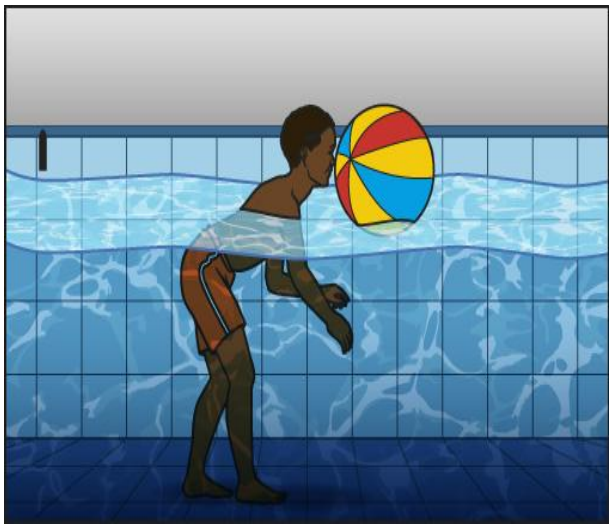


Movement in the water

Swimmers should be encouraged to move freely in the water when possible. Some may need support of floatation aids such as floats, armbands, noodles. As the swimmer gains in confidence they should be encouraged to experiment with a variety of movement patterns and games. Play is a vital element of the way in which a child learns and should therefore be an integral part in these early stages.

Many dry land games can be adapted and transferred to the pool. The emphasis should be on fun as this will help the swimmers overcome any fear of the water.

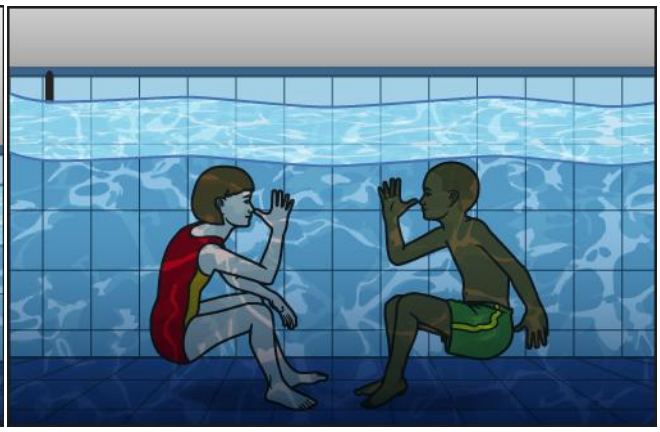
Practices	Teaching points	progression
Walk holding the rail/side	Slide the feet along the bottom and move slowly Keep shoulders below the surface	Walk alongside the rail/side without touching Walk around the pool Change speed and direction Walk sideways, backwards Move in different ways, hop, jump, skip Walk while blowing bubbles
Follow the leader	Vary direction, height, speed Give confident children the role of leader	Change speed Have two groups competing who can do the most changes? Play the game in deep water
Tag games	Can be played with a partner or group	Introduce rules – the tagger has to tag others with both hands. Once tagged the swimmer has to float until freed
Walk whist pushing a ball with the nose	Slide feet along bottom and move slowly Keep shoulders below water	Push the ball with the forehead Travel using arms and legs whilst pushing a ball Move around whilst blowing a egg flip or small ball



Aquatic breathing

Putting the face in the water is crucial to the development of prone (face down) swimming strokes and skills and it is important that children are comfortable submerging as soon as possible. Many games can be adapted to include submerging opportunities and can be as varied as the teacher's imagination

Practices	Teaching Points	Progression
Wetting the face and hair	Scoop water in hands and place over head	Wash the face and hair Use different equipment – watering cans, small buckets
Pick up sinkers	Open eyes Blow out under water Pick the sinker up with hands	Submerge in deeper water Pick sinkers up with both hands Pick 2 or 3 sinkers up
Push and glide	Push gently with feet Stretch body Blow bubbles Shoulders under water Face in water	Push and glide arms above head Push and glide add kick



The following sequence of activities has been found to be effective in establishing a breathing pattern in learners. This is a very basic progression but it is well worth spending the time developing the skill in this manner so that a solid foundation is established.

Once the progression has been developed, individual activities are practiced when needed for reinforcement or correction of the action. These can be done on the side of the pool or if necessary in shallow water where the hands can reach the bottom (elbows bend to allow the head to submerge).

Submerging and exhaling

Holding onto the wall with two hands, the learner bobs down with mouth and nose under the water and gradually blows out on a count to five.

The learner then repeats the above:

- with head submerged
- with head submerged by an arm's length
- with head submerged by an arm's length and eyes open
- with head submerged by an arm's length and eyes open, noting what can be seen, for example colour of tiles, markings etc.

Managing water in the mouth

Many people don't like water in their mouths. One of the main reasons for this is fear of choking or drowning. In aquatic activities water is held and circulated through the mouth all the time. This is so automatic that we are not conscious that we are doing this.

When there is water in the mouth the learner has three options – swallow, hold or spit. Taking in pool water and spitting it out is not something that people readily admit to because of the perceived hygiene factor. In reality that is what is happening while they are swimming, and the water is disinfected.

Teaching learners to control the flow of water in and out of their mouths is important. This skill, once learnt, is a great confidence builder for the beginner and will enhance the learning of effective breathing techniques for all strokes, particularly backstroke.

Streamlining

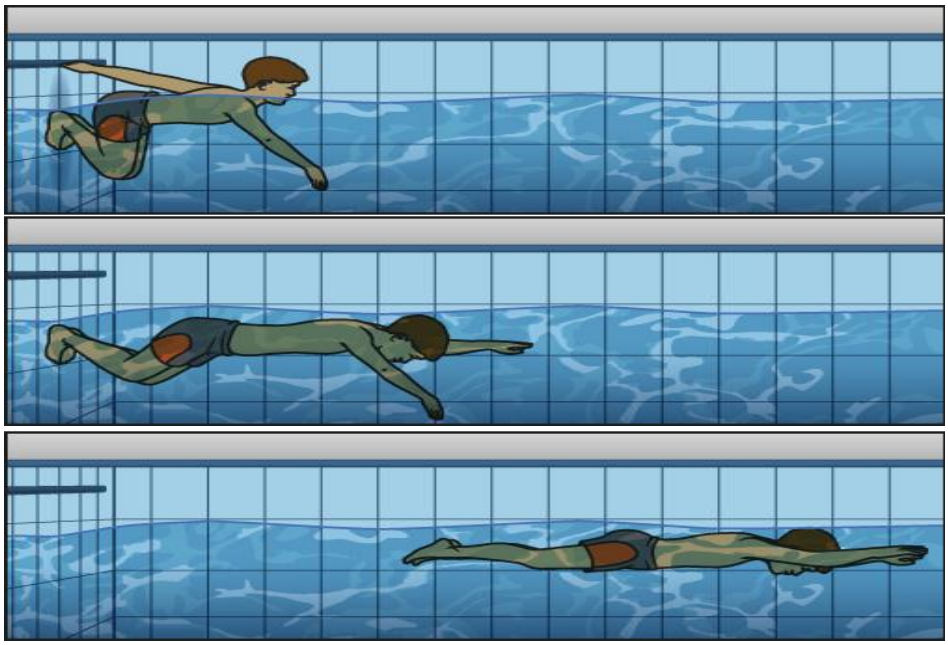
Understanding streamlining, how to be streamlined and why it is important.

