

# Swim England National Curriculum Training Programme Learner Guide

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## Introduction

### About this guide

The National Curriculum Training Programme Learner Guide has been developed to support candidates undertaking the Swim England National Curriculum Training Programme (NCTP). It can also be used by presenters to support the taught programme. The exact way in which it will be used will depend upon the presenter and particular needs of each candidate.

The guide is designed to be used in conjunction with all modules of the training programme, or as a self-paced learning tool. As a candidate, it will enable you to check your understanding as you move through the programme. It can also be used as an ongoing teaching resource to assist you after you have completed the programme. With this in mind, some aspects not covered on the NCTP are included for future reference.

### Health and safety

All those working in a swimming pool environment have the responsibility for the health and safety of their colleagues and pupils. At contract level, responsibility rests with the manager of the pool who will set certain standards relating to the operation of the facility in which swimming lessons take place. In practice, responsibility lies with the teacher working on poolside, swimming assistants and the person in overall control of the session (swimming coordinator). A teacher's core focus should be to ensure their pupils have a safe learning environment in which to develop their skills and achieve their goals. For this to happen all parties need to be familiar with the procedures adopted for the pool in which the teacher is working. An effective health and safety policy relies on collaboration.

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

- Requirements for lifeguarding.
- 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 make sure that the pool being used has a well-established Normal Operating Procedure (NOP) and Emergency Action Plan (EAP). These are collectively known as Pool Safety Operation Procedures (PSOPs). Pupils should be aware of the implications of these and the actions 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:

- Have the NOP and EAP been read and understood?
- Is the lifeguarding requirement being met?
- Are the teachers and assistants appropriately qualified to perform the role?
- Is the number in the group appropriate?
- Is there a 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 that 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 awareness of PSOPs, teachers should be clear on the guidelines provided by Swim England in relation to:

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

## Lifeguarding

It is usual for school swimming providers to include lifeguard provision as part of the hiring agreement. Individual providers and schools will need to consult their own policies regarding the specific role and qualifications of lifeguards, and the ratios of lifeguards to school pupils.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) recommends that everyone who provides a lifesaving role – whether as lifeguard or teacher – should hold an appropriate lifesaving award that demonstrates, as a minimum, their ability to effect a rescue from the deepest part of the pool in which they operate and carry out basic life support.

A separate lifeguard may not be required when programmed swimming sessions are taking place. In these situations, where the risk is limited due to the nature of the activity and the degree of control exercised, the teacher, competent in lifesaving, may provide the safety cover. Appropriate lifesaving competencies include rescue skills, basic life support and knowledge of relevant site-specific aspects of the Pool Safety Operating Procedures (PSOPs), which deal with emergency situations.

Further information about safe supervision can be found in the HSE document, 'Health and safety in swimming pools - HSG179 (2018)'.

The minimum national qualification for the lifeguarding of a single group engaged in programmed activity is the RLSS National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches (NRASTC). Where the lifeguard function is being provided for a whole class, the recommended national qualification is the RLSS National Pool Lifeguard Qualification (NPLQ).

## 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 when at the swimming pool, 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 pupils' introduction to the swimming pool environment will contribute significantly to the enjoyment of all visitors to the pool. It is important to stress:

- Visiting 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 of the shower before and after swimming.

The teacher should also advise pupils of circumstances when it might not be advisable to swim. These would include:

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

Other common ailments such as verrucas and athlete's 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 swimming lesson. Awareness of these conditions will allow the teacher to plan 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. While 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 teachers 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 Swim England 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 must 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, it's advised that all school teachers who attend pool-based lessons should have the necessary knowledge, skills and competence to support the swimming teacher. This is to ensure that as well as accurately assessing the three requirements for swimming and water safety, they will also be able to provide additional practical support to the swimming teacher as required. Those supporting or teaching school swimming and water safety lessons should hold a recognised swimming certificate such as the Support Teacher of School Swimming and/or Teacher of School Swimming.

### Swimming teachers

Where the school uses an external swimming teacher to take a lead role in the delivery of the swimming programme, the minimum recommended qualification is the Swim England Level 2 Teaching Swimming or equivalent. Swimming teachers should, however, familiarise themselves with the requirements of the national curriculum. This can be achieved by attending the Institute of Swimming CPD course, Teaching School Swimming and Water Safety (previously School Swimming and the National Curriculum).

### Working with a qualified swimming teacher

In situations where the school teacher does not hold a recognised swimming teaching qualification the delivery model recommended by Swim England 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 between the parties is key to ensure their skills and experience are fully utilised for the benefit 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 that 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. However, consideration should be given as to the appropriateness of this role. Sometimes, the qualified swimming teacher is better equipped to work with pupils in the initial learning stages.

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 and Safety Executive (HSE) 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.

## Safeguarding and protecting children

### Supervision of changing areas

The supervision of changing rooms can present difficulties for some schools, particularly those that may not have both female and male teachers. Where possible, separate male/female school changing areas should be made available at the pool facility. Where this is not possible, changing times separate from the public are recommended. Whatever the circumstances, changing rooms should be adequately supervised. Ideally, both a male and female member of staff should accompany each class to ensure the changing areas are supervised at all times. 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.

Schools should take into account both their own safeguarding policy, and the safeguarding policy and procedures of the venue.

Information on the safe use of changing facilities, written by The Child Protection in Sport Unit and NSPCC can be found at: [the cpsu.org.uk/resource-library/2018/safe-use-of-changing-facilities](http://the cpsu.org.uk/resource-library/2018/safe-use-of-changing-facilities).

As good practice Swim England recommends the following:

- Work in pairs when supervising classes or groups of children in the changing rooms.
- If it is necessary to do things of a personal nature for children who are young or who have a disability, make sure that a second adult is in attendance and get consent from the parent/ carer as well as the child. Let the child know what you are doing and why.

### Manual communication

Please refer to page 87 of this guide.

### Manual support

In swimming this might be assistance given to a non-swimmer or beginner to achieve a flat 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 are in attendance.

As good practice, Swim England recommends the following:

- For those who need additional help, ascertain both the child's and the parent/carer's views about manual support, particularly when they are in the water.

## 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

Establish how people could be harmed.

### Step 2. Decide who might be harmed and how

For each hazard, 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, nervous swimmers, competent swimmers, etc.

### Step 3. Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Having spotted the hazards, decide what to do about them. The law requires you to do everything “reasonably practicable” to protect people for 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 pupils and staff.

### Step 5. Review and update as necessary

It's essential you review what you are doing on an ongoing basis. Every year, review where you are to make sure you are maintaining or improving standards.

## Risk assessment

Once you have identified the risks associated with your teaching, 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 Rating Matrix**

	Severity		
Frequency	1	2	3
1			
2			
3			
<b>Low risk:</b> manage by routine procedures.	<b>Moderate risk:</b> specific risk management strategies.	<b>High risk:</b> immediate attention.	<b>Extreme risk:</b> requires urgent action.

## Risk reduction

Once risks have been identified and prioritised, it's important to develop some 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're being taught.

## Implementation

Now it's time to use your risk reduction strategies – i.e. put them into practice.

## Review and modification

It's important 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.

## Organisation of the learning environment

When taking pupils swimming for the first time it's important that the teacher makes a personal check on their ability. Information from other sources can be misleading (e.g. badges on swimwear, parent 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 and cause a hazard for the teacher or pupils.

The organisation of the working area, equipment and pupils is essential in creating a safe learning environment. It 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?

## Organisation methods

The following will impact how lessons are organised:

- **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 have an impact on the organisation of the pupils.

- **The number of pupils**

Class size can differ considerably from only small numbers to large classes. This will inevitably influence organisation.

- **Ability of pupils**

The class may have pupils of similar ability, or they may have quite different abilities. This will influence the grouping and activities.

- **Safety**

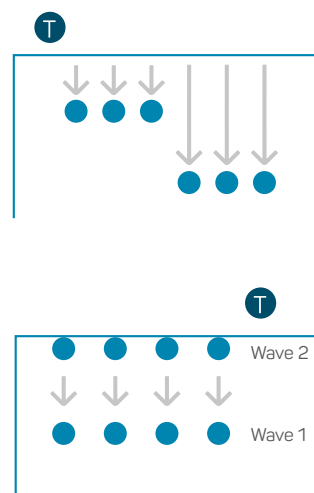
Above all, the safety of the pupils needs to be considered and the pupils organised accordingly.

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

### Waves

Depending on the activity or group size, pupils can be organised in one or more waves. One wave has all of the pupils going at the same time. For multiple waves, the first group will set off and swim to a set point and the next group will follow.

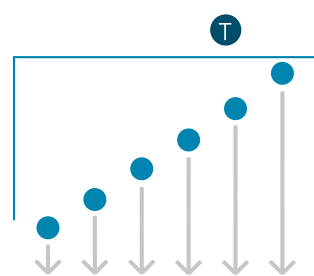
Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Suitable if space is limited and working the whole group at once would be unsafe or unproductive.</p> <p>Multiple waves supports clear ability grouping.</p>	<p>Activity levels of pupils will be low if they are made to wait before the other group completes their swim.</p> <p>Teacher attention can become taken up with setting off the waves rather than observing pupils and giving feedback.</p> <p>Behaviour management can become an issue if pupils are waiting around doing nothing for periods of time.</p> <p>There is an increased danger of collisions between waves, especially when swimming on the back.</p>



### Cannon/domino

Each pupil sets off a short time after the pupil before.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Allows the teacher to observe individual pupils and give individual teaching points and feedback.</p> <p>Pupils have a lot of space in which to complete the activity.</p>	<p>Activity levels are low as pupils are asked to wait for their turn.</p> <p>Teacher attention is on one pupil only and therefore behaviour management could be an issue for those not involved.</p> <p>Pupils may feel under pressure to perform on their own while others are watching.</p>



Key:

Teacher

Pupils

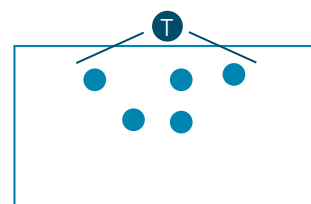
Teacher's line of sight



### Random spacing

Pupils move around a set area, changing direction as and when they want to. It is primarily used for skill-based activities, allowing each pupil a safe space to work in.

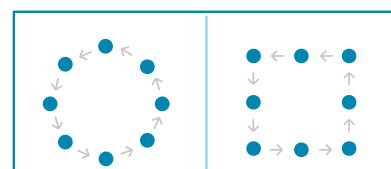
Advantages	Disadvantages
Ideal for many games and activities.	Challenging for travel-based activities.
Allows all pupils to be active at the same time.	More challenging to offer individual feedback to all pupils.
	Safety may be compromised where there is limited space.



### Circuits

Pupils set off a short time after each other following a pre-determined pathway.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Activity levels are high as all pupils can swim at the same time.	Pupils may catch up with the swimmer in front and then may need to overtake or slow down.
Allows for creativity as circuits follow different pathways such as circles, squares, triangles, etc.	Some pupils may begin to cut corners and the circuit will become smaller and more difficult to swim.
Allows continuous swimming.	

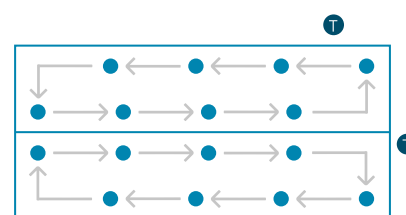


### Lane swimming

A number of pupils swim within roped off lanes in the pool following each other around the lane with a safe distance (5 metres or five seconds) between them.

Adjacent lanes should be set up so pupils swim anticlockwise and clockwise alternately. This avoids pupils locking arms when passing each other in adjacent lanes, especially in front crawl and butterfly. To be safe and effective, it is also important that pupils in each lane are organised in order of speed, which will vary according to the stroke or activity.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Pupils can be grouped in lanes by ability or speed.	Lane widths can be narrow and restrict the number of activities.
Different lanes can work on different activities.	Pupils can catch up with the swimmer in front and then may need to overtake or slow down.
Participant activity levels can be high.	Pupils can struggle to keep up with the swimmer in front, resulting in a loss of technique.
Pupils can learn lane discipline.	



Key:

Teacher

Pupils

Teacher's line of sight

## Working with a group

Pupils learn in a group environment, ideally of a similar ability. All carry out activities at the same time.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Gives opportunities for collaboration and competition.</p> <p>Gives opportunities to share experiences.</p> <p>Pupils can support each other and socialise.</p> <p>Pupils can take part in games and interactive activities with others.</p>	<p>Some pupils may not cope as part of a group if they need additional support.</p> <p>It can be difficult to meet the needs of all pupils with larger groups.</p>

The diagram below shows the teacher working with the group as a whole. This presents little organisational difficulty.

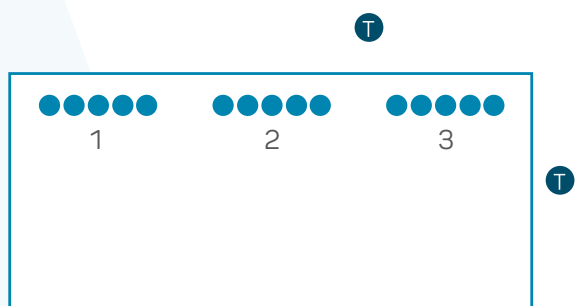


## Working with a number of ability groups

Pupils are divided into groups in accordance with their ability. If pupils within one class have different ability levels the session should be organised into ability groups to ensure all pupils have an appropriate lesson.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Allows all pupils to be active.</p> <p>Each pupil/group will work on activities appropriate to their ability.</p> <p>The teacher will circulate around all groups giving instructions and feedback.</p> <p>Pupils can be given individual or group challenges.</p>	<p>Safety may be compromised where there is limited space.</p> <p>It can be difficult to meet the needs of all pupils with larger groups.</p> <p>More challenging to offer individual feedback to all pupils.</p>

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



Key:

 Teacher

 Pupils

 Teacher's line of sight

## Swimming and water safety in the national curriculum statutory requirements

Swimming and water safety is included in the PE national curriculum programme of study. Together with other physical activities and sports its inclusion aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities.
- Are physically active for sustained periods of time.
- Engage in healthy competition through competitive sports and activities.
- Lead healthy, active lives.

### 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.

The importance of swimming and water safety is recognised in the national curriculum. School PE lessons at Key Stage 1 and/or Key Stage 2 must include a specific programme of study intended to ensure all pupils meet a minimum standard of capability and confidence in swimming and self-rescue by the time they're ready to leave Year 6.

Schools should provide sufficient swimming opportunities to ensure all pupils, including those with special educational needs, those with a disability or impairment and those whose first language is not English, make progress and achieve their very best in swimming.

Many pupils should achieve significantly more than the minimum expectations and school swimming programmes should provide opportunities for them to do so.

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

- Water polo.
- Synchronised swimming.
- Diving.
- Aquafit.

These aquatic disciplines can help schools meet the requirements of several areas of physical education. Examples include:

Games		Water polo
Dance		Synchronised swimming
Health and fitness		AquaFit

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

All schools must provide swimming instruction either in Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2. In particular, pupils should be taught to:

- Swim competently<sup>\*</sup>, confidently<sup>\*\*</sup> and proficiently<sup>\*\*\*</sup> 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.

<sup>\*</sup>Competently: having the basic skill or ability to do something well.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Confidently: the belief that you have the ability to succeed.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>Proficiently: to be competent and have a high level of skill to carry out a task.

### What does this mean?

#### Swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25 metres

Pupils should be able to demonstrate:

- A continuous swim of more than 25 metres, without touching the side of the pool or pool floor. Whenever possible at least part of the swim should be completed in deep water, defined as greater than shoulder depth. (Remember, competence and proficiency can't be assured if the swim takes place in shallow water only).
- That their stroke or strokes are as strong at the end of the swim as at the start and that the swim is completed without undue stress.
- That their stroke or strokes are recognisable to an informed onlooker.

#### Use a range of strokes effectively such as front crawl, backstroke and breaststroke

Pupils should be able to use a range of strokes and make choices about the strokes they use to achieve different outcomes. To do this they should experience simultaneous and alternating strokes, on their front and back, and be able to adapt them for a range of purposes and intended outcomes. An intended outcome might be a swim of 50 metres or using an effective leg kick to tread water. Swimming strokes do not have to be perfect; rather they need to be effective for intended outcomes to be successfully achieved.

#### Perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations

Pupils should know the dangers of water and how to act responsibly when playing in and near different water environments. This should include:

- Understanding and adhering to national and local water safety advice.
- Being able to use appropriate survival and self-rescue skills if they fall in unintentionally or get into difficulty.
- Knowing what to do if others get into trouble.