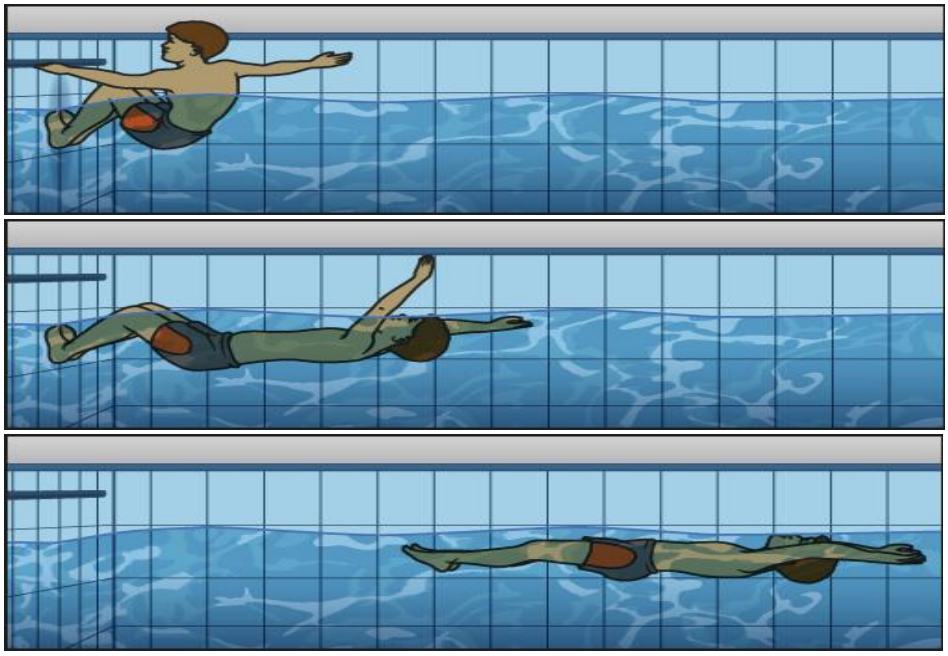
Teaching tips
Good body alignment or streamlined body position is critical for the achievement of swimming strokes. Being able to maintain body alignment depends upon the learner's ability to:

- Visualise the correct alignment.
- Sense where their body is in space (body awareness)
- Assume the correct streamline body position and maintain it (dependent on their having sufficient muscle strength and endurance).
- Adjust to the changes in body shape and size that may have occurred over the years.
- Adapt to any deficiencies in movement due to illness, injury or muscle weakness.
- Retrain muscles to correct previously poor posture.

The key points to observe in the streamline position are:

- Arms are extended above the head arms close to the ears.
- The head is back over the shoulders with the chin pulled in.
- Shoulders are back.
- Abdomen is pulled in.
- The buttocks are pulled in.
- There should be a focus on good core stability.



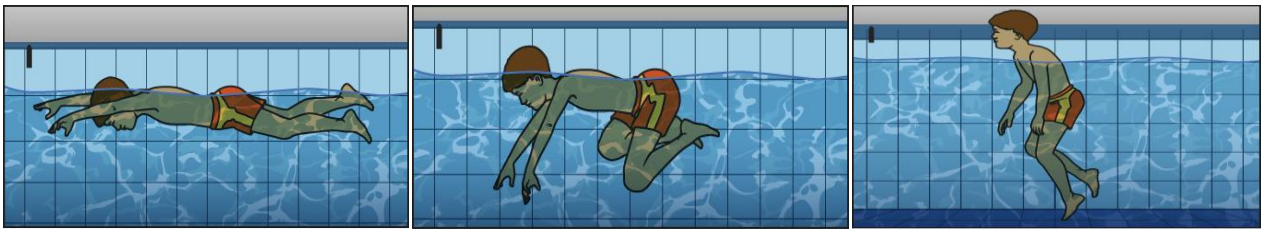


Balance and buoyancy

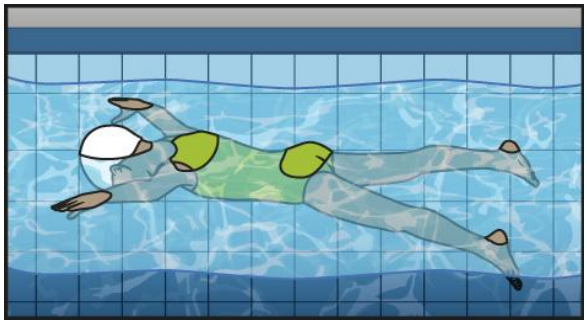
Without understanding the buoyancy and how to become buoyant in the water, learners will never achieve their potential. There are many, many methods that teachers can use to develop buoyancy in their learners, some of which are discussed below:

Floatation and regaining the standing position

It is essential that non-swimmers being introduced to the water are taught how to regain the standing position very early in their swimming development. This will help to develop confidence and is also a safety skill. Initially this should be introduced using buoyancy aids



Practices	Teaching Points	Progression
Front float with aids or support	Shoulders underwater Lie forward gently Face in water, look at the bottom Blow bubbles	Various floats – star, pencil, mushroom Floating without aids Floating patterns in pairs, groups
Standing up from front	Tuck knees under body Lift head Scull with hands Feel the floor with the feet Stand up gently	Without aides or support From travelling on front
Back float with aids or support	Shoulders underwater Lie back gently Eyes look up	Various floats – star, pencil, mushroom Floating without aids Floating patterns in pairs, groups
Standing up from back	Head and shoulders move up and forward Tuck knees in Scull with hands Feel the floor with feet Stand up gently	Without aides or support From travelling on back



Rotation and orientation

A number of water familiarisation skills which involve rotation and orientation have already been touched on in this Learner Guide. Additional skills involving rotation and orientation will also be outlined in some detail, when the four competitive strokes are discussed in following sections. Although this is the case, it is important to discuss the role of the teacher in developing learner's abilities to manoeuvre lane ropes, as this can sometimes be very difficult for some learners.

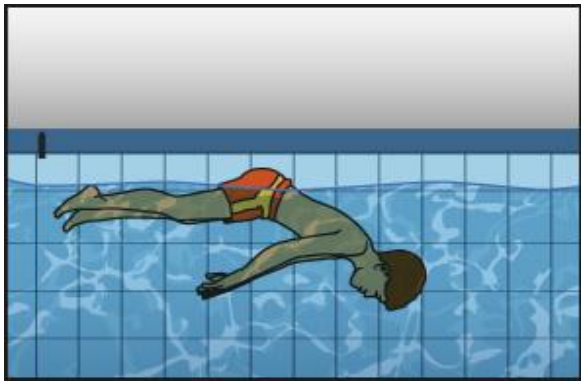
Types of rotation and their relevance to aquatics

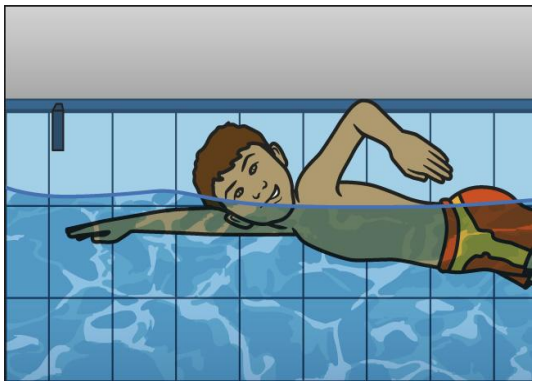
A longitudinal rotation:

- For the arm action of front crawl and backstroke
- Breathing technique in front crawl
- Rolling from front to back and visa versa
- Rotating back onto the front after a tumble turn

A horizontal rotation:

- Tumble turns
- Head first surface diving
- Diving
- Butterfly stroke





Travel and coordination

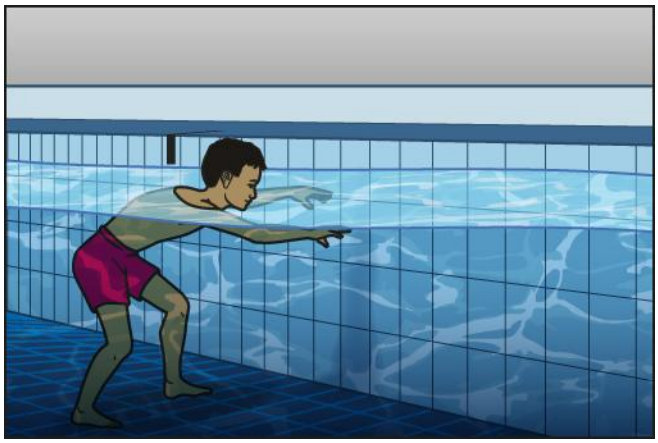
- Developing movement forwards, backwards and sideways
- How to travel effectively, exploring different ways of travelling in water

Children should be encouraged to move freely at the earliest opportunity. The initial movements done in the water can be attempted and achieved in a standing position with the shoulders under the water. This can also help with balance as children experience the pressure of the water around them.