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

### Key Stage 1

1. Master fundamental movement literacy skills		
Long-term planning	Medium-term planning	Lesson activities
<p><b>Broad outcomes:</b> Master basic movements such as running, jumping, throwing, and catching.</p> <p>Become competent and confident.</p> <p>Access a broad range of opportunities to extend their agility, balance and coordination.</p> <p>Explore and use skills, actions and ideas individually and in a combination.</p> <p>Engage in competitive and co-operative activities and team games in challenging situations.</p>	<p><b>Teach pupils to:</b> Enter the water safely.</p> <p>Help each other travel in different directions.</p> <p>Develop aquatic breathing and open their eyes under water.</p> <p>Develop floatation using different shapes.</p> <p>Learn to put their heads in the water and move short distances without touching the floor.</p> <p>Use arms to pull and push the water and to use legs in kicking actions.</p> <p>Develop team games.</p>	<p><b>Use games and fun activities to teach pupils to:</b> Enter the water by steps, ladders, and swivel entry.</p> <p>Move in different directions around the pool i.e. walking, running, hopping, skipping.</p> <p>Float on front and back, individually and making letters/words in pairs and groups.</p> <p>Move on and below the surface, showing confidence and enjoyment in the water.</p> <p>Travel using arms and legs, experimenting with different arm and leg actions.</p>
2. Apply the skills to different tasks		
Long-term planning	Medium-term planning	Lesson activities
<p><b>Broad outcomes:</b> Choose and use skills for different swimming tasks.</p> <p>Improve the control and coordination of their bodies in water.</p>	<p><b>Teach pupils to:</b> Feel how the water supports their bodies.</p> <p>Use their arms to stay upright and balanced.</p> <p>Use different types of leg kicking action to help them move.</p> <p>Listen to ideas from others on ways to travel in the water, and use their own ideas to set challenges for themselves.</p> <p>Discuss ways of putting simple skills together to make movement patterns.</p>	<p><b>Use games and fun activities to encourage pupils to:</b> Talk about how their body feels in water and describe the differences between moving on land and in water.</p> <p>Use different arm and leg actions to propel themselves through the water.</p> <p>Gradually coordinate these actions, so they remain balanced and in control of their bodies.</p> <p>Stretch out and keep afloat, using a number of body shapes.</p> <p>Use simple skills learnt to make a dance sequence.</p>

<b>3. Engage in competitive and co-operative physical activities</b>		
<b>Long-term planning</b>	<b>Medium-term planning</b>	<b>Lesson activities</b>
<p><b>Broad outcomes:</b> Participate in competitive games and activities.</p>	<p><b>Teach pupils to:</b> Develop simple tactics for attacking and defending.  Develop rules for team games.</p>	<p><b>Use games and fun activities to aid learning:</b> Mini polo. Tag games. Push and glides (e.g. traffic lights). Describe the outcome of team games/activity. Describe the rules of the activity.</p>

By engaging in these activities, pupils should:

- Gain an understanding of health and fitness and know that being active is good for them.
- Be able to 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 does the temperature of the water make them feel?

**Key Stage 1 and/or Key Stage 2**

<b>1. Develop a broader range of aquatic skills</b>		
<b>Long-term planning</b>	<b>Medium-term planning</b>	<b>Lesson activities</b>
<p><b>Broad outcomes:</b> Swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25 metres.</p> <p>Use a range of strokes effectively such as front crawl, backstroke and breaststroke.</p> <p>Perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations.</p>	<p><b>Teach pupils to:</b> Show how they use their arms and legs to propel themselves through water.</p> <p>Explore what types of strokes they can use on or under the water.</p> <p>Perform a combination of strokes, swimming actions and skills.</p> <p>Swim front crawl, backstroke and breaststroke, combining leg and arm actions to make their strokes smoother and coordinated, and to breathe when they swim.</p> <p>Use skills such as surface dives and retrieving objects.</p> <p>Perform survival skills with control (e.g. Heat Escape Lessening Position (HELP) and Huddle position, and survival strokes).</p> <p>Understand how the skills learnt can be used for self-rescue in different water-based situations.</p> <p>Float on the surface in a number of positions; scull and tread water; gain a streamlined body position.</p>	<p><b>Use games and fun activities to encourage pupils to:</b> Swim front crawl, backstroke and breaststroke, using arm and leg actions together, smoothly and coordinated.</p> <p>Use different leg and arm actions to perform skills such as treading water and head up front crawl, as in water polo.</p> <p>Develop and control their breathing.</p> <p>Swim with control and confidence when using backstroke, front crawl and breaststroke over a distance of at least 25 metres.</p> <p>Use safe self-rescue skills, including floating, sculling and surface dives.</p>
<b>2. Use the skills learnt in different ways and link them together to make actions and sequences</b>		
<b>Long-term planning</b>	<b>Medium-term planning</b>	<b>Lesson activities</b>
<p><b>Broad outcomes:</b> Choose, use and vary strokes and skills, according to the task and the challenge.</p>	<p><b>Teach pupils to:</b> Show how far they can swim with and without floatation equipment on their front and on their back.</p> <p>Set and meet targets relating to distance and time, choosing a stroke to suit them.</p> <p>Pace themselves to meet challenges.</p> <p>Talk about possible challenges in a self-rescue situation.</p> <p>Set self-rescue challenges for themselves and others.</p> <p>Develop games and set their own rules.</p>	<p><b>Use games and fun activities to encourage pupils to:</b> Use a variety of strokes and safe self-rescue skills to suit the needs of a task.</p> <p>Plan how to meet challenges on their own and in groups.</p> <p>Recognise their own ability and challenges.</p>

3. Evaluate and recognise personal success and that of others		
Long-term planning	Medium-term planning	Lesson activities
<p><b>Broad outcomes:</b> Describe and evaluate the quality of swimming and recognise what needs improving.</p> <p>Evaluate and recognise success in self-rescue situations.</p>	<p><b>Teach pupils to:</b> Plan in pairs and small groups.</p> <p>Watch and describe the swimming actions of others.</p> <p>Discuss and describe the different elements of the strokes with others.</p> <p>Discuss what makes a good swimming stroke.</p> <p>Recognise areas to concentrate on to improve their own swimming.</p>	<p><b>Use games and fun activities to encourage pupils to:</b> Use a range of language to describe what they see and give concise explanations of what they do well.</p> <p>Identify aspects of their work that need improvement and suggest ways to practise.</p> <p>Realise that smooth swimming requires good control of arms, legs and breathing.</p>

4. Enjoy communicating, calibrating and competing with one another		
Long-term planning	Medium-term planning	Lesson activities
<p><b>Broad outcomes:</b> Play competitive games.</p>	<p><b>Teach pupils to:</b> Discuss strategies for defending and attacking.</p> <p>Develop and set rules.</p> <p>Develop a points system.</p>	<p><b>Use games and fun activities to aid learning:</b> Water polo.</p> <p>Relays.</p> <p>Synchronised swimming sequences.</p> <p>Tennis.</p> <p>Basketball.</p>

## Progression in physical education

All teaching should provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to progress in physical education through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

The table below shows how pupils might make such progress.

Beginning (Key Stage 1)	Middle (Key Stage 1/2)	End (Key Stage 1/2)
Early movement explorations.	Acquire and develop a range of skills that show improved control and coordination.	Refine and extend these skills and be able to perform them with some accuracy, consistency and fluency.
Simple selection and application of skills.	Combine skills in a series or basic sequence.	Plan and use more complex sequences, games strategies and compositional principles.
Describe what they see being performed.	Make evaluations on performance.	Use performance descriptions/ evaluations to improve the quality of their work.
Awareness of the effects that exercise has on the body (e.g. feeling hot or out of breath).	Understand why activity is good for health and wellbeing.	Understand how different fitness levels can impact performance and the types of activity chosen.



## Attainment: identifying, assessing and recording achievement in a school swimming programme

### Making a judgement

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

- Take 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 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 clearer judgement on 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 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 variety 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.

### Assessing swimming and water safety attainment

The agreed swimming and water safety programme should ensure that teachers are able to assess their pupils on the following:

- Perform safe self-rescue skills.
- Float; tread water; attract attention.
- Use different strokes and swimming skills for different outcomes.
- Swim lengths; play water polo; tread water.
- Swim competently, confidently and proficiently for at least 25 metres.
- Swim increasingly longer distances using a range of strokes.
- Compete in a race or gala.
- Talk about how to behave when in and around water and how to help in an emergency.
- Explain where incidents could take place and what number to call for help.

Pupils should demonstrate they meet these elements with certainty, and on more than one occasion. Repeating attainment objectives will help build confidence and ability. When assessing the elements, always consider the extent to which pupils' skills and strokes would enable them to get themselves out of trouble if they unintentionally fall into water or get into difficulty.

Simple scenarios can be useful to provide a context for pupils to choose and use strokes and skills purposefully and for teachers to assess competence.

### Recording attainment

Although you will want to be able to explain why you have given particular awards to pupils at the end of a key stage, there is no requirement for judgements to be explained in a particular way.

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. A single assessment at the end of a course produces a pressurised environment for pupils and does not give them the best opportunity to demonstrate their skills. Assessing in this way can be an ineffective use of pool time.

Assessments should be carried out by the teacher who normally conducts the swimming lesson and assessment records reported to the head teacher as per all other areas of the curriculum. The school's 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.

To support schools, pool providers should regularly share relevant information with them, especially towards the end of the summer term. It's important to consider safeguarding and GDPR when sharing data.

## Water safety and safe self-rescue

Pupils must have a clear understanding of the principles of safety in and around water. It is vital that every pupil has the opportunity to learn how to survive and use safe self-rescue skills. They should know how to get out of trouble if they fall into water, know the dangers of water and understand the key water safety messages.

Water can be fun and enjoyable but it also presents unknown hazards. Young people who drown are often victims of their own misjudgement of their swimming ability. Although learning to swim may help those who find themselves in difficulty in water, pupils should know that in open water, even strong swimmers can get into trouble. Pupils should be taught to assess risk and apply the principles of water safety.

The four key water safety messages specifically for swimming are:

- Always swim in safe place.
- Always swim with an adult.
- If you fall in, float, breathe, relax.
- If someone else is in trouble call 999/112.

### Key Stage 1

If delivering Key Stage 1, water safety and self-rescue should be included in the programme of study for swimming and in classroom-based activities. If swimming isn't being delivered at Key Stage 1, the key safety messaging above can still be introduced in the general programme of study.

### Key Stage 2

If swimming is delivered at Key Stage 2, then these safety messages should be taught as part of a comprehensive water safety programme where pupils should practise and understand the principles and skills of personal survival and self-rescue.

### Swimming pools versus other open water sites

The swimming pool:	Open water sites (e.g. rivers, reservoirs and canals):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm.</li> <li>• A controlled environment.</li> <li>• Lifeguarded.</li> <li>• Clean.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cold.</li> <li>• Have currents.</li> <li>• Often unmonitored.</li> <li>• Dirty/have poor clarity.</li> </ul>

### Additional considerations

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

### The dangers of cold water immersion

Most pupils will experience immersion in water in the safety of the home such as in baths, showers, and play pools, as well as in swimming pools. In all of these, the water is relatively warm and immersion is often a pleasant experience.

Immersion in cold water, however, is a major factor in cases of drowning in British waters. This applies throughout the year, as sea temperatures rarely rise above 15°C in summer, and in winter can 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. In addition, many fatalities in inland water are caused by the victim's inability to get out because of steep sloping sides.

Pupils should be clear on what to do if they find themselves in cold water.

## Key instructions

### Safety advice for cold water immersion/shock

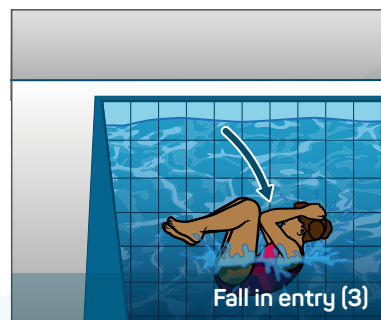
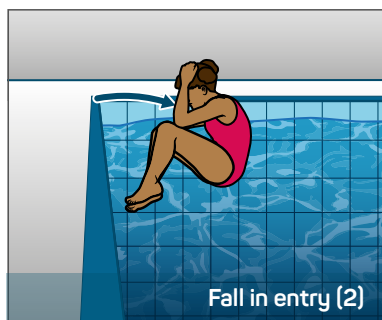
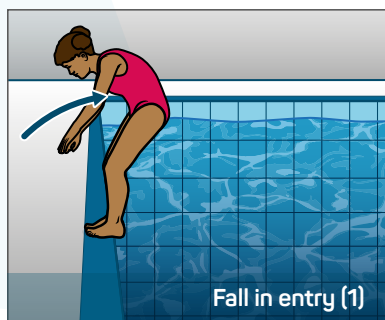
- Keep calm. Cold water shock may start to affect breathing and coordination, but it's possible that you will be able to regain control after a short time.
- Float on your back and try to regain control of your breathing.
- When you're calm, float, scull or tread water and signal for help, raising one hand in the air and shouting for help.
- If possible, swim to safety or something that floats.
- Holding the floating object, adopt the Heat Escape Lessening Position (HELP) which will slow the loss of body heat.
- If there is more than one of you, adopt the Huddle position to retain body heat communally.
- Hold on to support and float facing away from any waves to prevent the water splashing on your face.
- Try and stay out of the water as much as possible, for example on a floating object.
- Try and keep your head above water – intermittent submersion of the head will increase heat loss.
- To conserve body heat do not move more than is absolutely necessary.

### The 'DON'Ts'

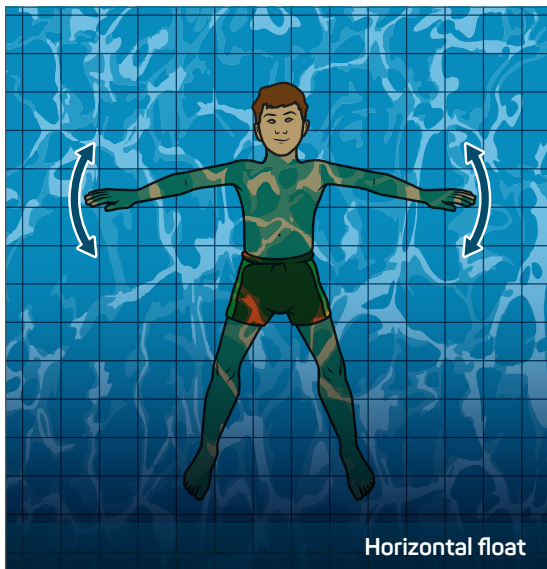
- Don't swim unless you are forced to do so to keep afloat or to get clear of danger.
- Don't try to swim for the shore unless you are a good swimmer and the shore is within reasonable distance e.g. up to 200 metres in cold water or up to 50 metres in very cold water.
- Don't move more than is absolutely necessary.
- Don't attempt to exercise to keep warm.
- Don't remove clothing, except items that interfere with floatation (i.e. heavy overcoats, boots, etc.).  
Lightweight everyday clothing can substantially reduce heat loss by preventing the continuous movement of cold water around the body.

## Fall in entry

Skill	Description	Teaching Points	Pupils should be able to:
Fall in entry	Curl the body into a ball to protect the head and body, drawing in the arms and legs. Once downward movement stops pupils should self-right and swim to the surface, stay calm and float.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuck your body into a ball.</li> <li>• Tuck the chin into your chest.</li> <li>• Tuck your knees into the body.</li> <li>• Place your arms over the head to protect it.</li> <li>• Tuck the elbows against the knees.</li> <li>• Use arms and legs to swim to the surface.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuck into a ball and hold.</li> <li>• Protect their head with the hands and forearms.</li> <li>• Use arms and legs to self-right once downward movement stops.</li> <li>• Swim to the surface.</li> <li>• Stay calm and float.</li> </ul>



## Floatation



If a child unintentionally falls into the water or finds themselves in difficulty in the water, they should float on their back.

Floating uses the natural buoyancy of the body to hold a stationary position, whilst maintaining a clear airway and minimising energy loss. Floating positions can be used by pupils of all abilities as a self-rescue skill. Pupils should take up a floating position on their back if they find themselves in an emergency situation, whilst calling and signalling for help. Pupils should be taught to seek out and use buoyant objects as a preference to unsupported floating in a survival situation.

Skill	Description	Teaching points	Pupils should be able to:
Horizontal float.	Float on the back with face out of water and the whole body at the water's surface.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most visible float for a rescuer to see from, land or air.</li> <li>• Legs can be held together to increase heat retention.</li> <li>• Adopt a star shape for the float to be effective.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lie on their backs.</li> <li>• Push stomach towards the surface.</li> <li>• Hold their arms out to the side of the body or above the head.</li> <li>• Keep a controlled breathing pattern.</li> <li>• Regularly check, call and signal for help.</li> </ul>
Angled float.	Float on the back with legs slightly angled down towards floor, face out of water. Less buoyant casualties will find this float easier to maintain.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lie on back.</li> <li>• Hold legs in a relaxed V shape with slightly bent knees.</li> <li>• Position arms out to side.</li> <li>• Control breathing in a regular pattern.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Float on their backs.</li> <li>• Explain why their legs may sink (head lifting, body composition etc.).</li> </ul>
Floating whilst signalling for help.	Float on the back and scull with one arm whilst holding the other arm out of the water and shouting for help.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep sculling arm under water.</li> <li>• Raise arm above the head to signal for help.</li> <li>• Regularly check, call and signal for help.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a sculling action to stabilise the float.</li> <li>• Desist from waving the arm that is signalling for help.</li> <li>• Control their breathing.</li> </ul>

## Treading water

Treading water is used in both survival and self-rescue situations to maintain a clear airway, stay at the water's surface (particularly when conditions do not support floating), keep the head clear of the water to reduce heat loss and aid communication.

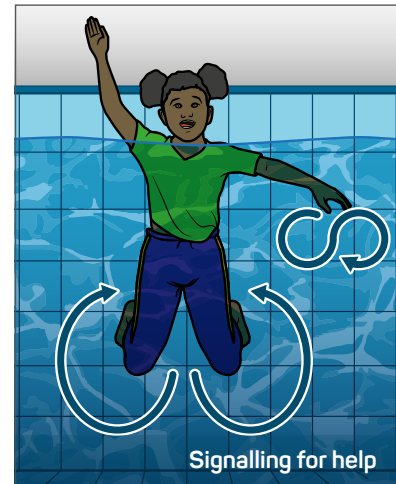
Skill	Description	Teaching points	Pupils should be able to:
Treading water.	Use a downward propulsion from the arms and legs whilst positioned vertically at the water's surface to maintain a clear airway.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep body in an upright position.</li> <li>• Scull with hands shoulder width apart in front of the body.</li> <li>• Keep the head clear of the water.</li> <li>• Use a variety of leg kicks (e.g. eggbeater, breaststroke, scissor, cycling).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tread water confidently using a variety of leg kicks.</li> <li>• Identify the different types of kicking actions.</li> <li>• Understand which leg kick works best for them.</li> <li>• Remain upright and on the spot.</li> </ul>





## Signalling for help

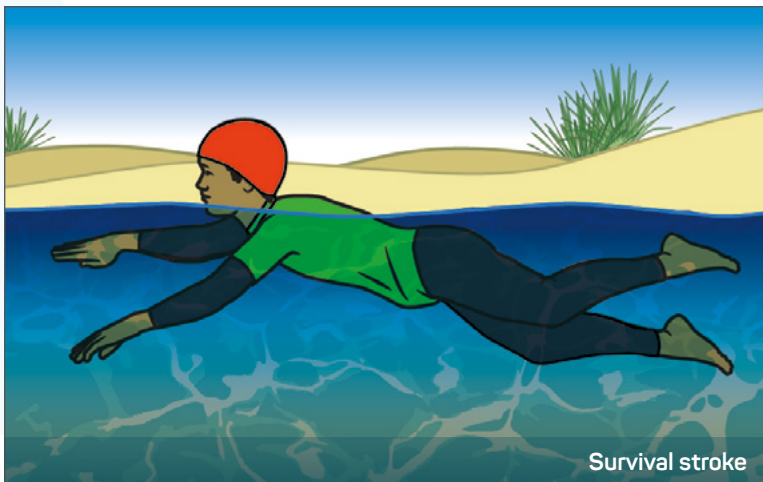
If a person is in trouble in the water, once they have calmed down and assessed the situation they should consider signalling for help. To do this they should raise one hand in the air while treading water and shout "HELP!" It is important that only one hand is raised in the air as it uses a large amount of energy to do so, especially if clothed. In wavy conditions, care should be taken not to inhale water while shouting. The arm should be lowered if it makes it difficult to maintain an airway, and priority given to remaining at the surface of the water.



## Personal survival stroke

Personal survival stroke is an important skill in order to preserve energy and body heat while moving efficiently either to safety or a buoyant object. It is important the arms remain underneath the water, especially if clothed, as an over the water recovery will use an increased amount of energy.

Skill	Description	Teaching points	Pupils should be able to:
Survival stroke.	<p>Arms should stretch out in front of the body in an alternating action.</p> <p>At full stretch, catch the water and pull underneath the chest.</p> <p>Leg kick should be alternating, but without splashing and the head should be up and looking forwards.</p>	<p>Keep arms under the water.</p> <p>Stretch arms out in front of the body.</p> <p>No splashing when kicking.</p> <p>Keep head and face out of the water.</p> <p>Look forwards.</p>	<p>Perform this stroke with head out of the water.</p> <p>Look and spot for dangers or assistance.</p> <p>Maintain body heat.</p>



## Heat Escape Lessening Position (HELP)



If a person is unable to exit the water and decides to wait for help, the Heat Escape Lessening Position (HELP) reduces heat loss in very cold water.

Holding a buoyant object such as a float or plastic bottle firmly, pupils should draw the knees up to the chest, keeping the legs pressed together to retain body heat. The head should stay clear of the water and arms should be held close to the upper body, retaining body heat. Pupils should keep their body straight and lean slightly backwards.



## Huddle position

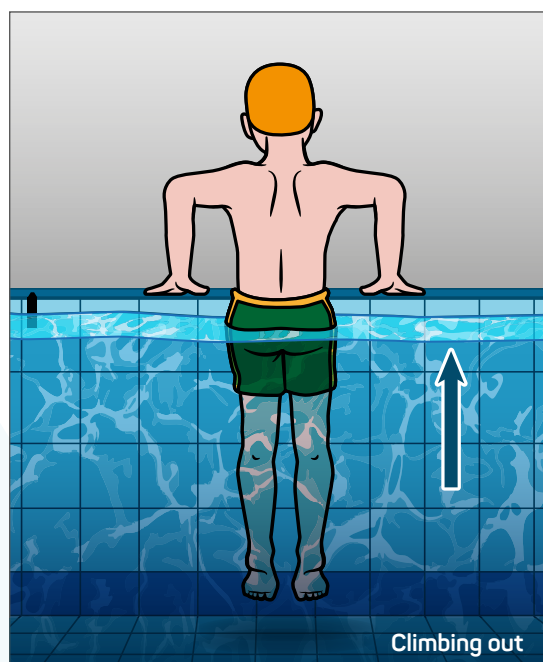
If a group of people are in the water together, they can huddle together to conserve body heat, offer moral support and provide a larger target for rescuers. Using noodles or other floatation equipment, four or more pupils should link together and hold on firmly to each other's float to make a tight circle. Heads must be clear of the water and one pupil should raise their arm and shout for help.



## Exiting the water

During lessons, pupils should be encouraged to climb out of the pool without using steps or a ladder. Competent swimmers should practise climbing out from deep water.

Skill	Description	Teaching points	Pupils should be able to:
Climbing out.	A method of self rescue at a river bank side (open water).	<p>Call for help.</p> <p>Place both hands on the 'bank', shoulder width apart.</p> <p>Push down with the arms and kick the legs.</p> <p>Lift yourself up and lean forward.</p> <p>Put a knee or foot on the edge and use it to climb out, or put the stomach/chest on the side and wiggle out.</p> <p>Stay low and crawl away from the edge to avoid falling back in.</p>	<p>Lock their arms simultaneously.</p> <p>Keep their balance as they come out of the water.</p> <p>Use their knee to make themselves stable on the side of the pool.</p> <p>Crawl away from the side.</p>



## Rescues

Rescuing a drowning person by entering the water should not be encouraged. Pupils should be taught to do everything possible to avoid getting into a dangerous situation in the first place, and to seek the assistance of an adult if they, or others, do fall into danger.

Pupils must think of their own safety first and never put themselves in danger. If the rescue is too dangerous they should wait until the emergency services arrive and never enter the water themselves.

### Get help

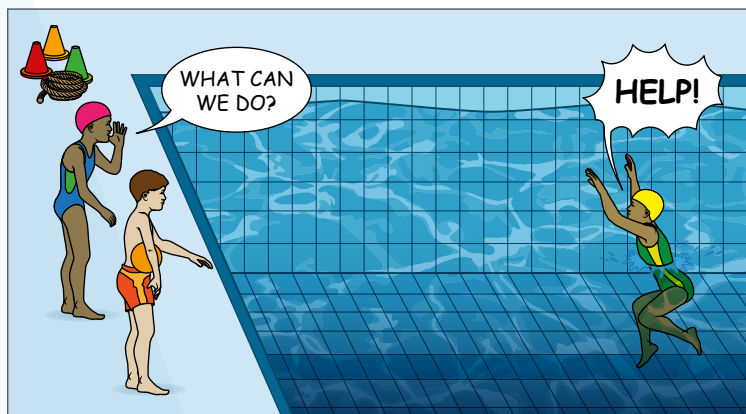
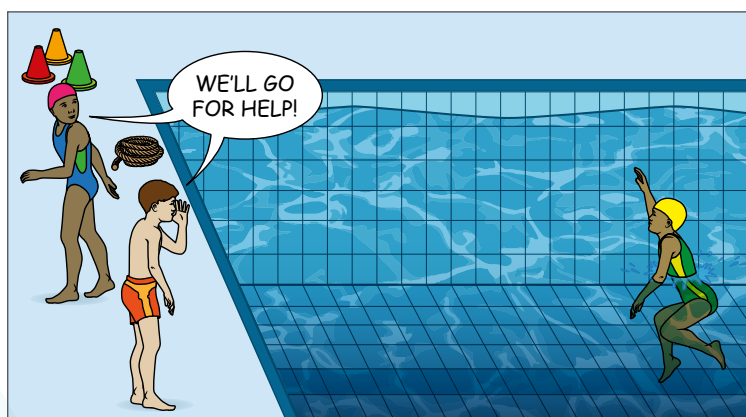
The first action for any emergency situation is to get help. Shout out, send someone to find an adult, or ring 999/112. If it is a coastal emergency ask for the coastguard.

### Shout and signal

The shout and signal rescue relies on the use of voice and hand signals to instruct and encourage the casualty to make their way to safety:

- Attract the attention of the casualty by shouting and signalling.
- Give clear instruction e.g. 'kick your legs' or 'swim towards me'.
- Use hand signals and your voice to instruct the casualty to the side.
- Instruct and assist the casualty to a position of safety.

If the casualty is near to the edge and floatation equipment is available then this can be thrown to the casualty to help their survival chances.



## Practical teaching guidelines

### Teaching from the poolside / in the water

Where a teacher has responsibility for groups of more than two pupils, the recommended teaching position is from the side of the pool. This position enables the teacher to oversee the whole group in terms of safety and deliver appropriate feedback on the performance of each pupil in the group.

This does not preclude a support or assistant teacher from being in the water to help the class teacher with overall delivery, or to assist pupils with specific needs on a 1:1 or 1:2 basis. In fact, it is a recommendation when teaching groups of two or more pupils.

At all times the support or assistant 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. It may be practicable to supervise up to four 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 that impact with the pool floor can result in injury to parts of the body such as 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 (i.e. height of the poolside above the water).
- The size and weight of the pupils making the entry.

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 emphasised.

### Recommended minimum water depth for jumping entries

For pupils who are water-confident and in the early stages of learning to swim, normally up to eight years of age, the recommended minimum water depth for feet-first entries is 1.0 metre.

For specific jumps or dives which require additional height from the poolside, a minimum depth of 1.8 metres is recommended.

### Pupil:teacher ratios

The following recommended ratios are starting points for determining actual pupil:teacher ratios, which will depend on the outcome of a risk assessment designed to ensure high quality, effective swimming lessons are delivered.

Lesson type	Ratio
<p><b>Non-swimmers and beginners</b> Learners with or without floatation equipment who cannot swim 10 metres comfortably.</p>	12:1
<p><b>Improving swimmers</b> Learners who have mastered stroke technique and have the ability to swim 10 metres comfortably and safely.</p>	20:1
<p><b>Mixed ability groups (not including beginners)</b> All should be able to swim a minimum of 25 metres. Mixed ability groups are often a necessity in managing school groups.</p>	20:1
<p><b>Competent swimmers</b> Those who can swim at least 25 metres competently and unaided and can tread water for two minutes.</p>	20:1
<p><b>Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)</b> Each situation must be considered individually. Learners with a SEND are not an homogenous group. Care must be taken to ensure that there are sufficient helpers in the water to provide 1:1 support for those who require it, and to cater for the range of SENDs within the group.</p>	1:1 support available in the water where required.

## Equipment for swimming lessons

Swimming equipment is a valuable resource for ensuring pupil safety and enhancing learning. Teachers need to be confident using a wide range of equipment.

Swimming equipment can be grouped according to type:

- Pool equipment (e.g. lane ropes, markers, pool dividers, flags, booms) – used to create and maintain a safe environment.
- Teaching equipment (e.g. floats, balls, sinkers, egg flips, toys, watering cans, noodles, activity cards, lesson plans, pull buoys, hoops) – used to support and encourage pupil progress.
- Floatation equipment (e.g. discs, armbands, shark fins, buoyancy belts) – used by pupils to provide support and buoyancy in the water.

### Pool equipment

This is the equipment you will find at the swimming pool to create a safe environment for swimming lessons.

Teaching equipment	What is it?	Advantages	Disadvantages
Lane ropes.	A rope threaded through coloured plastic floats.  Anti-wave lane ropes have discs designed to prevent waves of water coming across lanes.	Allows pupils to swim in a lane or width formation.  Provides a division between activities, such as lessons and lane swimming.	Can restrict activities if not used in a well thought-out programme.  Can be time-consuming to set.  Pupils can be tempted to sit on or climb over them.
Markers.	Coloured cones or floats.	Can provide a point to swim to or mark where the stroke or skill is changed.  Useful for pupils with a visual impairment as a brightly coloured cone is often easier to see.	Can become a trip hazard on the poolside.  Easily moved, which then affects the activity.
Pool dividers.	Shortened lane ropes or ropes threaded with coloured foam discs.	Splits up an area to allow for greater use of space.  Makes a secure area for nervous or anxious pupils.	Without regularly spaced markers on the rope, they can be challenging to see.
Flags.	A string of coloured triangular flags suspended across the pool from poles, usually positioned 5 metres from each end and 1.8 metres above the surface of the water.	Allows pupils swimming on their back to count their strokes into the wall without turning over or looking back to check where the end is.  Can be used to space pupils out at 5 metre intervals when lane swimming.	Poles that secure the flags can be a hazard.  Flags should be 5 metres from the end of the pool but distance can vary and pupils may misjudge the number of strokes and collide with the wall.

Teaching equipment	What is it?	Advantages	Disadvantages
Lane signs.	Lane direction signs and/or information on the participant ability appropriate for each lane.	Pupils know which way to swim, avoiding collisions. Gives information without the need for a member of staff.	Trip hazards. Not suitable for those who are visually impaired.
Boom.	A solid barrier usually placed across the width of a large pool to divide it into separate sections. It can then be used for different activities.	Allows the pool to be split into sections for different uses, such as swimming lessons one side and general swimming on the other.	Can be restrictive as it is often a fixed boom and can only be placed in one position. It can take time to be repositioned. It will need a designated member of staff to reposition.
Movable floor.	An area of the pool with a plastic floor which can be raised or lowered depending on the activity to take place.	The same area of pool can be used for both shallow and deep-water activities.	It can take time for the movable floor to be adjusted in height. It will need a designated member of staff to move the floor.
Pool platform.	A solid but lightweight platform that stands on the pool floor, allowing pupils to be able to stand even when out of their depth.	Increases the pool area that can be used for pupils who need to be able to stand. Provides a resting area for those swimming out of their depth.	Pupils can miss the platform when trying to stand or rest and go under water. Difficult to store when not in use.
Pace clock.	A clock with only a second hand. Can be freestanding or wall mounted.	Allows pupils to time activities such as treading water for 15 seconds. Allows pupils to set five second intervals when lane swimming, preparing them for the swimming training environment.	Freestanding ones can be a trip hazard. Wall mounted ones can be difficult to see at a distance.

## Teaching equipment

This is the equipment that you will use during your swimming teaching. Its aim is to enhance the ways in which pupils learn to swim and develop a range of skills. It includes items such as noodles and toys, as well as teacher resources such as lesson plans and activity cards.

Teaching equipment	What is it?	Advantages	Disadvantages
Noodles.	A coloured foam cylinder.	<p>Allows pupils full range of movement of their arms and legs to encourage better co-ordination.</p> <p>Can be used in many different and creative ways.</p> <p>Can be used on both front and back.</p> <p>Can be cut into different lengths to increase versatility.</p>	<p>Non-swimmers can easily slip off.</p> <p>Take up a lot of room when the class is lined up along the edge.</p> <p>Can adversely affect body position.</p> <p>Can be bulky and cumbersome to store.</p>
Float.	<p>A rectangular shaped foam board in various sizes.</p> <p>A fun-shaped foam board, for example a teddy bear or a fish.</p>	<p>Isolates the legs to allow more rapid development of the leg kick.</p> <p>Shaped boards are excellent for use in activities and games.</p> <p>Allows progression with different sizes/designs, as well as holding them in different ways.</p> <p>Provides stability and helps improve confidence.</p>	<p>Larger floats can be challenging for smaller children to hold and grip.</p> <p>Weaker pupils may grip them too hard which will cause fatigue.</p> <p>Weaker pupils may press all their weight onto the float, submerging it and creating additional resistance.</p>
Pull buoy.	<p>A solid block of foam shaped to fit between the thighs.</p> <p>Available in two sizes – adult and junior.</p>	<p>Can be used instead of a float as its shape can be easier for younger pupils to hold.</p> <p>Supports the legs during floating and sculling activities on the back for pupils who find it difficult to stop their legs sinking.</p> <p>Used only with advanced swimmers to improve arm action on all strokes <b>except butterfly</b>.</p>	<p>Primarily a swimming training aid and not suitable for arms-only activities in the swimming teaching environment.</p> <p>Can cause over-use injuries to shoulders and arms.</p> <p>Can cause back injuries if used for butterfly.</p>

Teaching equipment	What is it?	Advantages	Disadvantages
Sinkers.	<p>Small, brightly coloured and weighted sticks, rings or shaped objects that sink to the pool floor.</p> <p>Some are designed to represent seaweed, shells, animals, etc.</p> <p>Lifesaving bricks are plastic coated, large and heavy.</p>	<p>Improves water confidence.</p> <p>Develops aquatic breathing.</p> <p>Encourages submersion.</p>	<p>If thrown without care they can potentially injure.</p> <p>If put too deep pupils may struggle to reach them.</p>
Egg flips.	<p>Small plastic brightly coloured toys designed to flip over in the water.</p>	<p>Provide a focus and motivation for children to work on aquatic breathing.</p>	<p>Can cause frustration if not blown in the right place as they will not flip over.</p>
Toys.	<p>Plastic ducks.</p> <p>Squirty toys.</p> <p>Plastic fruit/vegetables.</p> <p>Foam bricks/numbers/ letters.</p> <p>Sinking coloured discs.</p> <p>Shapes that attach to the pool wall by suction.</p>	<p>Create a fun and engaging environment.</p> <p>Encourage pupils to use their imagination.</p> <p>Improve water confidence.</p> <p>Can be used in a variety of games and activities.</p>	<p>Storage and cleaning can be difficult.</p> <p>Require large quantities for larger classes.</p>
Watering cans.	<p>Small toy watering cans.</p> <p>Allow young pupils to fill and hold them easily.</p>	<p>Improve water confidence.</p> <p>Can be used in a variety of fun ways, e.g. watering the garden, car wash, etc.</p>	<p>If full they can be heavy for young pupils to hold above their heads.</p>
Hoops.	<p>Plastic hoops large enough for pupils to swim through.</p> <p>Hoops can be weighted and sit on the pool floor or suspended just below the surface.</p> <p>Hoops can also float flat on the surface of the water.</p>	<p>Increase water confidence through submersion activities.</p> <p>Improve streamlining through push and glides.</p>	<p>Hoops can move from the original position into deeper water.</p> <p>Some pupils may feel disheartened if they cannot get deep enough to go through the hoop.</p>



Teaching equipment	What is it?	Advantages	Disadvantages
Play mats.	Large foam mats in various shapes which participants can climb onto.	<p>Add creativity to lessons.</p> <p>Improve core stability when climbing on and off the mat.</p> <p>Provide a progressive activity for climbing out onto the poolside.</p> <p>Good for teamwork such as kicking activities.</p>	<p>Can flip over, trapping pupils underneath.</p> <p>Can cause trip hazards on the poolside as they are large and slippery.</p> <p>Storage can be difficult.</p>
Activity cards.	<p>Visual aids, often laminated cards, including pictures, words and diagrams.</p> <p>Can be used to support those with a SEND.</p>	<p>Create a fun and engaging environment.</p> <p>Can be used to support circuit-type sessions.</p> <p>Useful to give to a swimming assistant to help them communicate information about an activity.</p>	<p>Written information may not be in a pupil's first language.</p> <p>Need to be stored in a dry environment.</p>
Session plan.	Usually a written or printed document that identifies where the pupils are now, what you want them to achieve by the end of the lesson and the activities you intend to use to get them there.	<p>You will know what you are going to be doing and how you will use the time to best effect.</p> <p>Swimming assistants will know what is expected of them.</p> <p>A well-planned lesson is more likely to be an effective lesson.</p>	<p>Can be used as a script which can make adaptation difficult.</p> <p>If a paper copy is used it can be damaged by the water.</p>

## Floatation equipment

This type of equipment is worn by pupils to provide support and buoyancy in the water and to help them swim in the water on their own. It includes discs, armbands, shark fins and buoyancy belts.