Teaching tips

- Walking, sliding the feet along the bottom using with a wide base for balance, arms spread just under the surface in front of the body. Moving forward, backwards, sideways and with a turn
- Arms begin to pull, push and scull in an alternating and/or simultaneous manner
- Following a variety of patterns i.e., circles, triangles, figures of eight etc
- Varying the speed of movement through the water i.e., slowly, quickly etc

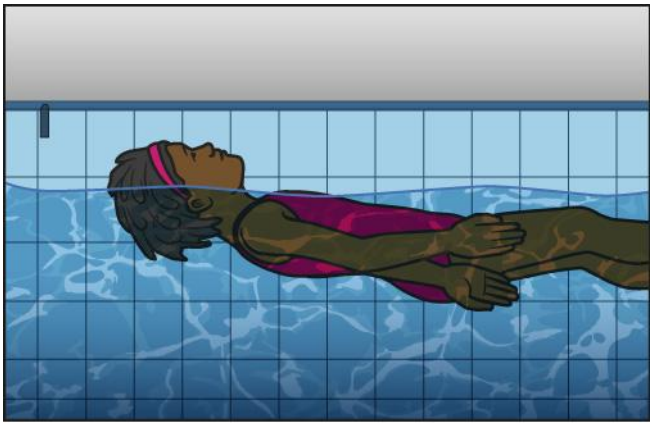
NB: Some children may require the support of buoyancy aids or the assistance of an assistant in the water. The provision of any support should be removed as soon as possible and as confidence allows.



Sculling

Sculling is a useful skill to help swimmers to enjoy the water with minimal effort and has a number of applications.

- Most aquatic learners move their hands around instinctively in some sort of action when in the water. This action will range from mild movement to thrashing.
- Learners need to be taught how to scull and shown how this is a useful skill to help them to enjoy the water with minimal effort.
- Floating on the back with flutter kick and sculling is a useful introductory activity to backstroke as well as a cool-down activity.
- Competence in sculling will give the learner more confidence to take their feet off the bottom when treading water or swimming.
- When learning to swim in deep water they can stop and rest.
- Sculling can be used to demonstrate to the learner how effective small strokes can be in the water to give propulsion. This helps when trying to demonstrate the finer points of stroke technique and how small movements can affect propulsion.
- If learners have an understanding of why a particular action is performed they have a greater chance of being able to put this into practice.



Introduction to the Four Main Strokes

Propulsion

The initial aim is to enable pupils to propel themselves on fronts, backs or side, on and under the surface of the water and subsequently to change direction. Movement used at this stage may resemble recognised stroke patterns but need not be accurate and precise.

Exploration of leg actions

Pupils can attempt leg actions from a push and glide on the front or back. The types of actions suggested are alternating kicking resembling crawl type action and simultaneous kicking resembling breaststroke and butterfly.

Exploration of arm actions

At this stage all recovery movements should be completed under the water surface. The affect of lifting the arms out of the water during recovery is that of sinking the body, which is not recommended and this level and will delay success.
Simple paddling or circling movements with the hands and arms will produce head first travel.

Multi Stroke Approach

This method of teaching involves the strokes being introduced alongside each other with equal emphasis on the basic technique of each stroke. The leg action of the crawl strokes are combined with an alternating arm action with underwater recovery (front and back paddle) and the circular breaststroke leg action is combined with an arm action with a circular pathway. Pupils usually find the type of action and position in the water one of the strokes more natural to them. This method is particularly advocated for the teaching of children as it promotes the importance of learning a number of skills and is the ethos of the ASA's Learn to Swim Framework and LTAD. This will ultimately assist with varied stroke development at a later stage as well as provide the earliest opportunity for them to experience movement through the water without buoyancy aids.

The multi stroke method can:

- Add variety to a session
- Allow for individual physical characteristics
- Allows for individual preferences
- Help to maintain pupils motivation

In order to teach the multi-stroke method effectively knowledge of the four main strokes is required. The four main strokes are:

- Front Crawl
- Back Crawl
- Breaststroke
- Butterfly

NB: For swimmers with a physical impairment some adaptation to the stroke may be needed.

Front Crawl

Front Crawl is normally development from front paddle which introduces the alternating legs action and a shortened underwater phase of the arm action. The over water recovery cannot be developed until the learner is able to fully submerge the face in the water and has an understanding of aquatic breathing.

Body

- Face in the water. Eyes looking downwards and slightly forward
- Body horizontal, stretched and streamlined on the front
- Shoulders and upper body rotating whilst maintaining a steady and central head position except for when breathing occurs

Legs and Feet

- Legs move in a steady alternating leg kick that predominantly originates from the hip with knees slightly bent.
- Feet close to the surface, toes pointed. There should be a small splash of the feet as they pass close to each other as a result of the feet pushing against the water.
- The kick may be slow and steady, or fast and powerful, dependent on the individual's preference.

Arms and Hands

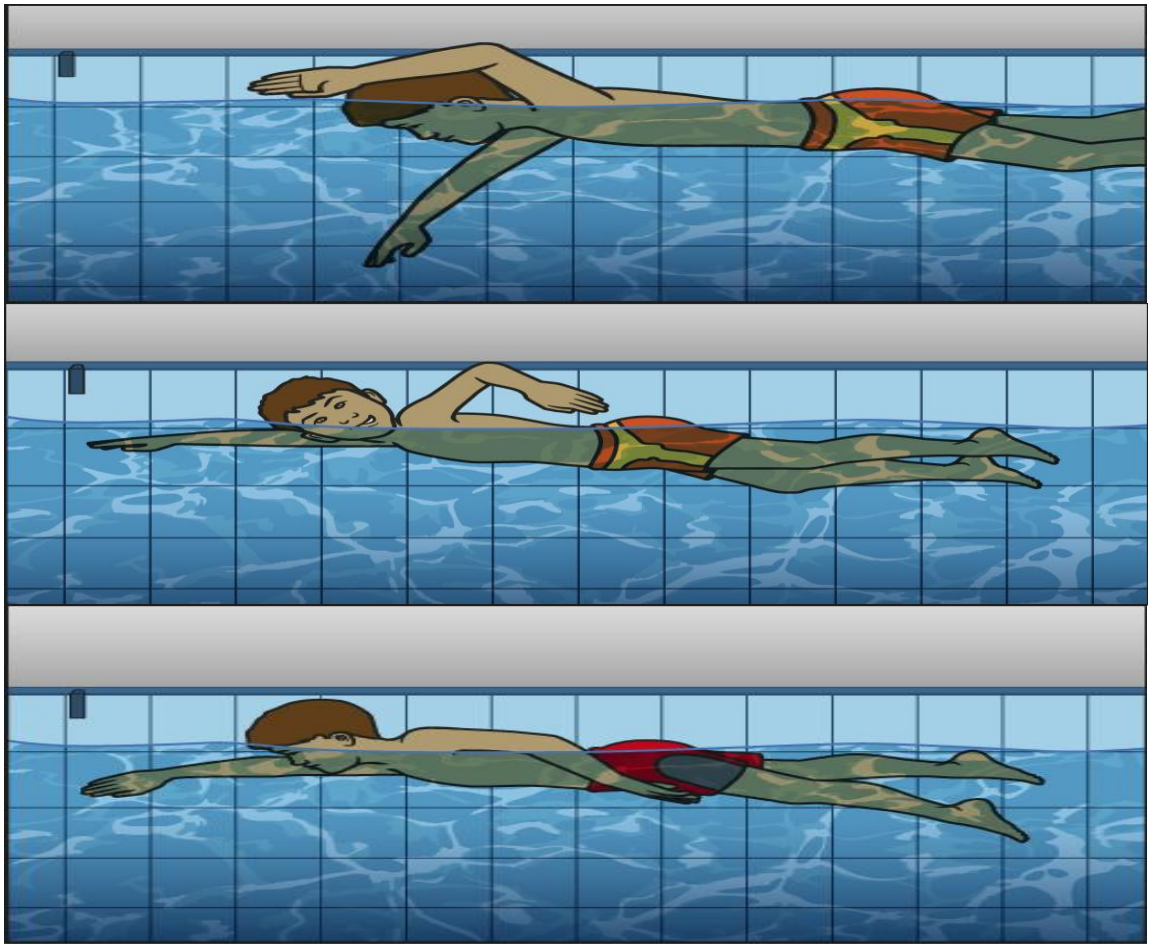
- Hand slides into the water, finger tips first. The entry is usually between the shoulder and head.
- The propulsive phase follows the hand entry; the hand moves slightly out and down to the catch position with the shoulder and the elbow higher than the hand position; presses against the water, then pushes backwards and outwards towards the hand exit.
- The elbow leaving the water first followed by wrist and hand initiates recovery. The arm moves over the water but remains close to the body and head into a controlled hand entry.
- Aim for the individual is to gain maximum distance per stroke effectively.