Before using floatation equipment, it's important that you fully understand both its purpose and how to use it safely and effectively. The equipment used must be appropriate for each individual pupil. It should be checked before use to ensure it's in good condition and fit for purpose.

Equipment	What is it?	Advantages	Disadvantages
Discs.	<p>Foam discs worn on each arm.</p> <p>The design allows for up to three discs to be worn on each arm.</p> <p>Can be in child or adult sizes.</p>	<p>Pupils are more independent and do not need manual support at all times.</p> <p>Support can be reduced progressively by adding or removing individual discs.</p>	<p>Pupils can become reliant on them.</p> <p>They restrict arm movement.</p>
Armbands.	<p>Inflatable armbands worn on each arm with either one or two areas to inflate.</p> <p>Different sizes are available for pre-school and school-aged children.</p>	<p>Widely available to the general public.</p> <p>Relatively inexpensive.</p>	<p>Pupils can become reliant on them.</p> <p>Restricts movement in the arms.</p> <p>Could potentially deflate.</p> <p>Hygiene issues as they are inflated by mouth.</p>
Shark fins.	<p>A foam shark fin shape worn on the back and attached using two straps around the chest.</p>	<p>The pupil will be completely buoyant in the water.</p> <p>Can swim on both the front and the back.</p> <p>Arms and legs can move freely.</p> <p>Improves water confidence and a flat body position.</p> <p>Can be used with other floatation equipment.</p>	<p>Pupils could become reliant on them if not removed on a regular basis.</p> <p>Can affect the centre of buoyancy if not fitted in the right position.</p>

Equipment	What is it?	Advantages	Disadvantages
Buoyancy belt.	<p>A strap worn around the waist with small individual floats attached to it.</p> <p>Commonly worn by non-swimmers being taught in deep water.</p>	<p>The pupil will be completely buoyant in the water.</p> <p>Can swim on both the front and the back.</p> <p>Arms and legs can move freely.</p> <p>Improves water confidence.</p> <p>Can be used with other floatation equipment.</p>	<p>Can be cumbersome.</p> <p>Pupils are held in an upright position.</p> <p>Can affect the centre of buoyancy if not fitted in the right position.</p>
Swimming vest/jacket.	<p>A vest or jacket containing floats that provides buoyancy to the front and rear of the torso.</p>	<p>Improves water confidence and independence.</p> <p>Support can be reduced by removing floats.</p> <p>Arms and legs are able to move freely.</p>	<p>Pupils are held in an upright position.</p> <p>Can be difficult to get the level of buoyancy right for all.</p>

## Swimwear

Swimwear should be suitable for purpose. To avoid drag and increase streamlining it should be reasonably tight fitting. It's recommended that schools have a uniform for swimming which is clearly communicated to parents, swimming teachers and school swimming providers.

## Jewellery

Jewellery should not be worn or taken to the pool. Guidance on jewellery should be written into the school's PE policy.

## Swimming hats

Swimming hats should be worn by everyone or as a minimum long hair should be tied back away from the face.

## Goggles

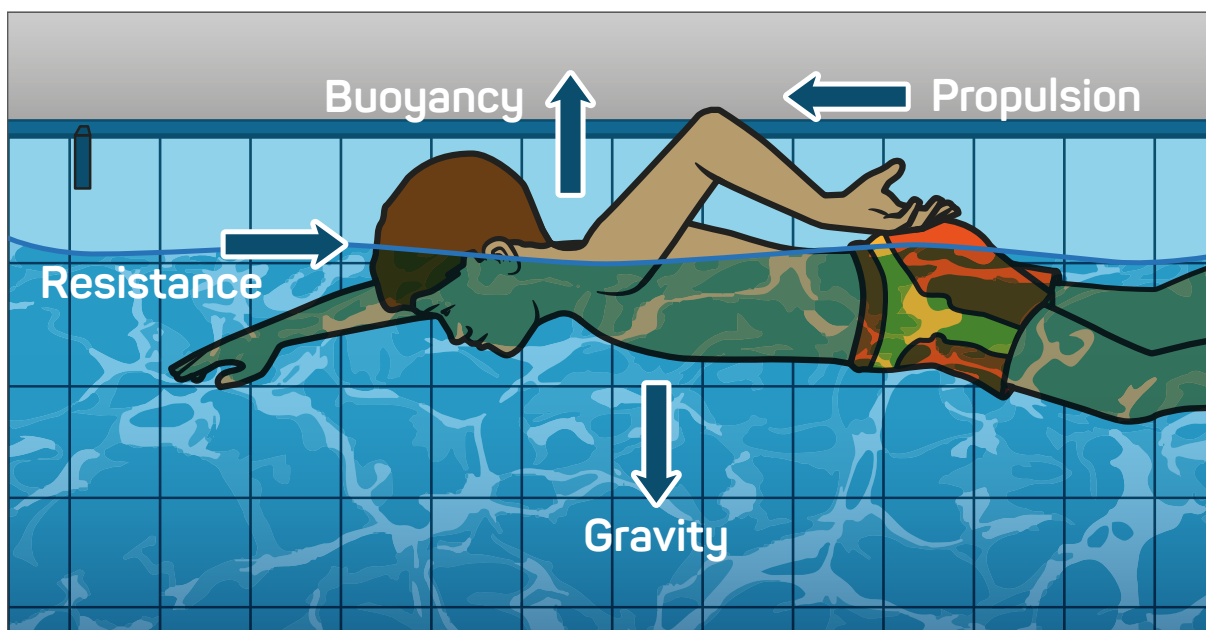
Schools should determine their own policies for goggles taking into consideration information in 'Safe Practice: In Physical Education, School Sport and Physical Activity' (AfPE, 2016). Pupils should be comfortable swimming with and without them. Parents/carers should be aware that pupils may be asked to remove them for some activities, particularly when learning to dive into water and when being taught survival and self-rescue skills. If pool water is well maintained it shouldn't be necessary for pupils to wear goggles when involved in relatively short school swimming lessons.

Further information about suitable swimming attire can be found in 'Safe Practice: In Physical Education, School Sport and Physical Activity' (AfPE, 2016).

## Working with non-swimmers and beginners

### The principles of movement in the water

Everyone moves differently in the water, dependent on a range of factors. To teach effectively, swimming teachers need to know about the principles underpinning how people float, the scientific principles governing movement in and through the water, and the effects of different water conditions.



### Buoyancy and gravity

Buoyancy is the ability of an object or body to float on liquid. Gravity is the force that attracts objects towards the earth.

### Resistance

Water creates more resistance for a person than air does. As pupils move through the water they will experience three key types of resistance (detailed overleaf), which slow their progress through the water.

### Propulsion

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

## Types of resistance

### Profile resistance (frontal)

This resistance is influenced by the shape of the body. A pupil with a large cross-sectional area will create more resistance. For example, a pupil with a poor body position in any stroke creates a larger surface area on the water, causing greater resistance.

Profile resistance can be reduced in the following ways:

- Performing a push and glide with one hand on top of the other, elbows straight and body flat.
- Keeping the head in or as close to the water as possible.

### Viscous drag

As pupils move through the water viscous drag creates friction between their bodies and the water. For example, a pupil wearing long baggy shorts will experience more viscous drag.

Viscous drag can be reduced in the following ways:

- Wearing a close fitting costume, shorts or trunks.
- Tying back long hair.
- Wearing a swimming cap.

### Eddy resistance (tail drag)

When pupils move through the water they leave a space behind them. The water rushes in to fill this space and this causes eddy currents. These are similar to the whirlpool created around a plughole when water is emptied from the bath. For example, a pupil 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 them.

Eddy resistance can be reduced in the following ways:

- Flat body position.
- Streamlined body position.
- Kicking with long legs and small kicks.
- Well-fitting swimwear.

## Physical literacy

Physical literacy is the motivation, confidence, physical competence and values which combine to keep pupils engaged in physical activity for life. It is the development of fundamental movement skills and fundamental sports skills, which enable an individual to move confidently and with control in a wide range of physical activities. Developing physical literacy also means increased awareness of what is going on in an activity setting and the ability to react appropriately.

### • **Motivation**

Enjoying sport and physical activity in a positive, fun and safe environment can provide experience that helps build motivation to be physically active.

### • **Confidence**

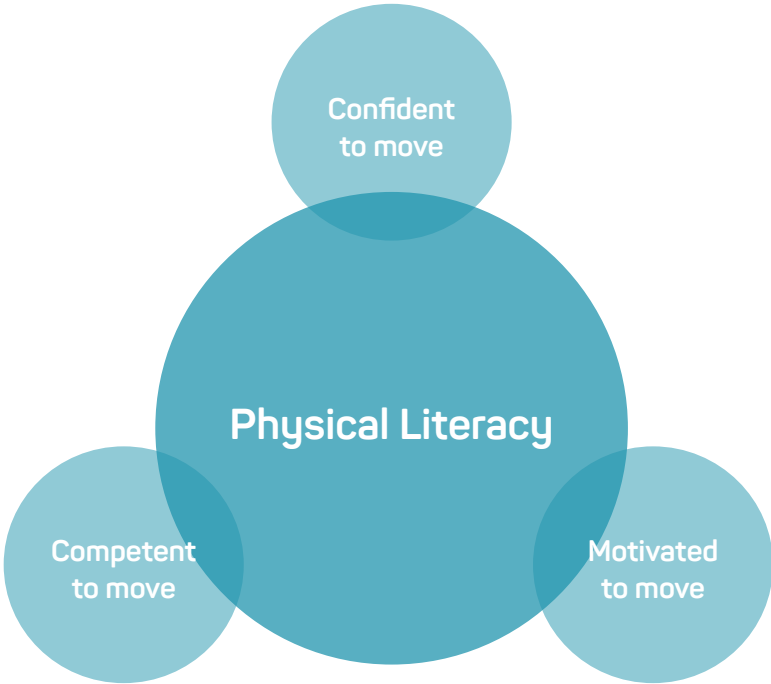
Learning and achieving physical skills is linked with increased confidence and higher self-esteem.

### • **Physical competence**

Pupils learn and develop through free play and activities.

### • **Values**

Pupils will learn the values of sport through positive experiences of physical activity. This will also help them develop their skills.

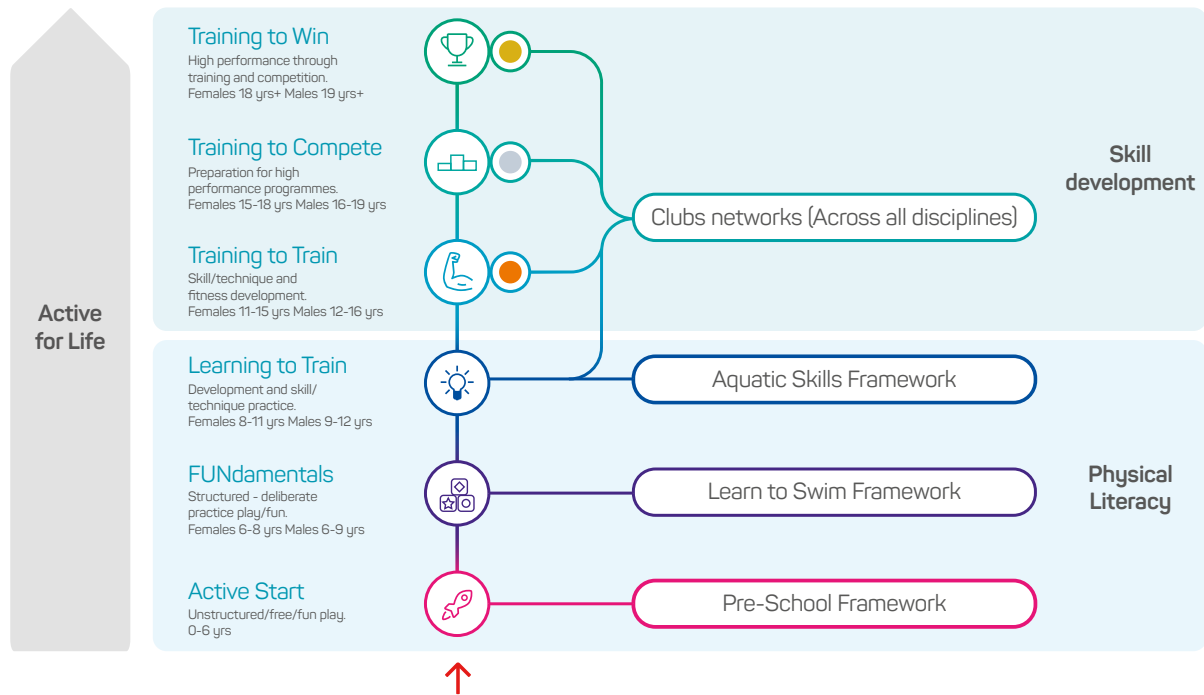


## Aquatic physical literacy

Aquatic physical literacy is the development of water-based fundamental movement skills. It also refers to a child's understanding of the pool environment. Attaining aquatic physical literacy gives children the skills they need to confidently and safely enjoy water-based activities for health, fun, enjoyment and potential athletic performance.

## The Swim England Athlete Development Support Pathway (ADSP)

This is a framework for developing pupils' physical literacy. It includes seven key stages showing clear progression from Active Start to Active for Life.



As a teacher, you will need to be familiar with the first three stages of the ADSP, but for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2, the focus will be on the FUNdamentals and Learning to Train stages.

## Active Start

Boys and girls from birth to six years. At this stage, physical activity should be fun, safe and stimulating.

It's important to focus on:

- Early fundamental movement skills.
- Unstructured play.
- Child-led activities.
- Assistant-led activities.
- Encouraging and prompting new skills.

## FUNdamentals

Girls aged six to eight years and boys aged six to nine years. This stage will introduce and develop the core aquatic skills. Fundamental skill development can still involve informal play, but also more structured activities that develop physical literacy.

During this stage it is important to focus on:

- More structured, fun activities.
- Development of fundamental movement skills.
- Development of core aquatic skills.

Active Start and FUNdamentals are important skill learning and fun activity stages that improve the ability to learn to swim more quickly and effectively.

## Learning to Train (SwimSkills)

Girls eight to 11 years and boys nine to 12 years. This stage is about developing specific skills required for swimming.

It's important to focus on:

- Developing sport-specific movement skills.
- Technical practice and skill development.
- Fun, enjoyment and participation.

## Active for Life (lifelong participation)

By delivering the Active Start and FUNdamentals stages in a fun and inclusive way, swimming teachers start to build the foundations for lifelong participation in aquatics.

## Fundamental movement skills

Children don't naturally develop fundamental movement skills – they must be taught them. Once learnt, these skills provide the foundation for more complex movements and sport-specific competencies.

Fundamental movement skills cover three basic areas:

- Body management skills. These involve maintaining a balanced body, both when still and moving.
- Locomotor skills. These involve moving the body in any direction from one point to another.
- Object control skills. These are used to control implements and objects such as balls and bats using the hand, foot or any other part of the body.



To develop these three areas, fundamental movement skills need to be introduced and practised. These are:

- ABCS: agility, balance, coordination, speed.
- RJT: running, jumping, throwing.
- KGBS: kinaesthetics, gliding, buoyancy, striking with the body.
- CPKS: catching, passing, kicking, striking with an implement.

## Developing skills

Teachers need to be aware of the stage of learning their pupils are working at in order to employ specific, relevant and effective teaching. Each stage of learning has individual characteristics and teachers need to use strategies relevant to that stage to bring about skill improvement.

### **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.

### **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 time for experimentation and self-learning.
- 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, they may develop “bad habits” and inefficient motor patterns, which can be very hard to change. It’s important to 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 pupil is ready.
- Teach “specific” skills in their context (use modified games – i.e. the ‘Games-Based Approach’ – for 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 pupil and make them solve problems.
- Structure complex activities that represent the pressures and demands of intense competition.
- Have the pupil self-analyse their performance.
- Use video analysis and extensive questioning.

## Fundamental movement skills, definitions and activities

Fundamental movement skill	Definition	Activities
Agility	The ability to move quickly, lightly and easily.	Running changing directions; dodging; twisting; sidestepping.
Balance	The ability to maintain a steady and stable position.	Standing balances on beams, bars and lines on the floor.
Coordination	Muscle groups working in harmony to perform movements.	Skipping; spinning; cycling; crawling; playing hopscotch.
Speed	The ability to move rapidly or swiftly.	Short sprints; repeated sprints alternating with rests.
Running	To move swiftly on foot so that both feet leave the ground during each stride.	Sprinting; galloping; shuttle runs.
Jumping	The ability to spring off the ground or other base by a muscular effort of the legs and feet.	Bounding; leaping; hopping; bunny hopping; hurdling.
Kinaesthetics	The ability to feel movements via the limbs and body; sensing the movement is 'right'.	Self-assessing and correcting; synchronising actions with others or to music; adapting skills to differing circumstances; working with others in team games.
Gliding	To move in a smooth, effortless manner.	Skating; sliding on a slippery surface.
Buoyancy	The capacity to remain afloat.	n/a
Striking with the body	Hitting an object with any part of the body.	Handball; volley ball; football.
Catching	The ability to grab, to slow and stop the motion of an object.	Catching balls and objects with the hands.
Passing	The ability to transfer an object to a team mate/other person.	Throwing/catching different sized objects to/from each other.
Kicking	To strike with the foot or to propel an object or the body with the foot.	Kicking and dribbling balls and other objects using the legs and feet.
Jumping	The ability to hit an object using an implement.	Using bats or rackets to hit different-sized balls or other objects.

## Core aquatic skills

These are the skills that underpin all aspects of swimming, and are the building blocks to more complex skills and strokes across all aquatic disciplines.

The core aquatic skills are:

- Entries.
- Exits.
- Buoyancy and balance.
- Rotation and orientation.
- Streamlining.
- Aquatic breathing.
- Travel and coordination
- Water safety.
- Health and fitness.

### Link between fundamental movement skills and core aquatic skills

It is a combination of the fundamental movement skills that make each of the core aquatic skills possible.

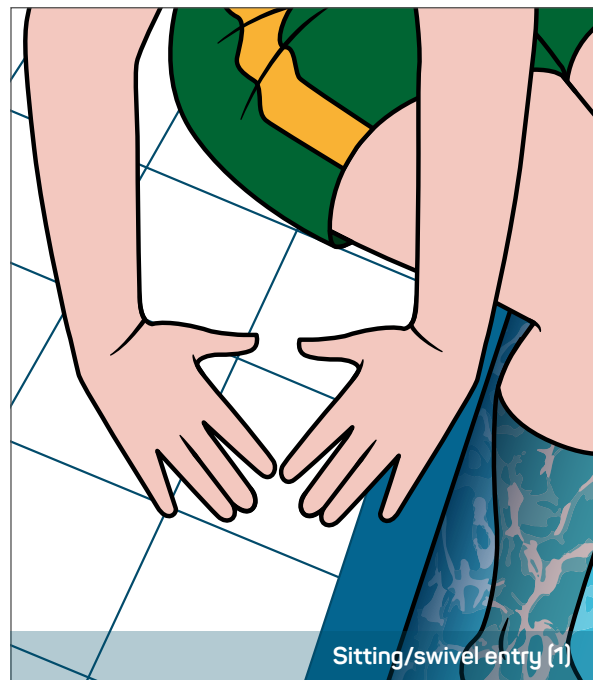
### Entries

Safe entry into the water includes:

- Use of steps.
- Use of ladders.
- Sitting/swivel entries.
- Jumping.
- Use of the hoist.
- Beach.

Key features and teaching points	Safety considerations
<p><b>Use of steps</b></p> <p>Plant the feet on each step.</p> <p>Move down one step at a time.</p> <p>Hold rails where available.</p>	<p>Pupils are likely to have used steps before, so will be familiar with them and over-confident, not knowing the effects the water will have on their body. They may lose their footing.</p> <p>Steps can be slippery so pupils should walk slowly.</p>
<p><b>Use of ladders</b></p> <p>Facing away from the pool, step backwards down the ladder.</p> <p>Step down one step at a time.</p> <p>Hold both rails firmly.</p>	<p>Pupils will need to use the ladder one at a time, so the activity can take a while.</p>
<p><b>Sitting/swivel entries</b></p> <p>Pupils sit on the side of the pool.</p> <p>Place both hands on one side next to the thigh, with the index fingers and thumbs forming a diamond shape.</p> <p>Pupils turn and lower themselves into the water with control.</p>	<p>Pupils all enter at the same time.</p> <p>Pupils with a SEND or mobility issues may find this difficult.</p>

Key features and teaching points	Safety considerations
<p><b>Beach</b> Enter the water via a slope. Suitable for leisure pools.</p>	<p>Depth of water may increase quickly. Floor may be slippery.</p>
<p><b>Jumping</b> Start with toes over the poolside edge. Make sure there is clear space to jump. Jump forwards and away from the poolside. Variations include pencil jump, star jump and tuck jump.</p>	<p>Suitable for pupils who are confident in the water. For the ages of between four and eight, it is recommended that there should be a 1.0 metre depth minimum. Beginners or more anxious pupils may be able to attempt with the help of a swimming assistant.</p>



**Progressive practices for entries**

<b>Activities/practices for sitting entries</b>	<b>Teaching points</b>	<b>Safety considerations</b>
Twisting activities in the water, e.g. passing a ball around the body to another pupil with the feet planted on the floor.	Twist the body. Look where you are passing the ball. Keep both hands on the ball.	More challenging if the water is deeper than waist height.
Aquatic breathing activities to develop confidence with face and head submerged.	See aquatic breathing activities later in this section.	See aquatic breathing considerations later in this section.
Sitting entries from a playmat – turn and return to mat.	Turn onto tummy. Slide into water slowly.	Emphasise the safety of turn and return.
Sitting entries from poolside – turn and return to poolside.	Support the body with strong arms. Try to keep the head above the water on entry.	Keep chin clear of the poolside. Ensure the entry finishes with the pupil holding the pool wall with both hands.

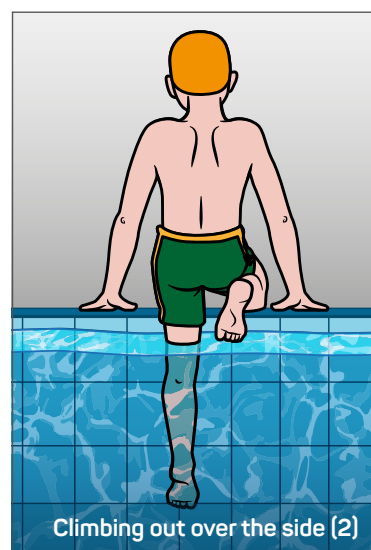
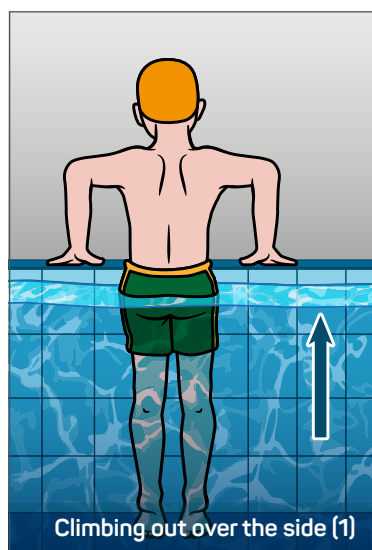
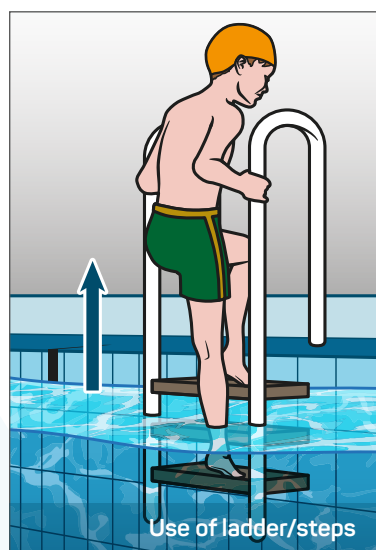
<b>Activities/practices for jumping entries</b>	<b>Teaching points</b>	<b>Safety considerations</b>
Jumping off the pool floor and submerging.	Push off the floor with both feet. Bend the knees and fall under the water. Blow bubbles under the water.	Ensure adequate water depth for height of pupils.
Pencil jumps into standing depth water, to a swimming assistant if required, gradually progressing to deep water.	Bend knees and jump up and over the water. Keep back straight and look forwards. Land in the water feet first with straight legs. Bend legs immediately on entry to lessen the impact with the pool floor.	Ensure you have adhered to the Swim England recommendation for safe water depth for jumping into shallow water (1.0 metre minimum). Ensure pupils jump up and out, away from the pool side. Ensure adequate support in the water for anxious pupils.
Shaped jumps, including star and tuck into deep water.	As above. After making the shape in the air return to a pencil shape before entry.	Emphasise jumping up and out to ensure time to return to a pencil shape before entry.

## Exits

Exits include:

- Use of the steps/ladders.
- Climbing out over the side.

Key features and teaching points	Safety considerations
<p><b>Use of steps/ladder</b></p> <p>Plant the feet on each step.</p> <p>Move up one step at a time.</p> <p>Hold rails if available.</p>	<p>Pupils are likely to have used steps before so they will already be familiar.</p> <p>Steps can be slippery so pupils should walk slowly.</p>
<p><b>Climbing out over the side</b></p> <p>Place both hands on the poolside and press down while using the legs to push from the pool floor.</p> <p>In deep water, a strong breaststroke kick will push the body up.</p> <p>The pupil should push themselves up until the knee can be placed on the poolside and then use the arms and knee to press down and fully exit the water.</p>	<p>Needs to be controlled with hands flat and knee placed between hands to avoid slipping.</p> <p>Pupils can all exit at the same time so it is a quick activity.</p> <p>Pupils with a SEND or mobility issues may find this difficult.</p>



## Buoyancy and balance

Buoyancy and balance in the water are all about floating in a controlled way. Buoyancy and balance help pupils become confident in the water and can be an important safety skill. If pupils get tired, they can float on their back, with their face free of the water.

Buoyancy and balance also help to develop confidence and the correct body position for other skills, such as the swimming strokes.

Floating can be done in stages:

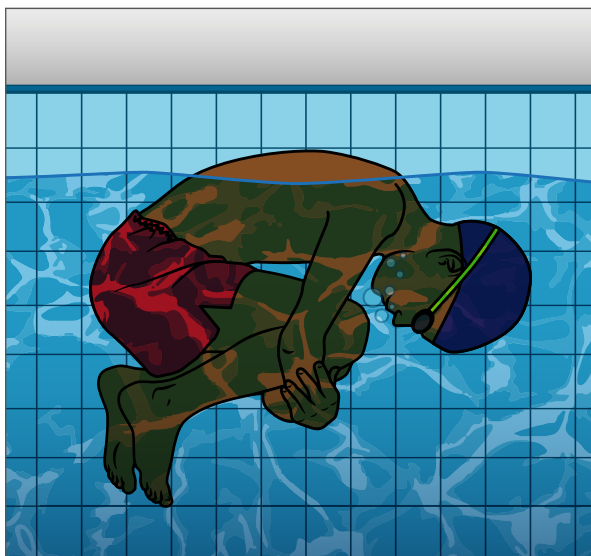
- With physical support from a swimming assistant.
- With floatation equipment, such as discs, noodles and floats.
- Unassisted, with no support or floatation equipment.
- Floating on the back.
- Gently lying on the back with ears in the water.

### Progressive practices for buoyancy and balance

Activities/practices for floating	Teaching points	Safety considerations
<p>Float in different shapes: star, pencil, mushroom, animals and letters, etc.</p> <p>Hold for longer periods to improve balance.</p> <p>Work in pairs and small groups.</p>	<p>When on the back, keep ears in the water, look up at the ceiling and keep the tummy up.</p> <p>When on the front, put the face in the water and blow bubbles.</p> <p>Mushroom float: look down at the pool floor, tuck up in a ball and wrap arms around the legs.</p>	<p>Remember floatation equipment will prevent pupils from experiencing their natural buoyancy. So as soon as they are able, pupils should try floating activities unaided.</p>
<p>Progress to floating positions with rotation, e.g. do a pencil float on the back and then log roll to a pencil float on the front; perform a mushroom float on the front to tuck to mushroom float on the back.</p> <p>Perform a synchronised sequence of floating movements with a partner or small group.</p>	<p>Keep the arms and legs still.</p> <p>Turn the head, shoulders and hips to log roll.</p> <p>Lift the head up and lean back to turn the mushroom.</p> <p>Think about how to know when to change shapes at the same time.</p> <p>Work together as a team.</p>	<p>Use guided discovery as a teaching method.</p> <p>Encourage teamwork and collaboration.</p>

**Tuck float**

Gently curl up with chin on the chest, knees close to the chest. Arms around knees.



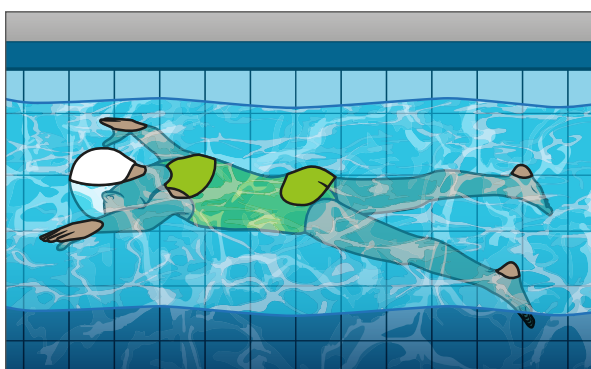
**Floating on the back**

Gently lie on the back with the ears in the water and the hips up.



**Floating on the front**

Gently lie on the front with face in the water.



**Noodle float**

This keeps the face out of the water for new/nervous pupils.



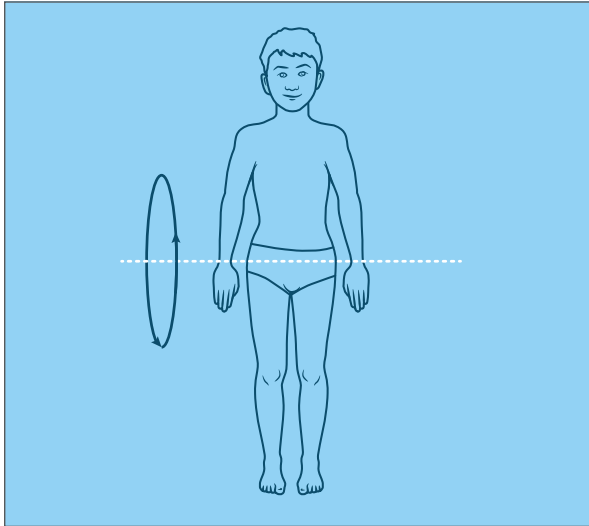


## Rotation and orientation

Rotation and orientation refers to the ability to rotate around an axis of the body. An axis can be horizontal, vertical, or longitudinal.

### Axis

An imaginary central line through the body around which the body can rotate.



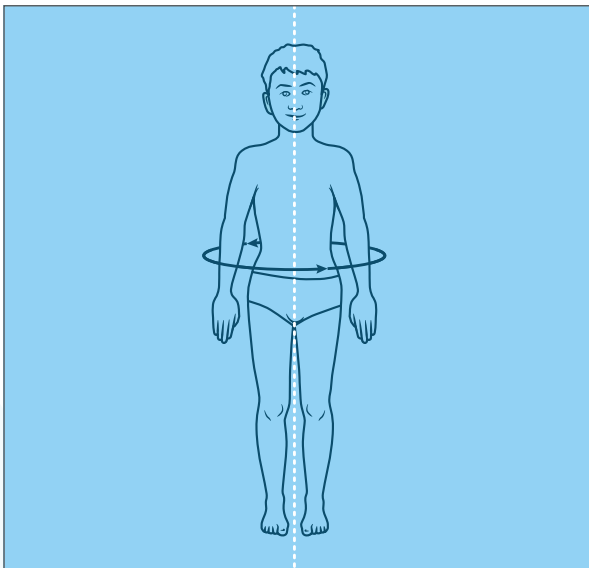
#### Horizontal axis

An imaginary line running across from left to right.

#### Horizontal rotation

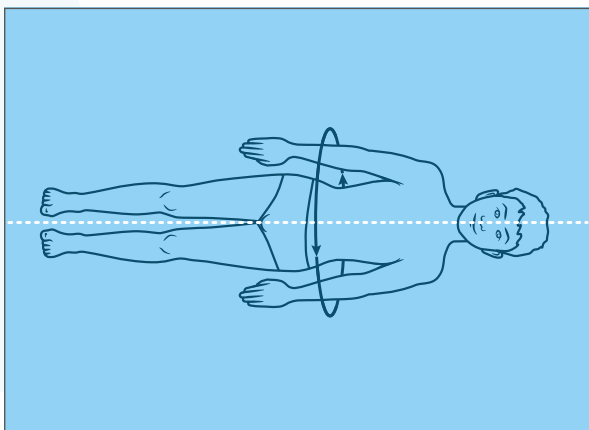
Horizontal rotation is used in activities such as:

- Floating on the back or the front and then regaining an upright position.
- A forward roll in the water.
- A head first surface dive.
- A feet first surface dive.
- Breaststroke and butterfly.



#### Vertical axis

An imaginary line running up and down, through the middle of the body, from the head to the feet.



#### Longitudinal axis

An imaginary line running through the centre of the body from head to toe, when the participant is lying down.

#### Longitudinal rotation

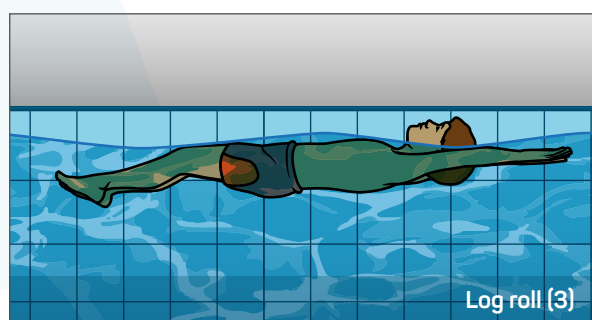
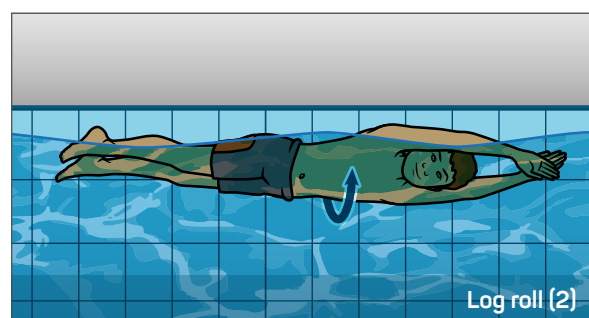
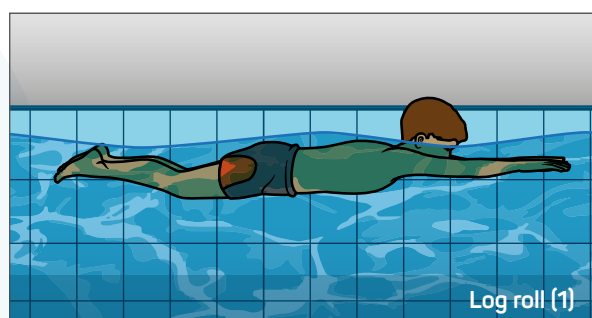
Longitudinal rotation is used in activities such as:

- Front crawl.
- Backstroke.