Breathing

- Breathing is initiated with a controlled turn of the head to the side to quickly inhale air, followed by the head returning to the centre, face in the water and air exhaled.
- A regular pattern of breathing is recommended and the swimmer must be at ease in breathing to either side.

Timing

- The kicking, pulling and breathing must be co-ordinated and controlled.
- All actions must be smooth and continuous whilst a relationship of stroke length and stroke rate must be developed and vary with the requirements of the swim.



Selected simple practices for teaching frontcrawl

Body Position

- Push and glide in prone position (full extension from toes too fingers)
- Push and glide with arms at side, kicking
- Push and glide with arms extended, kicking

Leg Action

- Frontcrawl leg action, holding rail
- Push and glide with arms at side, face in water, kicking
- Push and glide with arms extended, face in water, kicking
- Frontcrawl leg action, one float, face in water
- Frontcrawl leg action on side, one arm extended

Arm Action

- Frontcrawl arm action, standing
- Frontcrawl arm action, walking
- Push and glide with arms extended, face in the water, single arm action, no breathing
- Push and glide with arms extended, face in the water, alternating action, no breathing
- Frontcrawl arm action, with pull buoy

Breathing

- Holding rail or side with one hand, breathe to side
- Standing, combine with arm action
- One arm extended, other hand by side, frontcrawl leg action with breathing
- One arm extended, single arm action with breathing
- Full stroke, short distance, add one breath
- Full stroke, increase distance and increase number of breaths
- Full stroke with bilateral breathing (breathing every three arm pulls)

Back Crawl

Back Crawl is normally development from back paddle which introduces the alternating legs action. The overarm recovery is developed once the swimmer is able to maintain a streamlined body position and use of an effective kick.

Back Crawl will often be the first choice stroke as it permits the face to be clear of the water and presents few difficulties with regards to breathing. However, some swimmers are unwilling to attempt the stroke in the early stages due to a fear of swimming on the back.

Body

- Back of head in the water, and held still in a central position, eyes looking upwards and slightly forward
- Body almost horizontal, stretched and streamlined on the back with the chest clear of the surface and hips slightly submerged
- Shoulders and upper body rotating with a controlled roll of the shoulders

Legs and Feet

- Legs move in a positive alternating leg kick that predominantly originates from the hip with knees slightly bent.
- Legs close to the surface, toes pointed and slightly turned inward. There should be a slight splash of the feet as they pass close to each other and a result of the feet pushing against the water.
- The leg kick should be continuous.
- The kick may be slow and steady, or fast and powerful, dependent on the individual's preference.

Arms and Hands

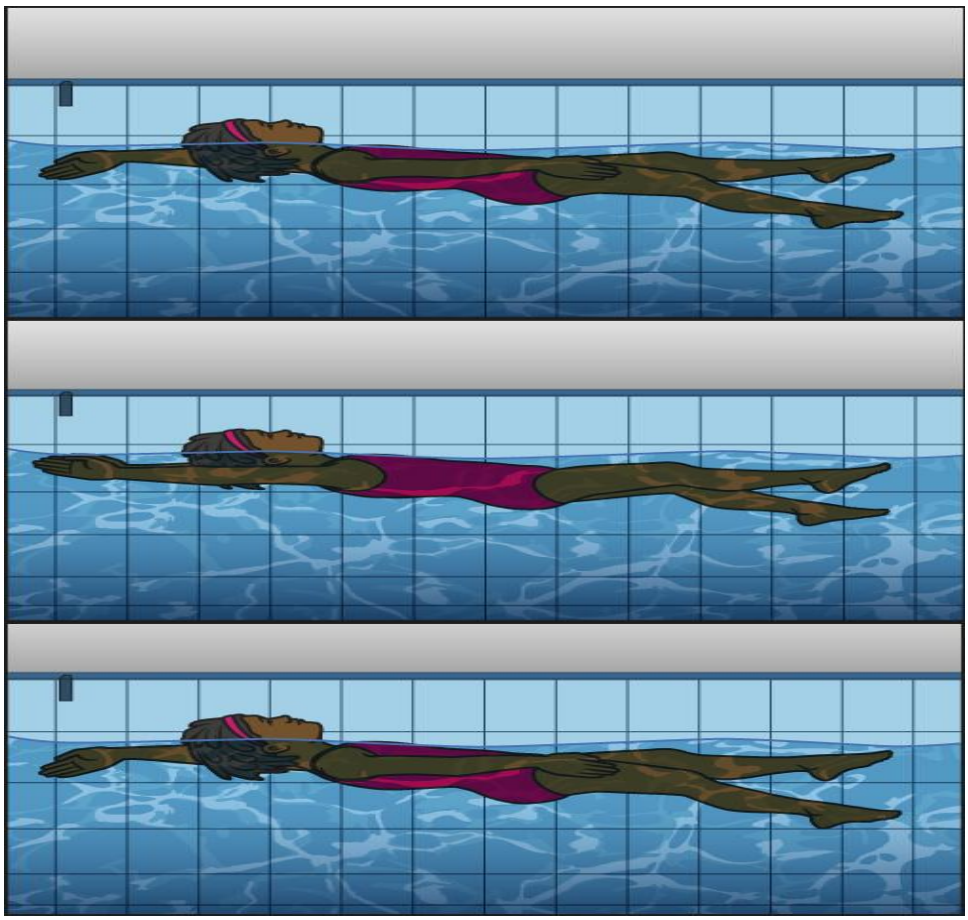
- Hand is placed into the water, little finger first, palm facing outward. The entry is in line with the shoulder.
- The propulsive phase follows the hand entry; at the deepest point after entry, the elbow bends and hand presses round and backwards towards the thigh; as the arm starts to straighten, the hand presses downwards facing the pool floor, before moving towards the thigh and up to the surface.
- The shoulder leads the arm recovery, lifting up and round as the hand leaves the water. The elbow is kept straight as the arm lifts straight up above the shoulder to the entry point.
- A deep 'catch' as the hand enters the water and a strong bent elbow pull as the shoulders roll will result in a more powerful pull and increased distance gained per stroke.

Breathing

- Breathing regularly in relation to the effort phases of the stroke. Breath in one one arm pull breath out on the other

Timing

- The kicking and pulling must be co-ordinated and controlled whilst maintaining a steady head position throughout.
- All actions must be smooth, continuous and consistent whilst a relationship of stroke length and stroke rate must be developed and vary with the requirements of the swim.



Selected simple practices for teaching backcrawl

Body Position

- Push and glide in supine position
- Floating, in supine position
- Push and glide with arms at side, kicking
- Push and glide with arms extended, kicking

Leg Action

- Backcrawl leg action, one float on chest or with woggle
- Backcrawl leg action with arms at side
- Backcrawl leg action one float held over knees
- Backcrawl leg action hands sculling at swimmer's side
- Backcrawl leg action, arms extended above head

Arm Action

- Backcrawl kicking with arms at side, single arm
- Backcrawl kicking with arms at side, catch up at hips
- Backcrawl kicking, single arm action, float held on chest
- Backcrawl arm action, with pull buoy

Co-ordination

- Full stroke, concentrating on keeping arms opposite to one another

Breaststroke

Body

- From a horizontal, stretched and streamlined position on the front with the head in line and face in the water; the head and upper body lift during the pull in order to breathe and the swimmer completes into a stretched streamlined position following the kick

Legs and Feet

- The kick is simultaneous. From legs extended and together, the swimmer bends the knees, drawing the heels up close to the seat and still under water; knees remain stable, away from the tummy and hip width apart.
- Both feet turn outward and the ‘soles’ or ‘in-step’ of the feet flatten ready to kick.
- The feet then kick outwards, downward and inwards pressing against the water until the legs are almost straight.
- On completing the kick, the toes become pointed and soles turned toward each other.