There are a number of key factors which affect rotation:

- The position of the head.
- Use of the hands.
- Shape of the body.

Key features and teaching points	Safety considerations
<p><b>Regaining an upright position on the back</b> Lift the head to initiate rotation letting the hips sink and the knees bend.</p> <p>Tuck the knees in toward the chest and press down on the water towards the pool floor, sweeping the hands towards the hips and rotating around the horizontal axis.</p> <p>Extend the legs and place the feet firmly on the floor together.</p>	<p>Encourage a continuous press to the hips with the hands</p> <p>Stress planting the feet on the floor at the same time.</p>
<p><b>Regaining an upright position on the front</b> Tuck knees in towards the chest.</p> <p>Lift head, press down on the water towards the pool floor with the palms of the hands.</p> <p>Extend the legs and push both feet firmly on the floor together.</p>	<p>Encourage a continuous press to the hips with the hands.</p> <p>Stress planting the feet on the floor at the same time.</p>
<p><b>Forward roll</b> From a tucked float position, with the face in the water and the chin on the chest, sweep the hands forwards towards the head.</p> <p>Keep chin on chest and knees tucked throughout.</p>	<p>Some pupils will lift their head in the upside down position which will prevent rotation.</p> <p>Water might go up their noses which is uncomfortable, so encourage them to blow bubbles through the nose.</p>
<p><b>Log roll</b> Begin from a pencil float or a push and glide on the front or the back.</p> <p>The body must be stretched and streamlined.</p> <p>The head initiates the turn, shoulders and hips rotate to turn the body.</p> <p>The arms and legs are kept straight and still.</p>	<p>Ensure there is adequate distance in front of the pupil to complete the roll.</p> <p>Ensure there is adequate spacing between pupils.</p>



**Progressive practices for rotation and orientation**

<b>Activities/practices for forward rolls</b>	<b>Teaching points</b>	<b>Safety considerations</b>
Mushroom float.	Look down at the pool floor. Tuck up in a ball. Hold around the legs with both arms.	Ensure adequate pool depth. Ensure there is adequate spacing.
Picking up sinkers.	Head down. Reach with both hands.	Ensure there is adequate spacing.
Push and glide into a handstand.	Chin on chest. Bend at hips. Hands to floor. Legs up straight.	Ensure adequate pool depth. Ensure there is adequate spacing.
Push and glide into a forward roll.	Strong push off the wall. Chin to chest. Sweep hands to hips. Maintain the tight tuck during rotation.	Ensure there is adequate spacing.

<b>Activities/practices for log rolls</b>	<b>Teaching points</b>	<b>Safety considerations</b>
Pencil float activities on front and back.	Long and thin.	Ensure there is adequate spacing.
Push and glide activities on front, back and side on the surface and under water.	Streamlined.	Ensure there is adequate spacing.
Push and glide on the front and log roll to the back. Push and glide on the back and log roll to the front.	Turn head, shoulders and hips to rotate. Keep arms and legs straight and still.	Ensure there is adequate spacing.
Rotation from front to back and vice versa whilst swimming front crawl and backstroke.	Turn head, shoulders and hips to rotate. Long straight legs, kicking from the hip with relaxed floppy ankles and pointed toes. As above, but rotate as the arm is in the propulsive phase, so the arm pull will assist the rotation. Keep arm and leg action continuous.	Initially, rotations can be repeated just once in a swim. As pupils become more able, rotations can be repeated more regularly up to each arm stroke. This should be practiced for short distances only, to avoid dizziness.

**Faults, causes and corrections for forward rolls**

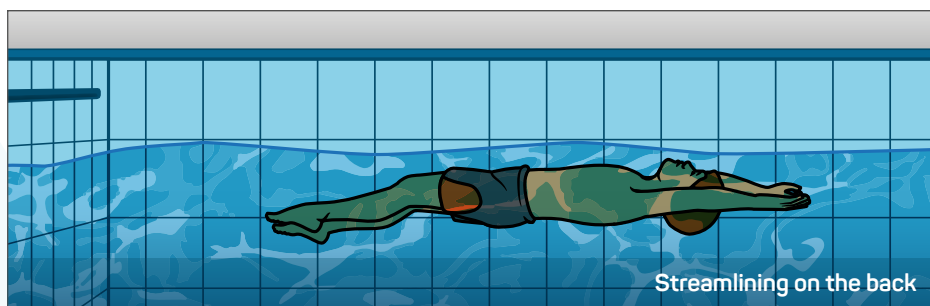
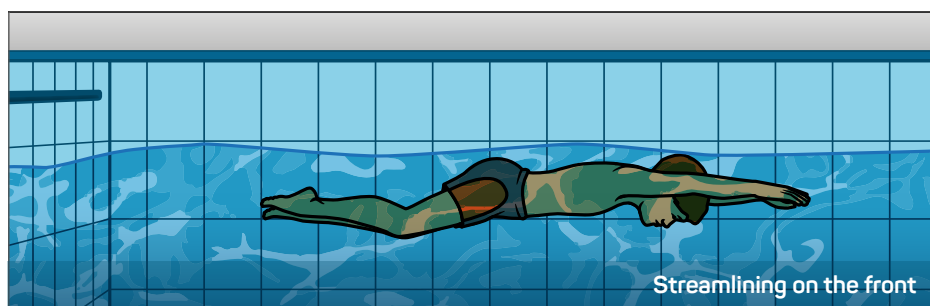
Faults	Causes	Corrections
Twisting when rotating.	Body position not compact/tucked. Lifting head.	Mushroom (tuck) float. Early practices for chin on chest, e.g., picking up sinkers.
Unable to rotate.	Head turned to one side	Emphasise chin straight down on the chest and a still head position.

**Streamlining**

Streamlining is a key part of all four strokes and many skills. It helps to reduce resistance and makes swimming more efficient.

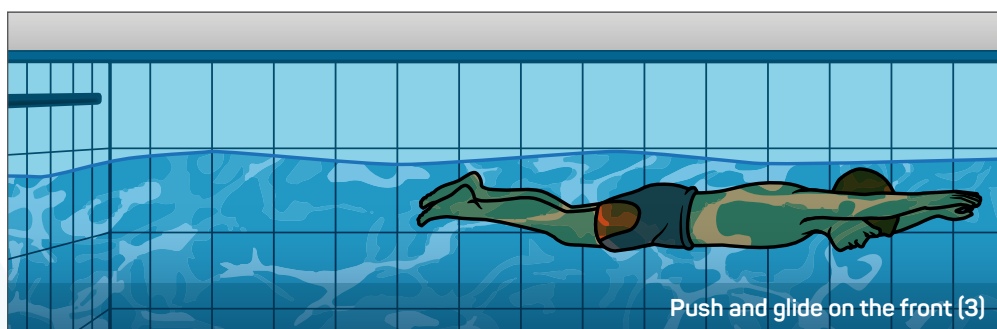
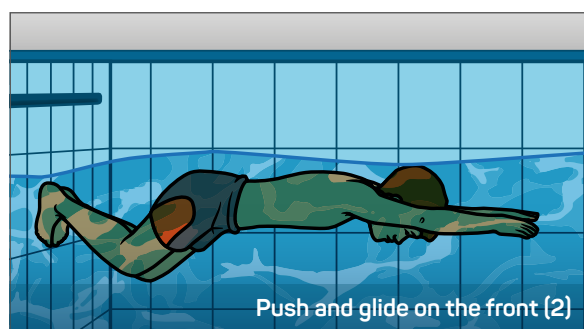
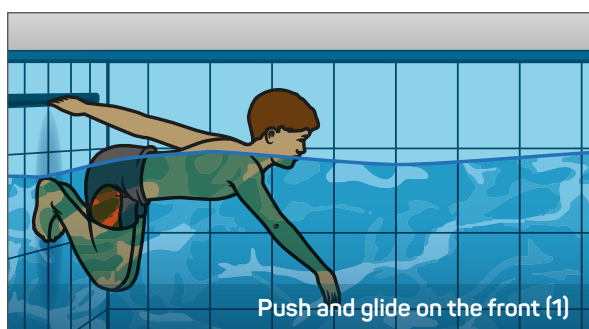
Key features and teaching points:

- One hand on top of the other.
- Arms stretched, squeezing the ears.
- On front, face looking at the floor. On back, face looking at the ceiling.
- Body stretched, straight and level.
- Legs together and straight with feet pointed.



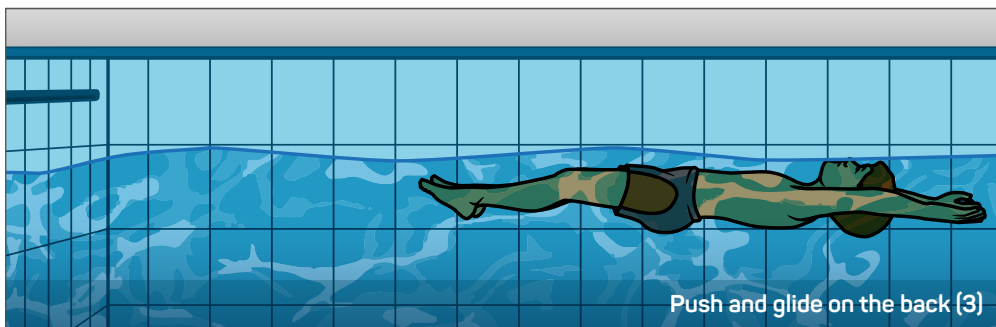
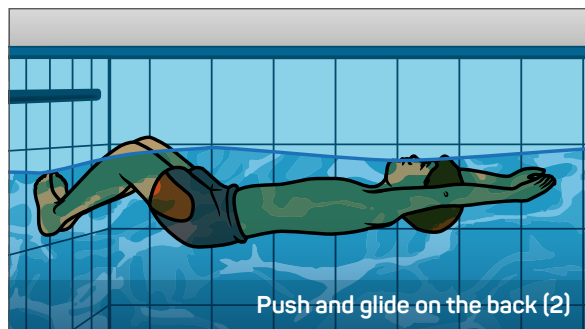
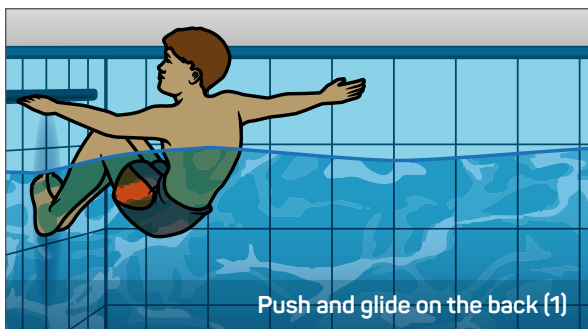
**Push and glide on the front**

Key features and teaching points	Safety considerations
<p>Pupils face the water with their back to the pool wall.</p> <p>One arm reaches in front, with the hand pointing in the direction of travel, the other touches or holds the poolside or rail behind.</p> <p>Placing both feet on the pool wall, pupils put the face in the water, looking down.</p> <p>Pupils push against the pool wall with both feet, bringing the back hand forwards on top of the front hand.</p>	<p>Ensure there is adequate spacing.</p>



**Push and glide on the back**

Key features and teaching points	Safety considerations
<p>Pupils face the pool wall, holding the side or rail with both hands.</p> <p>Place both feet on the wall.</p> <p>The back of the head and ears should be in the water.</p> <p>Push against the pool wall with both feet.</p> <p>Hands can remain at the side or stretch out behind the head.</p> <p>Body should be in a stretched position.</p>	<p>Ensure once the glide is completed the pupil can regain an upright position.</p> <p>Additional support can be given – manual or floatation equipment.</p> <p>Ensure adequate spacing.</p>



**Sink, push and glide under water**

Key features and teaching points	Safety considerations
<p>This can be performed on the front or the back.</p> <p>Face the wall (back glide) or with the back to the wall (front glide).</p> <p>Bend knees and sink under the water and place both feet on the pool wall.</p> <p>Reach in the direction of travel with one hand on top of the other.</p> <p>Push against the wall with both feet, maintaining a stretched position.</p>	<p>Ensure adequate spacing.</p> <p>Ensure pupils protect their heads and angle the push and glide appropriately for the depth of water.</p>

**Progressive practices for the push and glide**

Activities/practices for push and glide on the front	Teaching points	Safety considerations
<p>Push off the pool floor and glide, holding onto a noodle with outstretched arms or a float under each arm.</p>	<p>Lean forwards and push gently off the pool floor.</p> <p>Keep the chin on the surface of the water or the face in the water.</p>	<p>Ensure once the glide is completed, the participant is able to regain an upright position.</p> <p>Additional support can be given – manual or floatation equipment.</p>
<p>Push off the pool floor and glide towards the wall, or a swimming assistant, with the face in the water.</p>	<p>Place one hand on top of the other.</p> <p>Stretch towards the wall or swimming assistant.</p>	<p>Ensure once the glide is completed, the pupil is able to regain an upright position.</p> <p>Additional support can be given – manual or floatation equipment.</p>

Activities/practices for push and glide on the front	Teaching points	Safety considerations
Push off the pool wall and hold different body shapes, e.g. stars, pencils, superman, etc.	<p>Push off the pool wall with both feet.</p> <p>Q: Which shapes make you travel the furthest/fastest?</p> <p>Q: What differences do you feel if your face is in or out of the water?</p>	Ensure once the glide is completed, the pupil is able to regain an upright position and is able to return to the side.

#### Faults, causes and corrections for the push and glide

Faults	Causes	Corrections
Body not flat or level with surface.	Fear of floating on the back or lack of confidence to regain an upright position from the back.	In-water support from a swimming assistant to develop confidence in floating and regaining an upright position from the back.
	Incorrect head position.	Floating activities to develop and awareness of the relationship between head and hip position in the water.
	Fear of water on the face.	Aquatic breathing activities to develop confidence of face in the water.
	Lifting head after push off. Lack of flexibility.	Push and glide activities with specific teaching points to correct the head position and shoulder position (e.g. look at the pool floor (front), keep ears in the water (back), squeeze ears).
Not streamlined.	Lack of body awareness. Legs/arms apart.	Floating activities to develop pencil floats and an awareness of the relationship between head and hip position in the water.
	Head/legs too high or too low.	Push and glide activities with specific teaching points to correct streamlining, e.g. squeeze legs together, put one hand on top of the other, and look at the floor.

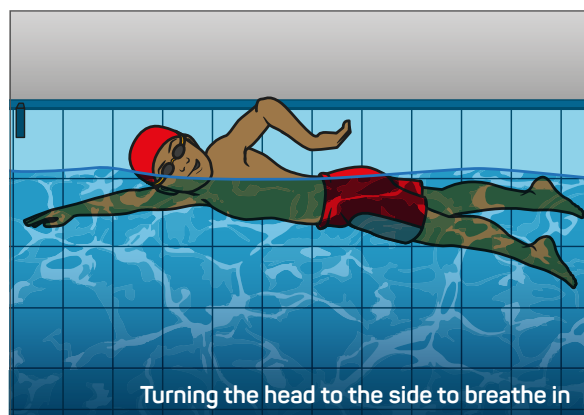
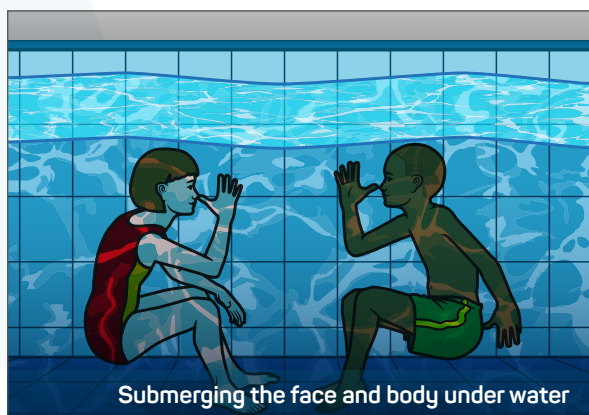
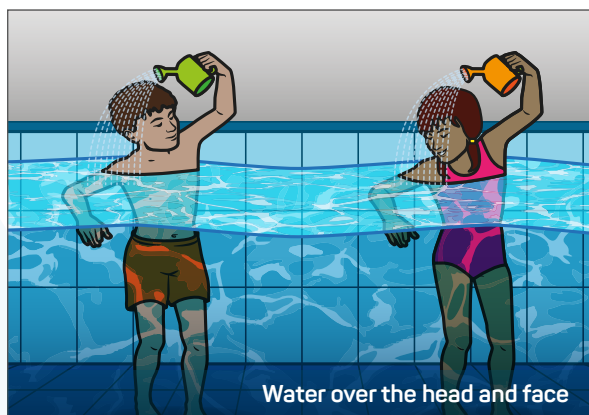
### Aquatic breathing

Aquatic breathing is the ability to breathe rhythmically and under control whilst performing aquatic activities. Aquatic breathing is not just about blowing out in the water; it's also being confident with water in and around the face, mouth and nose.

When swimming, pupils may get water in their mouths. Breathing in at the wrong time can result in swallowing water, which can be distressing. It's therefore important that they learn strategies for dealing with water that goes in their mouths and up their noses.

Remember all aquatic breathing activities should be pupil-led and never forced.