Arms and Hands

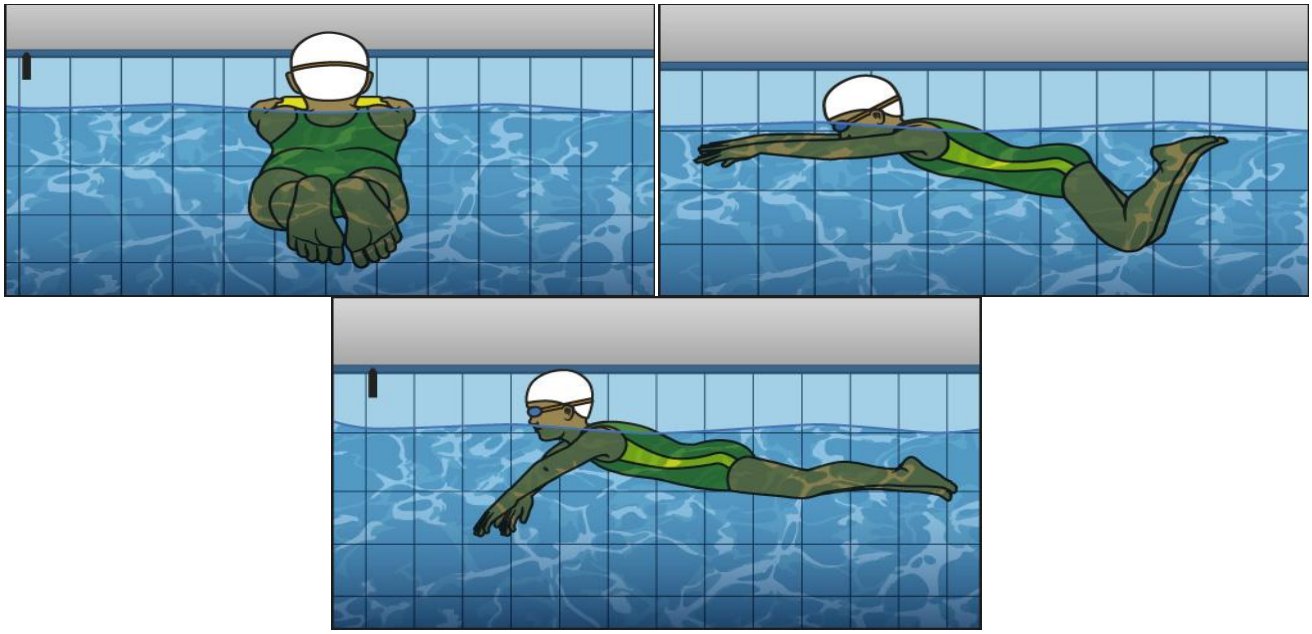
- From a full stretched position, the hands, facing slightly outwards and down, press sideways to a point where the hands start an inward movement.
- The hands then lead the forearms in a downward and inwards circular movement, bringing the hands close together; the hands finish facing each other with the elbows and upper arms squeezed in towards each other.
- With no hesitation, the hands and forearms move smoothly and continuously forward into a stretched position as started.

Breathing

- Air is exhaled into the water as the swimmer lies in the streamlined and stretched position.
- From the extended position of the pull, the head and upper body lifts as soon as the hands start to pull apart from one another and press sideways.
- A breath is taken during the propulsive phase and then returns to face in the water and streamlined position as the hands recover forward from the chin.

Timing

- From a fully stretched position, the arms pull, the breath is taken, the arms begin to recover, then the legs recover and kick back to full stretch position; pull, breathe, kick, stretch.



Selected simple practices for teaching breaststroke

Body Position

- Push and glide in prone (front) position

Leg Action

- Breaststroke leg action, holding rail
- Breaststroke leg action, two floats in prone position
- Breaststroke leg action, two floats in supine position
- Breaststroke leg action, one float extended
- Breaststroke leg action, arms by sides in prone position
- Breaststroke leg action, arms by sides in supine position

Arm Action

- Breaststroke arm action, standing
- Breaststroke arm action, walking
- Push and glide and one complete stroke
- Full stroke building the arm action from a small scull to a full action

Breathing

- Standing in water, arm action, breathe to front
- Full stroke, breathe every stroke

Co-ordination

- Push and glide and one complete stroke cycle
- Full stroke with pause in glide position
- Two kicks, one arm cycle
- Two arm cycles, one kick
- Full stroke

Butterfly

Body

- Body position starts horizontal, stretched and streamlined on the front; head in line and face in the water
- Head and upper body will rise and fall in relation to undulation from the kick, pull and breathing pattern.

Legs and Feet

- The kick is simultaneous.
- A full action of the hips, legs and feet occur as the seat lifts and lowers; the knees bend and straighten.
- The feet and toes are pointed throughout. The kick should resemble a whip like action.

Arms and Hands

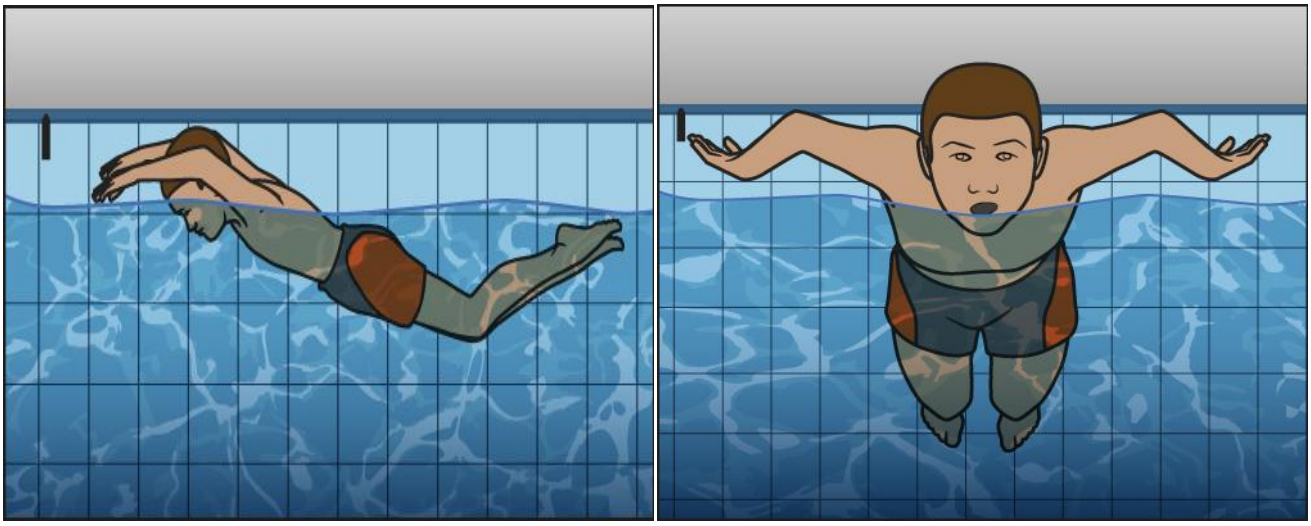
- The hands simultaneously enter as arms approach full extension.
- Following the entry, the hands move slightly outward and down to the catch position, moving back and through toward the thighs.
- The arm recovery is a smooth, simultaneous double arm recovery over the water surface.
- Aim for the individual is to gain maximum distance per stroke effectively.

Breathing

- The mouth is lifted above the water line to the front (in some instances it may be to the side) before the hands complete their push through to the legs.
- The head returns to ‘face in the water’ at the end of the arm recovery.
- The expectation is that the swimmer is encouraged to breathe every alternate arm cycle (every two strokes).