Key features and teaching points	Safety considerations
<p><b>Water over the head and face</b> Pupils are encouraged to splash and pour water over the head and face.</p> <p>Relate to activities done at home, for example, washing the face or having a shower.</p>	<p>Encourage pupils to blink their eyes to remove water, as opposed to rubbing the eyes with their hands.</p>
<p><b>Blowing bubbles</b> Pupils are encouraged to progressively place the mouth, nose and face into the water and blow bubbles.</p>	<p>Ensure pupils are blowing rather than inhaling water.</p>
<p><b>Submerging the face and body under water</b> Pupils are encouraged to place the whole body under the water.</p> <p>Blowing bubbles or holding the breath can be encouraged.</p> <p>Humming into the water is a good activity as it makes air come down the nose, so water cannot go up it.</p>	<p>Ensure depth of water allows the feet to be planted firmly on the floor.</p> <p>Goggles can be worn but it is an important safety skill to open the eyes under the water without them.</p>
<p><b>Turning the head to the side or lifting the head up to breathe in</b> Pupils place their face in the water, blowing bubbles.</p> <p>Pupils then turn the head to the side or forward to take a breath before returning the head to the water.</p>	<p>Ensure pupils are blowing rather than inhaling water.</p>





## Travel and coordination

Travel is how pupils move around in the water. Coordination is using two or more actions effectively whilst travelling. It can be done with a variety of equipment, which can gradually be removed, until pupils are able to move around independently. Travel and coordination covers all ways that pupils move freely, from walking, to basic front and back paddle, sculling, and the four competitive strokes.

Key features and teaching points	Safety considerations
<p><b>Moving through the water</b> Moving, holding the rail or side of the pool or in the centre of the pool.</p> <p>Movement to include walking, running, hopping, jumping.</p> <p>Movement can be forwards, backwards, sideways and at various speeds.</p>	Ensure there is a wide range of floatation equipment to support pupils, especially if they are out of their depth.
<p><b>Front paddle</b> Front crawl leg action combined with a propulsive underwater arm action and aquatic breathing.</p>	Ensure adequate spacing.
<p><b>Back paddle</b> Backstroke leg action combined with a head first sculling action.</p>	Ensure adequate spacing.
<p><b>The four swimming strokes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Backstroke.</li> <li>· Breaststroke.</li> <li>· Front crawl.</li> <li>· Butterfly.</li> </ul>	<p>Ensure butterfly is taught without the use of floatation equipment.</p> <p>Distances are completed in a recognisable stroke and without undue stress.</p>

### Progressive practices for travel and coordination

Activities/practices for front paddle	Teaching points	Safety considerations
Push and glide on the front.	See teaching points for push and glide on the front (page 57).	See safety considerations for push and glide on the front (page 57).
<p><b>Leg kick activities</b> Individually with floatation equipment, for example, holding balls or a float under each arm.</p> <p>In pairs, holding onto a noodle either side by side, or as a train, one behind the other.</p> <p>In a small group, holding onto a large play mat having a 'push of war.'</p> <p>From push and glide with arms extended.</p>	<p>Long, straight legs.</p> <p>Kick from the hip.</p> <p>Point the feet.</p> <p>Hold the equipment with both hands.</p> <p>Face in the water and blow bubbles.</p> <p>Kick fast and make a small splash.</p>	Creative use of a wide variety of teaching equipment is recommended.

Activities/practices for front paddle	Teaching points	Safety considerations
<p><b>Arm action activities</b> Walking using underwater alternating arm action 'tiptoeing through the jungle'.</p> <p>Travel using underwater alternating arm action.</p>	<p>Reach arms as far in front as possible.</p> <p>Pull arms back to chin level with shoulders.</p> <p>One arm at a time but keep them both moving.</p> <p>Pull the water with the hands but keep the fingers closed.</p> <p>Chin in the water.</p>	<p>Encourage pupils to feel they are using their arms to gain propulsion.</p>
<p>Front paddle, chin on the water, chasing toys.</p>	<p>As before but trying to reach toys.</p> <p>Throw and chase the toys.</p>	<p>Ensure toys are safe to put in the pool.</p> <p>Encourage safe throwing to pool space.</p>

Activities/practices for back paddle	Teaching points	Safety considerations
<p>Push and glide on the back.</p>	<p>See teaching points for push and glide on the back (page 57).</p>	<p>See safety considerations for push and glide on the back (page 57).</p>
<p><b>Leg kick activities</b> Lying on the back with a noodle for support.</p> <p>Lying on the back holding a ball/toy on the tummy.</p> <p>From push and glide with arms by the sides.</p>	<p>Long straight legs.</p> <p>Kick from the hip.</p> <p>Point the feet.</p> <p>Hold the equipment with both hands.</p> <p>Look up at the roof, ears in the water.</p> <p>Push the tummy up.</p> <p>Kick fast and make a small splash.</p>	<p>Creative use of a wide variety of teaching equipment is recommended.</p>
<p><b>Arm action activities</b> Standing making an alternating sculling arm action in the water.</p> <p>Walking using an alternating sculling arm action.</p> <p>Kicking with a noodle for support and using a sculling arm action.</p>	<p>Keep hands under water.</p> <p>Sweep out and in with hands.</p> <p>Keep arms close to body.</p>	<p>Encourage pupils to feel they are using their arms to gain propulsion.</p> <p>Ensure adequate spacing.</p>
<p>Back paddle, using a sculling arm action.</p>	<p>Long, straight leg kick.</p> <p>Head back and tummy up.</p> <p>Keep hands under the water.</p> <p>Push the water towards the feet.</p> <p>Smooth actions with hands at the same time.</p>	<p>This is a modified stroke that can be developed into backstroke.</p>

## Sculling

Sculling is an important skill that has a number of applications. Most pupils move their hands around instinctively in some sort of action when in the water. This action will range from mild movement to thrashing. Learning how to scull not only helps pupils make progress in many more advanced aquatic activities, it also helps them enjoy the water with minimal effort.

An important part of propulsion in swimming strokes comes from sculling actions. The sweeps in the arm action involve sculling movements, with the hands changing pitch and following curved pathways.

Key features and teaching points	Safety considerations
<p><b>Stationary or flat scull</b></p> <p><b>Body position</b> Flat and balanced.</p> <p>Ears in the water, eyes looking up.</p> <p>All muscle groups engaged, creating body tension.</p> <p>Toes are pointed and the body is extended and streamlined.</p> <p>The body should not move in the water.</p> <p><b>Leg action</b> None.</p> <p><b>Arm action</b> Arms slightly bent and close to the body.</p> <p>From the elbows and with the thumbs down, the hands sweep away from the thigh.</p> <p>Hands change pitch with the thumbs facing up and the hands sweep back towards the thigh.</p> <p>The actions repeat smoothly and rhythmically.</p> <p><b>Breathing</b> Regular and continuous.</p> <p><b>Timing</b> The hand sweep should be rhythmical with equal force for both sweeps.</p>	<p>Teaching should focus on maintaining body tension and a streamlined body position.</p>
<p><b>Standard or head first scull</b></p> <p>Body position is the same as for the stationary scull.</p> <p>The hands change pitch, so the palms are facing the feet.</p> <p>The hands continue to sweep in and out as with the stationary scull.</p>	
<p><b>Reverse or feet first scull</b></p> <p>Key points are the same as for the head first scull, except the fingers are pointed to the pool floor.</p>	<p>When travelling feet first, pupils tend to relax and lose body tension. The hips drop in the water and the legs come apart.</p>

### Progressive practices for sculling

Activities/practices	Teaching points
<p>Travelling games using hands only sitting on a float or a noodle.</p> <p>Standing in chest deep water and hands on the side of the pool (deck level only).</p> <p>Hands apart and thumbs up, make an imaginary pile of sand.</p> <p>With back of hands together and thumbs down, push the 'sand' away sideways.</p>	<p>Use hands only.</p> <p>Legs stay still.</p> <p>Smooth actions with the hands under the water.</p> <p>Thumbs up, thumbs down.</p> <p>Fingers together.</p>
<p>With hands just under the surface of the water, repeat the actions.</p>	<p>Sweep in, sweep out.</p>
<p>Lying on the back in a streamlined floating position and hands just outside body line, repeat the sweeping actions.</p> <p>A pull buoy or shark fin can be held between the thighs to prevent the legs sinking as appropriate.</p> <p>Pupils who cannot float unaided can use a noodle under the arms for support.</p>	<p>Keep flat in the water.</p> <p>Tummy up.</p> <p>Legs together.</p> <p>Thumbs down, thumbs up.</p> <p>Remain stationary.</p> <p>Continuous, controlled actions.</p>
<p>Maintain a stationary scull.</p> <p>Ask how the pupil can travel head first through the water (guided discovery).</p>	<p>Sweep in, sweep out.</p> <p>Tilt the hands in different positions.</p> <p>Maintain flat body position.</p> <p>Finger point upwards.</p> <p>'Bye bye feet.'</p>
<p>Maintain a stationary scull.</p> <p>Ask how the pupil can travel feet first through the water (guided discovery).</p>	<p>Sweep in, sweep out.</p> <p>Tilt the hands in different positions.</p> <p>Keep legs together with toes at the surface.</p> <p>Keep hips up.</p> <p>Finger point downwards.</p>
<p>Partner and small group sculling activities.</p> <p>Design a synchronised routine using the three sculls.</p>	<p>Teamwork.</p> <p>Maintain streamlining.</p> <p>Smooth controlled hand actions.</p>
<p>Body position balancing game in pairs or groups.</p> <p>Pupil to hold correct body position on bottles whilst partner/team member balances as many toys on the body, legs and head.</p>	<p>Keep head back and muscles tight.</p> <p>Squeeze ankles together and up to the surface.</p> <p>Point toes and extend head through to toes.</p>
<p>Sculling races.</p>	<p>Keep head back and muscles tight.</p> <p>Speed up sculling action to increase speed.</p>

Activities/practices	Teaching points
Individual and small group activities. Discover different methods of sculling (problem-solving).	Smooth controlled actions. Q: do the hands have to be by your side? Q: do you have to be lying on your back?
Partner and small group sculling activities. Design a synchronised routine linking different skills such as sculling and treading water.	Teamwork. Smooth transition from one skill to another. Q: how will effective sculling improve the strokes?

#### Faults, causes and corrections for sculling

Faults	Causes	Corrections
Lack of streamlining.	Head too high. Hips too low. Legs apart. Arm action too wide.	Pencil floats body position balance game with focused teaching points. Sculling with focused teaching points.
Unable to travel head first.	Loss of body tension, resulting in a lack of streamlining and/or incorrect hand action.	Pencil floats body position balance game with focused teaching points; use a pull buoy or shark fin between the ankles. Return to early standing practices for hand action.
Unable to travel feet first.	Loss of body tension resulting in a lack of streamlining (especially legs apart and hips sinking) and/or incorrect hand action.	Body position balance game with focused teaching points. Use a pull buoy or shark fin between the ankles. Return to early standing practices for hand action.

## Water safety

Please refer to pages 23-30 of this guide.

## Health and fitness

Swimming is an inclusive activity. It can be enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities all year round and gives access to a range of aquatic opportunities.

Examples include:

- Diving.
- Synchronised swimming.
- Water polo.
- Open water swimming.
- Lifesaving.
- Scuba diving.
- Canoeing and sailing.
- Snorkelling.

Part of your role as a school swimming teacher is to encourage your pupils to pursue lifelong participation in swimming and other physical activities, beyond school.

Explaining the benefits of swimming to them will help with their understanding of why it's important to be physically active.

Benefits include:

- Low impact.
- Maintains overall fitness.
- Strengthens bones and muscles.
- Improves mental health and mood.
- Helps develop key skills that can be applied to a range of other activities.
- Helps to maintain a healthy weight.

Keeping lessons varied and getting pupils involved in other fun activities related to swimming will maintain their motivation and contribute to their aquatic skill development. Some examples of activities that will help you to enrich your school swimming programme include:

### School Swimathon

- A yearly swimming programme that aims to inspire school children from across the country to 'Swim their Best'.
- Training is incorporated into the national curriculum weekly swimming lessons during the spring term.
- Children set their target distance at the beginning of the Swimathon and make progress across the term.
- In the final session, pupils challenge themselves to meet their target. Badges are awarded to those who are successful.
- Schools that sign up receive marketing resources, wall charts, badges and swim caps.

For more information visit: [schoolswimathon.org](http://schoolswimathon.org).

### Big School Swim

- Swim England's annual campaign that celebrates swimming in schools.
- Provides an opportunity for schools and pupils to find the fun in learning how to swim and understand the importance of water safety.
- Spans four days every November.

For more information visit: [swimming.org/swimengland/big-school-swim](http://swimming.org/swimengland/big-school-swim).

## Introduction to stroke analysis and stroke improvement

The ability to analyse strokes is an important part of the teacher's role in helping pupils to improve their performance. With stroke analysis, the teacher can build up a clear picture of the way a pupil performs a stroke and then find ways to help them improve.

Stroke analysis requires the teacher to:

- Observe the pupil's actions carefully.
- Accurately record the results of the observation.
- Decide on the steps needed 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.
- Carefully observe the pupil's actions to ascertain whether improvement has been made.
- Repeat the above process as required.

### BLABT

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

B – body position

L – leg action

A – arm action

B – breathing

T – timing

When observing a pupil perform a stroke, each of the above should be considered against the mental picture the teacher has of how the stroke should be performed.

For each area of BLABT, the teacher should take into account the following key points:

B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The position of the head, shoulders, hips and legs in relation to the rest of the body.</li> <li>• The position of the body in relation to the water surface.</li> </ul>
L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The movements the legs are making in relation to the water surface and the rest of the body.</li> <li>• The change in shape of the feet/legs.</li> <li>• Whether the leg action is relaxed or stiff.</li> <li>• Whether it is streamlined.</li> <li>• Whether it is continuous.</li> <li>• Whether it is propulsive.</li> </ul>
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How and where the hands enter the water.</li> <li>• The shape of the propulsive phase pathway.</li> <li>• Whether the hands accelerate.</li> <li>• What part of the hand or arm exits first and where?</li> <li>• How and where do the hands/arms recover?</li> </ul>
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The actions needed to get the mouth clear of the water to inhale.</li> <li>• Where inhalation and exhalation take place.</li> <li>• Whether exhalation is explosive, a trickle or something different.</li> </ul>
T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of kicks to each arm action.</li> <li>• Where the breathing fits in with the arm action.</li> </ul>

When considering the process of stroke analysis it's important to follow the specific order detailed above. It would be inappropriate to focus on the leg action if there were serious problems with the body position, for example (unless the problem with the body position had its origin in the action of the legs).

Ideally, observations should be made from a number of different positions so a full and accurate picture can be achieved. For example, aspects of the breaststroke leg action are best observed with the pupil travelling away from the observer, whilst the body position may best be observed from the side.

Like many skills, stroke analysis improves with practise. It's important to keep disciplined with your observations, taking in information about one aspect of the stroke at a time rather than attempting to look at the whole stroke. Too much information in this situation may prevent the teacher from providing the very specific steps needed to help the pupil improve.

## Introduction to the four main strokes

### Propulsion

Pupils should work towards being able to propel themselves on fronts, backs or sides, on and under the surface of the water and subsequently to change direction. Movement used at this stage may resemble recognised stroke patterns but does not need to be 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. Lifting the arms out of the water during recovery causes the body to sink, which is not recommended at 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 actions of front crawl and backstroke are combined with alternating arm actions with under water 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 for one of the strokes more natural to them.

This method is recommended when teaching children as it promotes the importance of a number of skills and is the ethos of Swim England's Learn to Swim Framework and ADSP. It helps with varied stroke development at a later stage and provides the earliest opportunity for pupils to experience movement through the water without floatation equipment.

The multi-stroke approach can:

- Add variety to a session.
- Allow for individual physical characteristics.
- Allow 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.
- Backstroke.
- Breaststroke.
- Butterfly.

Please note: for pupils with a special educational need and/or disability (SEND), 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 under water 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, have an understanding of aquatic breathing and can demonstrate a good streamlined body position.

### BLABT

#### Body position

- Body flat, stretched and streamlined on the front.
- Face in the water, water level in line with mid forehead, eyes looking downwards and slightly forward.
- Head and legs in line with the body.
- Shoulders and upper body rotate around the longitudinal axis with each arm stroke.

#### Leg action

- Balances the rotation of the shoulders and provides some propulsion.
- The kick is alternating from the hip.
- The legs are close together with a slight knee bend on the up kick and straight on the down kick.
- The ankles are relaxed and the feet long and intoed.
- The feet remain under the water with just the heels breaking the surface.

#### Arm action

- Provides the main propulsion with its continuous arm action, long underwater arm pull and overwater recovery.

Entry:

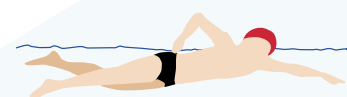
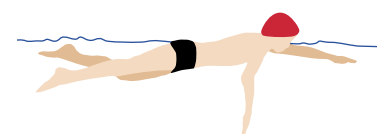
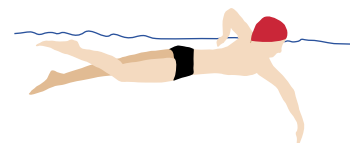
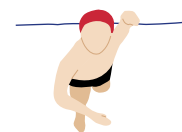
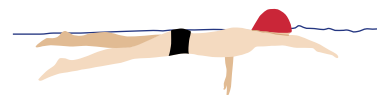
- Palm down, finger tips lead the hand entry between the head and shoulder line.
- The elbow is slightly bent on entry and straightens as the hand reaches forward.
- The hand moves slightly down and out to catch.

Propulsive phase:

- The hand sweeps under the body towards the centre line with the elbow bending to 90 degrees.
- The hand changes direction and sweeps out to the thigh.
- The elbow leaves the water first followed by the wrist and hand.

Recovery:

- The elbow remains higher than the hand with the fingers close to the water surface.
- The arm is relaxed as it comes over the water.