Timing

- A steady constant movement with two kicks to each arm cycle; encouraging the swimmer to breathe each alternate arm cycle (every two strokes).
- The order is kick, pull, kick recover.



Selected simple practices for teaching butterfly

Body Position

- Push and glide and undulate in prone position

Leg Action

- Push and glide, add leg action in prone position, arms at side and extended
- Push and glide, add leg action in supine position, arms at side
- Push and glide underwater, add leg action on side, one arm extended
- Butterfly leg action, in prone position with arms extended

Arm Action

- Butterfly arm action, standing
- Butterfly arm action, walking
- Butterfly single arm action, arm extended
- Push and glide, add one or two arm strokes, gradually increase number

Breathing

- Standing in water, arm action, breathe to front
- Full stroke breath holding
- Full stroke, add one breath
- Full stroke, add breath on alternate strokes
- Full stroke, add breath every stroke

Correcting all Aquatic Skills – Key Points

- Demonstrations must be accurate.
- The shorter the delay between demonstration and practice, the better.
- Keep instructions to a minimum.
- Ensure the learner has time to practice the skill after the demonstration.
- Try to get learners to try the whole skill where possible, before breaking it down into its component parts.
- In a group learning environment, if the majority of learners are struggling with a new skill, recall the whole group and make adjustments.
- If only a few learners are struggling, then work with these learners to make adjustments in a small group situation.
- If only one learner is struggling, create an environment in which you can work with him/her individually.

Introduction to Stroke Analysis and Stroke Improvement

The ability to analyse strokes is an important part of the teacher's role in respect of improving performance. Stroke analysis requires the teacher to build up a picture of the stroke being performed by the learner as the first stage in the process of progressive steps required to bring about improvement. Stroke analysis and stroke improvement requires the teacher to;

- Observe carefully the actions of the learner
- Record accurately the results of the observation
- Decide upon steps to required to bring about improvement
- Implement the steps – usually, but not always, through the use of part practices e.g. to develop the leg action, arm action, breathing etc.
- Reintroduce the full stroke
- Observe carefully the actions of the learner to ascertain whether improvement has occurred
- Repeat the above process as required.

The process of stroke analysis is best approached through using BLABT. This refers to

- B – body position
- L - leg action
- A – arm action
- B – breathing
- T - timing

Each of the above component parts should be considered against the mental picture which the teacher has of how the stroke should be performed and should be followed through in the order detailed above. For example, is the body position as flat as possible whilst also accommodating the specific movements integral to the stroke; is the leg action sufficient to maintain the body position and does it appear to add to the propulsive aspects of the stroke; does the breathing fit in with the overall stroke or does it appear to hamper the smooth execution of the stroke.

When considering the process of stroke analysis it is important to follow the specific order detailed above. For example, it would be inappropriate to focus on the leg action if there were serious problems with the body position, unless of course the problem with the body position has its origin with the action of the legs.

Ideally the initial observations should be carried out from a number of different positions in order to achieve a full and accurate picture. For example, aspects of the breaststroke leg action are best observed with the swimmer travelling away from the observer, whilst the body position may best be observed from the side.

Like many activities stroke analysis improves with practice. It is important to discipline the observations to take in information about one aspect of the stroke at a time rather than attempt to look at the whole stroke. In this situation too much information may prevent the teacher from providing the very specific steps required to bring about improvement.

Effective Communication

This section will cover:

Practical Communication Skills

- Verbal / Non-Verbal Communication
- Providing and Receiving Feedback
- Questioning

Introduction

Don't assume that just because you have delivered information or instructions for an activity that the message has gotten across to the participants (i.e. that understanding has occurred). When teachers communicate with participants, administrators, support staff, parents and others, they need to make sure that the correct meaning of the message has been received.

Too often, teachers assume that the intended meaning of their message matched perfectly with the receiver's interpreted meaning of the message. Good teachers will vary their style of teaching to meet the needs of the participants and will change the way they communicate with their participants if instructions are not being fully understood.

Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication

Verbal communication

As a teacher, you will use verbal communication to direct activities and games, manage teams, organise sessions, provide feedback, ask questions and much more. Some guidelines for effective verbal communication include:

- Speak clearly and concisely to ensure that the message you think you are sending is the message that the receiver is getting.
- If you are not sure that a message has been understood, ask the participant/s to demonstrate their understanding.

Non- verbal communication

Up to 80% of the meaning we get from communication comes from non-verbal cues that go with verbal communication. If your non-verbal cues (body language) match or compliment your spoken words, your communication will be more effective

Non-verbal communication includes the following:

Facial expressions :

- Smiling
- Frowning
- Smirking
- Raising eyebrows
- Body language: such as shaking your head, shrugging shoulders, posture, etc.
- Eye contact

Providing and receiving feedback

Providing feedback is a very important part of teaching. A teacher who allows participants to make the same mistakes over and over, without providing quality feedback, is not helping the participant to achieve his/her potential, or to enjoy their experience in the sport as much as they could … and should.

Listed below are some guidelines for effectively providing feedback to participants. It should also be noted that a good teacher will not only give feedback, they will also accept feedback from participants and others.

Tips for providing feedback:

- ☑ Try to keep it positive
- ☑ Try to make it constructive
- ☑ Try to make it specific
- ☑ Try to give it at the time that the behaviour requiring improvement is demonstrated
- ☑ Don’t overload the person with too much information
- ☑ Assess that the person has understood the “meaning” of your message
- ☑ Provide the participants with specific and simple improvement strategies to try. Feedback is about helping participants to improve and without the tools to be able to improve they will keep making the same mistakes. Feedback is not a one-way process where a teacher provides people (participants, officials, etc) with feedback. Teachers also need to listen to the feedback that others provide to them if they are to improve and achieve their potential.

Tips for receiving feedback:

☑ Understand that you will receive negative feedback and try to use this to improve your skills.

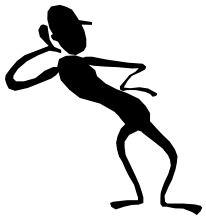
☑ that many people providing you with the feedback will not have the skill to communicate effectively. If the manner in which their feedback is delivered is ineffective, do not take it personally.

☑ Seek clarification or expansion on the feedback if required.

☑ Encourage others to provide you with feedback.

☑ Use feedback to improve your skills.

☑ Use the feedback as a motivating factor for you to achieve your pote



When giving feedback try using the SANDWICH APPROACH.

Questioning

Participant focused teachers use questions for a variety of reasons. These include checking for understanding, involving participants and gaining feedback. If you do not ask questions, you will find out very little about your participants and how much they are learning

During learning or training, the use of questioning may be considered for any of the following reasons:

☑ To focus attention on a certain topic

☑ To encourage interest

☑ To promote activity

☑ To check understanding

☑ To stimulate thinking

☑ To assess a participant's progress

☑ To get participants to evaluate their own skills and knowledge

The following table contains some of the common types of questions that can be used by teachers to ensure understanding and to involve participants:

Question Type	Example
Direct Checks for individual understanding	"Joe, what equipment do you need to bring to training tomorrow"?
Indirect Checks for group understanding	"How can we make sure that this activity involves everyone?"
Closed – Single answer, Checks for progress	"Should the equipment be checked?"
Open Requires more detailed information and measures understanding.	What …? Who …? How …? Why …?
Attitudinal Checks for feelings / opinions	"What do you think about…?"
Reflective Checks for understanding by rephrasing their answer or response	"So what you're trying to say is…?"

Teaching Methods and Related Topics

Support Aids

The purpose of any aid must be fully understood by both the teacher and the pupils in order for it to be used safely and to the best advantage. When the pupil is out of his/her depth then buoyancy aids may be required to help the pupil gain confidence in the water. When buoyancy aids are introduced the objective should be to reduce the reliance on the aid at the earliest, safe opportunity. Prior to introducing other types of support aid e.g. floats the teacher should consider carefully its value and whether the activity can be completed successfully without such support. Floats, for example often require the pupil to move with the head out of the water. This would be to the detriment of pupils in the early stages of learning front crawl.

Guided Discovery / Setting Tasks

The guided discovery method relies upon the teacher to set problems which the pupils are asked to solve. This might take the form of:

- How can you move from point A to B?
- Find different ways of travelling from A to B
- Find different ways of submerging
- Find different ways of floating

Shallow Water Method

In this method the water must be shallow enough to allow the pupils to support themselves horizontally by placing the hands on the bottom of the pool with their heads out of the water. Pupils can initially walk on their hands and the leg action may be introduced shortly afterwards. The arm action may be introduced but the hands can be placed on the bottom of the pool when required.

If this method is being used on the wide steps of a learner pool, rather than a shallow water pool, then buoyancy aids may be required to ensure the safety of pupils who may stray off the appropriate step.

Advantages

- Horizontal position achieved
- Generates confidence
- No problem with breathing
- Buoyancy aids may not be necessary

Disadvantages

- Can become reliant on very shallow water
- Restricted availability of appropriate pools
- Over confidence
- In normal depth water regaining the standing position must be taught at the earliest opportunity

Deep Water Method

The deep water method is when pupils learn to swim when out of their depth. Close fitting buoyancy aids are essential. This method must only be used with great care and empathy with the concerns of the pupil. It is also advisable, in the early stages, to have an assistant teacher in the water. For many young children the same effect can be achieved in relatively shallow water as they may not be able to touch the floor

Advantages

- Can help to remove fear of deep water
- Encourages relaxation and regular breathing
- Encourages movement, especially of the legs

Disadvantages

- Fear by the pupils
- May develop over confidence
- Still a need to teach regaining the standing position

Partner Support

Pupils are assisted by a partner to gain a forward or backward position and progress through the water**.** Not particularly used for teaching young swimmer but the partner could be an assistant teacher can be used in the same way instead of a peer.

Whole – Part – Whole

Once the non-swimmer has developed the skills necessary to progress through the water on the front or back more specific teaching or coaching of the recognised strokes or aquatic skills can begin. The main theme of the session will normally be structured as whole-part-whole. The teacher begins with a brief explanation of the whole stroke or skill and the pupils make attempts. The stroke or skill is then broken down into a series of progressive part practices which permit the development of the stroke or skill at the appropriate level. The teacher may then return to the whole to assess progress before continuing further. The main theme of the session conducted in this way should start and finish with the whole stroke or skill.

Part – Whole

The part-whole method is used when a new skill is being introduced for the first time and therefore early part practices need to be developed first before the whole skill can be attempted e.g., learning to dive.

Using a Pace Clock

Most swimming pools have a pace clock on the wall which can be utilised in a session in a variety of ways from those learning to swim through to competitive swimmers. A pace clock may be used;

- To time a pupil over a set distance or task
- To time a rest period
- To provide a start time for swimmers
- To give a time, and therefore space, between each swimmer
- Health and Safety issues such as pulse rates

Transfer of Skills

It is recognised that the learning of one skill can have a positive effect on the development of other skills. This is commonly known as positive transfer.

Positive transfer occurs when the movement of one skill can be easily transferred into another, or can assist with the development of further skills. Some examples of this are:

- The breaststroke leg action, can be transferred into the method of treading water using a breaststroke leg action
- A somersault can be transferred into a head first surface dive, front crawl or back crawl tumble turn
- The front crawl leg action can be transferred into the butterfly dolphin leg kick

Partner Work or Small Group Work

Partner work or small group work can not only develop aquatic skills but introduces pupils to valuable life skills such as co-operation, communication, team work, leadership etc. The use of small sided games of water polo can be used as a stepping stone to introduce pupils not only to another aquatic discipline but also introduce basic rules , simple tactics and game play.

Sequence Building and Linking of Skills

Sequence building and linking of skills can develop aquatic skills by linking a range of skills and movement together appropriate to the developmental stage of the pupils. It can also be seen as an introduction to Synchronised Swimming bringing together the whole philosophy of the multi-skill and multi –aquatic approach to teaching swimming. The skills used can be the pupils own chose or certain skills can be named and the pupils have to incorporate them into a routine. Music could also be introduced for this activity. After a period of practice each pupil or team can present their routine to the rest of the group to observe and comment on. In the same way once a routine has been developed others can copy.

Races and Relays

The introduction of races and relays can develop watermanship, confidence and techniques. Relays and races do not need to be based around strokes but can be fun activities which see pupils working together in a fun environment.

Planning

This Section will cover:

- ☑ Session Plans
- ☑ Schemes of Work

Planning Individual Sessions

Each session will vary (or it should do), however there are certain components that most sessions should include. These are:

- ☑ Pre-session talk
- ☑ Warm-up
- ☑ Skill development
- ☑ Stroke development
- ☑ Cool-down/contrasting activity
- ☑ Debrief

Planning is beneficial for the following reasons:

- ☑ Prompting organisation
- ☑ Makes sure all aspects of sessions are considered
- ☑ Gives participants the opportunity to achieve their goals and potential
- ☑ Allows teachers to measure their effectiveness, as well as the effectiveness of their programme
- ☑ Motivates teachers and participants

When planning, a teacher needs to consider many things, including:

- Stage of participant development and ability
- What is the session trying to achieve?
- What resources are available? (i.e. aquatic venue, equipment, etc
- How can the session be varied?
- How the success of the programme be measured?
- Contingency plans (“Plan B”)

The plan

There are 4 stages involved in the planning of a session:-

1. Gathering information in readiness for the planning.
2. Planning the session.
3. The execution of the plan.
4. The evaluation of the session.

Gathering information

This should include:-

- Venue – date – time.
- Size of the group.
- Ability and age range.
- Space available – exclusive / shared use.
- Equipment available.
- Water depth.
- Safety equipment available.

Planning the session

Each session will vary (or it should do), however there are certain components that *most* sessions should include. These are:

- ☑ **Pre-session talk**
- ☑ **Warm-up**
- ☑ **Skill development**
- ☑ **Stroke development**
- ☑ **Cool-down/contrasting activity**
- ☑ **Debrief**

Pre-session talk:

Should be a short time where the teacher explains the goals of the session and sets the appropriate tone. It allows participants to ask questions and for the teacher to check understanding.

Warm-up:

Allows participants to prepare physically and psychologically for the session ahead. Use activities, which progress from low to moderate / high intensity.

Skill development:

The teacher briefly outlines the skills that are to be focused on during the session, explains why they will be focused on and quickly demonstrates the correct techniques and activities**.** Participants have the chance to apply and develop the skills introduced. The teacher should ensure maximum participation by all participants, as well as making the activities specific to their individual needs.

Stroke development:

The teacher briefly outlines the stroke(s) that are to be focused on during the session, explains why they will be focused on and quickly demonstrates the correct techniques and activities**.** Participants have the chance to apply and develop the stroke(s). The teacher should ensure maximum participation by all participants, as well as making the activities specific to their individual needs.

Cool-down/contrasting activity:

Allows the participants to physically and psychologically recover from the session and provides an opportunity for the pupils to participate in a range of skill based activities.

Debrief:

Includes a review of the key points from the session and may include aspects that you want the pupils to practise prior to the next session.

Execution of the plan

- Keep to the plan when possible.
- Refer to the plan when necessary.
- Amend the plan if necessary.
- Note any amendments made.

Contingency planning (Your "Plan B")

An important aspect of planning is "contingency planning". This is the ability of the teacher to make changes to their session or weekly plans and activities, as needed, to meet the ever changing needs of the participants and the situation.

Regardless of how prepared teachers are, things will rarely go exactly to plan. Teachers need to have the ability to draw upon contingency ("Plan B") skills, as needed. Although things can

go wrong for a range of reasons (some of which cannot be planned for), other problems can be anticipated and therefore planned for, which will allow teachers to effectively deal with these problems when and if they arise.

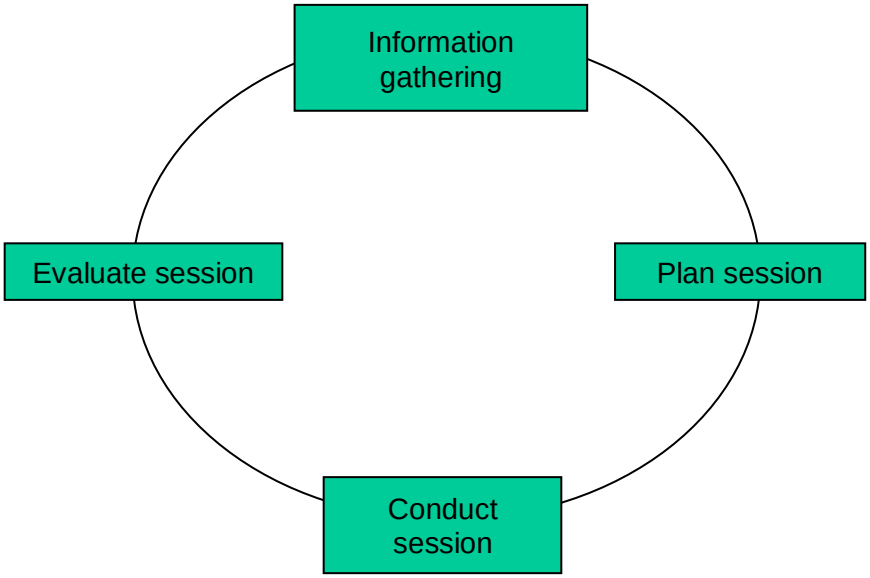
Commonly planned for contingencies may include (but are not limited to):

- Heat
- Cold
- Injury
- Illness
- Lack of equipment / water space
- Lack of participants, or too many
- Bored participants
- Rapid or slow participant improvement

The evaluation of the session
Teachers should consider;

- Have the objectives for the session been achieved?
- Have the pupils made progress
- Your own performance
- Reasons why adjustments were made to the original plan
- Impact on the planning for the next session

The evaluation process is cyclical with the evaluation of 1 session being the starting point for planning the next (see below).



Scheme of Work

When planning a series of sessions many teachers of aquatics refer to this as 'a scheme of work'**.** This is an outline of what you intend to cover in a particular period of time (6 sessions/a term etc). When planning a scheme it is important to ensure that you have all the relevant information required to make the decisions regarding the content, the approach you need to take, etc. Compiling the following information for your teaching sessions will help to ensure that you give consideration to the relevant factors:-

- Information on the pool size /depth / exclusive or shared use will determine certain activities possible/impossible/difficult etc.
- Equipment available will determine possible activities/variety of practices/organisation of equipment use, etc.
- Information on age, stage of development will determine teaching approach, selection of practices, appropriate vocabulary, etc.
- Number in the group/class (in relation to space) will determine organisation.
- Knowledge of participant's previous experience and ability will determine appropriate content, groupings etc.
- Knowledge of any specific problems e.g., disabilities, medical conditions will ensure participant's needs are anticipated.
- Knowledge of any particular traditions within the club/school/group or cultural influences will ensure that needs are met and participant's not offended due to disregard for their belief's etc.

Once the teacher has assembled the relevant information you should then be able to plan your scheme of work. This should take the form of:-

- **Aim** – is a general statement about what you intend to do during the course:- Introduce learners / non-swimmers to the aquatic environment
- **Objectives** – states what you anticipate the participant's will be able to do at the end of the course. These should all clearly fall within the general aim stated

For example –

Aim: Introduce learners / non-swimmers to the aquatic environment.
Objectives: Participants will be able:-

- To enter and leave the water in various ways.
- To demonstrate the ability to regain standing from the front and from the back.
- To demonstrate confidence in submerging and breathe control.
- To demonstrate basic propulsion on the front and back (with or without buoyancy aids as appropriate).
- To demonstrate an awareness of safety considerations around the pool.
- To demonstrate an awareness of hygiene considerations related to swimming.

A list of content areas – state what you would intend covering to help the participants achieve the objectives and aim.

- Entry; steps, slide in over side, jump
- Exit; steps, climb out
- Regaining standing from front/back
- Water confidence practices for getting wet, submerging, breath control, body position, floatation etc
- Propulsive movements of legs/arms on front and back. Starting with buoyancy aids where appropriate and moving towards reducing/removing use of buoyancy aids. Full stroke and part practices.
- Safety rules for pool area e.g. running, pushing etc.
- Hygiene rules for pool area e.g. shower, toilets etc.
- Games to develop water confidence and skills.

Once this has been completed the next stage involves the allocation of the content over the number of sessions in the course or block of work.

For example -

Session 1 - Basic hygiene rules / basic safety rules.

- Fitting of buoyancy aids.
- Entry / exit by steps.
- Water confidence practices for getting wet, submerging and regaining standing.
- Multi stroke approach to propulsion/strokes.
- Games to develop confidence

Session 2 - Reminders of hygiene rules.

- Entry by sliding in over the side.
- Repeat and develop water confidence practices for getting wet and submerging.
- Multi-stroke approach to propulsion/strokes.
- Games to develop confidence.

Session 3 …….. **Session 4 ……** **Session 5 ……**

Planning an Effective School Swimming Programme

The nature, content and duration of a school swimming programme will be influenced by a number of factors such as access to a pool, distance from a pool, priority placed upon swimming within the school, expertise and commitment of the teaching staff, size of the budget allocated to swimming etc. Generally a school with a pool on site will have more opportunities to develop a comprehensive swimming programme than one which has a considerable distance to travel although good organisation and links can often make up for difficulties in travelling to, and accessing, a swimming facility. When planning a school programme it is important to look beyond the school day and to explore opportunities that may be available for all pupils to continue aquatic activity as part of community programmes. Factors to be considered when developing a programme are;

- The time available for swimming across years 1-6 (foundation in some situations)
- How the time available can be used most effectively. For example there is evidence to suggest that non swimmers improve more quickly when participating in intensive lessons e.g. 3 lessons per week over ¾ weeks rather than the normal weekly lessons. However, those pupils who can already swim may benefit more from the spaced lessons as this provides involvement in swimming over a longer period of time and pupils may be less susceptible to problems of regression.
- How the time spent travelling to and from a venue can be reduced in respect of the % of the total time used for swimming lessons. For example, if a school travels for 30 minutes each way and has a 25 minute swimming lesson the overall % of time spent on travel is high. Consideration could be given to increasing the lesson time to 50 minutes.
- The staffing arrangements to ensure that the size of groups is appropriate to the stage of development of the pupils. The 'Top Up' swimming programme funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families provide clear evidence that small group size was probably the most important factor in bringing about significant improvement in those previously considered to be reluctant swimmers.
- The possible links with the local leisure centre that may, at a cost, be able to provide additional help and support during curriculum time.
- The possibilities of establishing links with other learn to swim providers within the community.
- The availability of parents etc who may have specific swimming teaching/coaching qualifications and may be happy to volunteer to assist with the delivery of the school programme, both in and out of school.
- The willingness of staff to participate in aquatic activities outside of the normal school day
- The opportunities for club based activity as part of the school programme
- The possibility of establishing links with local clubs, some of which will be competitive and some will be more recreation

Engaging young people in activity in and beyond the school day is an important aspect of Government policies in respect of healthy lifestyles and obesity and the school provides the only opportunity to influence the participation habits of all young people. For many there are barriers to joining a community club and steps should be taken to break down these barriers. For example, many clubs will be delighted to be invited into the school to talk to the children and even to offer taster sessions. Others will have qualified coaches available who may be prepared to assist with curriculum activities and therefore have the opportunity to build up positive relationships which may go some way to breaking down the barriers sometimes associated with club activity. However, it is important to ensure that any external organisation invited into schools to assist with curriculum or out of school activities goes through the appropriate vetting procedures and that close liaison exists between the school and the external organisation in respect of the activities taught and the style of the delivery. In addition, schools that help to direct pupils to community clubs must ensure that the clubs are child friendly and with the appropriate level of expertise to deal sensitively with young people and to offer programmes appropriate to their age, maturation and ability. For many sports club accreditation processes are in place and schools have a responsibility to ascertain this information and, where possible, to direct pupils to clubs that have met the standards required. In respect of swimming the asa Swim 21 accreditation will identify those clubs that have shown that they have structures and personnel in place to provide programmes appropriate to young people in a supportive and friendly environment