### Breathing

- Takes place to the side.
- Air is exhaled through the mouth and/or nose.
- As the hand sweeps towards the thigh, the head is turned to the side.
- The ear and cheek remain in the water.
- A breath is taken and the face smoothly returns to the water before the arm finishes the recovery.

### Timing

- Both arm and leg actions should be continuous and rhythmic.
- There are usually six leg kicks to every arm cycle.
- Breathing can be unilateral (to one side) or bilateral (to both sides, usually after every third arm pull).

### Progressive practices for front crawl

Activities/practices	Teaching points
<b>Body position</b>	
Pencil float on front.	Face in water and blow bubbles. Stretch arms above the head.
Push and glide towards the pool wall.	Place one hand on top of the other. Stretch towards to the pool wall.
Push and glide on the front and glide as far as you can.	Lean forward and gently push off the wall. Keep chin close to the surface of the water or face in the water.
<b>Leg action</b>	
Push and glide with arms extended, face in the water, kicking and holding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noodle.</li> <li>• Two floats.</li> <li>• One float.</li> <li>• Ball or other floating toy.</li> </ul>	Relaxed ankles. Long legs. Kick from the hip. Small splash.
Push and glide front crawl leg action, without floatation equipment. Kicking through a hoop or under water.	Long and streamlined. Continuous kick.
Kicking races with or without floatation equipment.	Continuous kicks from hips. Fast leg kick.
Kicking in pairs, holding opposite side of noodle (See 'Kicking Duel' activity on National Curriculum Activity Cards).	
<b>Arm action</b>	
Front crawl arm action, standing.	Slide fingers in and reach forwards. Push hand back to thigh.
Front crawl arm action, walking.	Elbow exits water first. Keep elbow high.
Push and glide with arms extended, face in the water, single arm action, no breathing. Limited number of strokes.	Hold float with a long extended arm. Touch thigh before exiting the water.

Push and glide with arms extended, face in the water, alternating action, no breathing. Limited number of strokes.	Feel the catch (water). Pull and push water to thigh.
Above practices and increase number of strokes.	Relaxed arm over the water.
<b>Breathing</b>	
Holding rail or side with one hand, breathe to the side.	Blow out explosively. Ear and cheek stay in the water.
Walking in the water, face in with one arm extended.	Turn head to side to breathe.
Walking in water using front crawl arm action.	Face returns back to the water smoothly.
Full stroke breathing after one stroke cycle.	Smooth controlled head movement.
As above complete a second stroke cycle before stopping. Extend the number of strokes.	Breathe in as the head sweeps to the side.
Repeat breathing practices with bilateral breathing.	
<b>Timing</b>	
Full stroke with unilateral breathing.	Continuous arm and leg actions. Breathe every two arm actions.
Full stroke with bilateral breathing.	Continuous leg kick. Breathe every three arm pulls.

#### Faults, causes and corrections for front crawl

Faults	Causes	Corrections
Snaking movements of the body through the water.	Head moving from side to side. Hand entry over the centre line. Lack of core engagement.	Front paddle with chin on the water, focusing on a still head. Full stroke over short distances without breathing. Early arm action practices, focusing on entry between head and shoulder with a relaxed recovery.
Body over-rotating	Head turning too much to breathe. Head too low.	Early breathing practices, keeping cheek in the water when turning head to breathe.
Bouncing up and down.	Straight-arm propulsive phase.	Early arm action practices stressing pull and push to thigh.
Feet/legs kicking out of the water.	Head position too low.	Body position practices, stressing water level at mid-forehead.
Feet kicking deep in the water.	Head position too high. Face not in the water.	Body position practices, stressing water level at mid-forehead.
Kicking from the knees.	Lack of understanding. Over-enthusiastic kicking.	Recap early leg action practices, focusing on kicking from the hips.
Slapping hand on entry.	Fingers not entering first.	Early arm action practices, focusing on sliding fingers in.

<b>Faults</b>	<b>Causes</b>	<b>Corrections</b>
Weak arm action with little or no propulsion.	Straight-arm propulsive phase. Dropped elbow during propulsive phase.	Early arm action practices, stressing high elbow and pull/push to thigh during the underwater phase.
Lifting head in front to breathe.	Lack of confidence. Anxiety. Eyes closed under water and unsure of direction of swim.	Early standing breathing practices, focused on turning the head to the side with the cheek in the water.
Struggling to breathe or feeling like running out of breath.	Breath-holding. Not fully exhaling before inhalation. Lack of regular breathing pattern.	Early breathing practices, focused on exhalation, inhalation and a regular breathing pattern.

## Backstroke

Backstroke is a development from back paddle, which introduces the alternating legs action. The over arm recovery is developed once the pupil is able to maintain a streamlined body position and use an effective leg kick.

Once learnt, backstroke will often be the first-choice stroke as it permits the face to be clear of the water and presents few difficulties with breathing. However, during the early stages, you may find that some learners are reluctant to attempt the stroke due to a fear of swimming on the back.

### BLABT

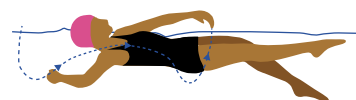
#### Body position

- Body flat, stretched and streamlined on the back.
- Slightly saucer shaped with hips just below the surface.
- Back of the head pillowed in the water, and held still in a central position, eyes looking upwards and slightly forward to the feet.
- Shoulders and upper body rotate around the longitudinal axis with each arm stroke.



#### Leg action

- Balances the rotation of the shoulders and provides some rotation.
- The kick is alternating from the hips and continuous.
- The legs are close together with a slight bend on the down kick and straight on the up kick.
- The ankles are relaxed and the feet long and intoed.
- The feet remain under the water with just the toes breaking the surface.



#### Arm action

- Provides the main propulsion with its continuous arm action, long underwater arm pull and overwater recovery.

##### Entry:

- Hand is placed into the water, little finger first, and palm facing outward. The entry is between the head and shoulder line.
- The arm is straight and close to the ear.



##### Propulsive phase:

- The propulsive phase follows the hand entry. The hand sweeps out, down and towards the feet, with the elbow bending to 90 degrees and pointing at the pool floor.
- The hand changes direction and sweeps up and in, turning to press down at the thigh with the arm straight alongside the body.
- The back of the wrist or thumb side of the hand exits the water first.



##### Recovery:

- The hand and arm are relaxed and straight as they recover.
- The hand follows a controlled semi-circular pathway in line with the body.

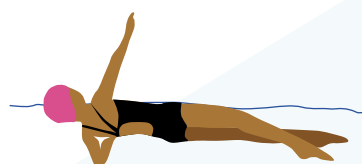


#### Breathing

- Regular breathing pattern.
- Breathe in with one arm pull, breathe out with the other.

#### Timing

- Both arm and leg actions should be continuous and controlled.



**Progressive practices for backstroke**

Activities/practices	Teaching points
<b>Body position</b>	
Pencil float on back.	Stretched body.
Push and glide on the back.	Look up.
<b>Leg action</b>	
Kicking with ears in the water holding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noodle.</li> <li>• Two floats.</li> <li>• One float.</li> <li>• Ball or other floating toy.</li> </ul>	Relaxed ankles. Long legs. Kick from the hip. Small splash.
Push and glide whilst kicking with hands by thighs.	Relaxed ankles. Long legs. Continuous kick.
Push and glide whilst kicking with arms extended above the head.	Relaxed ankles. Long legs. Continuous kick.
Kicking with toy balanced on forehead.	Keep head still. Knees under the water.
Kicking with elbows close to the waist and hands out of the water – still, waving or clapping.	Keep head still. Knees under the water.
<b>Arm action</b>	
Standing in the water focusing on one arm then the other arm and progress to both arms and in an alternating action.	Arm straight. Brush arm past ear.
Backstroke kicking with single arm action, float held across chest.	Pull and push water to the thigh. Back of wrist or thumb exits the water first. Repeat practice using other arm.
Using both arms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit the number of arm cycles.</li> <li>• Increase the number of arm cycles.</li> <li>• Increase distance.</li> </ul>	Relaxed arm over the water. Continuous arm action.
<b>Breathing</b>	
Full stroke but limit the number of arm cycles.	Breathe regularly.
Increase the number of arm cycles or distance.	Breathe in as one arm recovers. Breathe out as the other arm recovers.
<b>Timing</b>	
Full stroke.	Continuous arm and leg actions.

**Faults, causes and corrections for backstroke**

<b>Faults</b>	<b>Causes</b>	<b>Corrections</b>
Body over-rotating.	Head rolling from side to side. Pulling too deep under the water.	Early arm action practices focused on keeping the head still.
Bouncing up and down.	Straight-arm propulsive phase.	Early arm action practices stressing pull and push to thigh.
Feet and ankles kicking out of the water.	Head position too low. Kicking from the knees.	Body position and leg action practices, stressing water level covering ears and only toes breaking the surface.
Feet kicking deep in the water.	Head position too high. Poor propulsive leg action.	Body position practices. Leg action practices with float over knees – pupils must touch the float with each kick.
Kicking from the knees.	Lack of understanding. Over-enthusiastic kicking.	Leg action practices with float over knees – pupils must <b>not</b> touch the float.
Snaking movements of the body.	Head moving from side to side. Hand entry over or outside the centre line. Ballistic arm recovery.	Full stroke over short distances keeping head still. Early arm action practices, focusing on entry between head and shoulder, and relaxed recovery.
Hand entry back of hand or thumb first.	Lack of understanding.	Early arm action practices, focusing on entry.
Weak arm action with little or no propulsion.	Straight-arm propulsive phase.	Early arm action practices stressing pull/push to thigh during the underwater phase, with elbow pointing toward the floor.
Arms pulling one at a time in a non-continuous action, typically stopping at the thigh.	Lack of confidence on on the back. Trying too hard. Lack of understanding of the continuous alternating action.	Kicking with one arm extended by the ear and one by the thigh. On command, pull with the extended arm and recover the one by the thigh. Repeat and then return to full stroke.
Struggling to breathe /running out of breath.	Breath-holding. Not fully exhaling before inhalation. Lack of regular breathing pattern.	Early breathing practices, focused on exhalation, inhalation and a regular breathing pattern.

## Breaststroke

Breaststroke is one of the two simultaneous strokes with both arms and legs performing the same actions at the same time. It is also the slowest of the swimming strokes.

### BLABT

#### Body position

- Body flat stretched and streamlined, with a slope from head to feet to allow the leg action to take place under water.
- Head is still with no lateral movement.
- Body position varies to head in the water to shoulders above surface when breathing.
- Head and legs in line with the body.
- Shoulders are level.
- Hips are level.

#### Leg action

- Provides the main propulsion.
- From an extended streamlined position the legs recover, bringing the heels up towards the seat.
- Knees remain behind the hip line, pointing down and slightly out.
- Feet are hip width apart and are now dorsiflexed (turned out).
- Simultaneously the feet sweep out, down and in, following a narrow semi-circular pathway.
- The feet are brought together with the legs straight and streamlined.

#### Arm action

- Arms extended in front of the body with the hands close together.
- Hands pitched with palms facing down and out, fingers relaxed and together.

#### Propulsive phase:

- Hands simultaneously scull down and out to the catch.
- Hands continue to sweep downwards and outwards.
- Elbows bend to 90 degrees remaining close to the surface of the water.
- Hands sweep inwards and upwards under the shoulder line.
- The elbows remain bent and tuck in at each side of the body.

#### Recovery:

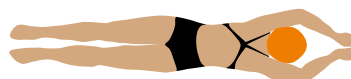
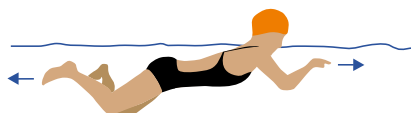
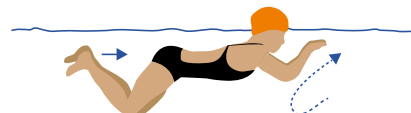
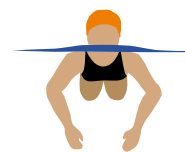
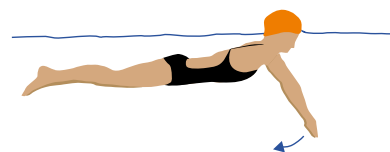
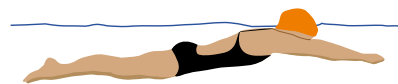
- From the chest the hands are pushed forwards just under or on the surface.
- Arms are extended and streamlined with hands close together.

#### Breathing

- The head is lifted, during the in sweep of the arm action.
- A breath is taken in and the face drops back into the water to breathe out.
- Breathing out is usually explosive as the arms are recovering.

#### Timing

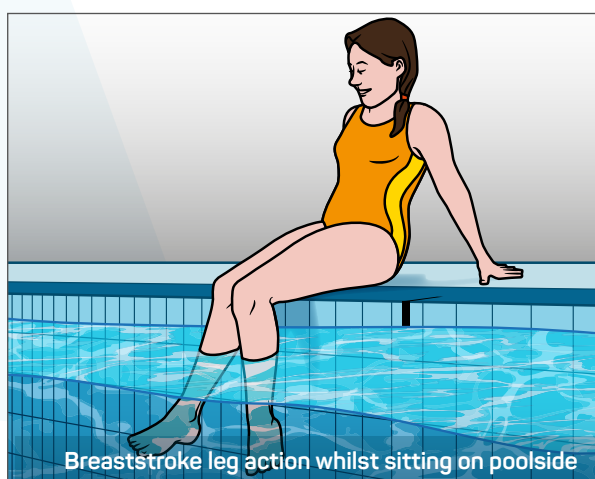
- When the arms are in the propulsive phase the legs are streamlined.
- When the legs are in the propulsive phase the arms are streamlined.
- A breath is taken every stroke cycle.
- The stroke cycle is pull-breathe-kick-glide.





**Progressive practices for breaststroke**

Activities/practices	Teaching points
<b>Body position</b>	
Push and glide in prone (front) position.	Face in the water, one hand on top of the other.
<b>Leg action</b>	
Breaststroke leg action whilst sitting on poolside; bend knees; bring heels to the pool wall, and move them in a circular action until legs are straight out in front with feet together.	Push the water with the soles of the feet. Finish with feet together.
Breaststroke leg action, holding a noodle or two floats under each arm on the front.	Turn feet out. Feet follow a circular pathway.
Breaststroke leg action, holding a noodle or two floats under each arm on the back.	Watch the leg action. Heels up towards seat.
Breaststroke leg action, holding one float, arms extended in front.	Push the water with the soles of the feet.
Breaststroke leg kick with arms extended in front.	Finish leg kick with feet together.
<b>Arm action</b>	
Breaststroke arm action, standing.	Reach forwards with hands together. Draw a small circle with the hands.
Breaststroke arm action, walking.	Fingers together.
Push and glide and one complete stroke.	Tuck elbows in to side of body.
Full stroke with noodle.	Reach forward with hands.
Full stroke with limited number of arm actions.	Small circles with arms (scoop out a bowl with your hands).
<b>Breathing</b>	
Standing in water.	Lift head and push chin forward to breathe. Return face to water.
Walking in water.	Blow out as hands push forward.
Over a number of strokes, gradually increasing amount and distance.	Breathe every stroke.
<b>Timing</b>	
Push and glide and one complete stroke cycle. Repeat, building the number of cycles.	Pull-breathe-kick-glide.



Breaststroke leg action whilst sitting on poolside

**Faults, causes and corrections for breaststroke**

<b>Faults</b>	<b>Causes</b>	<b>Corrections</b>
Uneven or non-simultaneous leg action.	Lack of understanding. Uneven shoulders. Uneven hips. One knee turned in. One foot turned in. Lack of flexibility, or injury.	Return to early leg action practices. Over-correction, such as dropping the opposite shoulder/hip. Focus on performing the action with the heels and big toes bent up. Use concepts such as 'draw a circle with your heels'.
Both feet turned in.	Hypermobile ankles. Lack of understanding.	Return to early leg action practices. Reduce number of actions and rest as soon as the feet stop turning out (perhaps just one or two actions at a time).
Bobbing up and down.	Tucking knees toward chest in front of the hipline.	Return to early leg action practices on front, focusing on heels to seat.
Knees pulling forward of hips.	Teaching of wedge kick (often on back) and not whip kick.	Return to early leg action practices, making sure to keep knees narrow and behind the line of the hips.
Pulling past hip line either with or without a flutter kick, especially when breathing.	Weak leg action with legs too low in the water. Long propulsive phase and long underwater recovery.	Return to early body, leg, arm and breathing practices.
Uneven shoulders and/or hips.	Looking to one side. Uneven arm action.	Leg action practices focusing on looking straight ahead at a toy or marker. Arm action practices with two floats or a noodle under the armpits.
Wide leg and arm actions.	Lack of understanding of the correct technique. Straight leg and arm actions.	Return to early practices, focusing on narrow pathway. Visualise swimming through a narrow tube.
Hips and leg action low in the water.	Face out of the water throughout the stroke. Weak leg action.	Return to early aquatic breathing confidence and leg action practices.
Lifting head to breathe at the start of the arm action.	Lack of confidence.	Return to early breathing practices, focusing on breathing as the hands prepare to sweep in under the chest.
Not breathing every stroke.	Pupil under water.	Return to early breathing and timing practices. Gradually increase time and distance.
Stroke cycle starting with the leg action.	Lack of understanding.	Return to timing practices.
Continuous arm/leg actions.	No glide.	Return to timing practices with a three second, then two second, then one second streamlined glide.

## Butterfly

Butterfly is one of the fastest strokes, due to its long propulsive arm action and powerful simultaneous kick. It is performed on the front with an undulating body position.

### BLABT

#### Body position

- Body position starts flat, stretched and streamlined, on the front; head in line and face in the water.
- The body position undulates throughout the stroke.
- Shoulders level.
- Hips level.
- Hips remain close to the surface of the water throughout.

#### Leg action

- The kick is simultaneous and from the hip.
- Legs close together.
- Ankles relaxed, feet long and intoed.
- Legs straighten during the down kick causing the hips to rise.
- The knees bend slightly during the up kick and the hips sink.
- The feet just break the surface at the end of the up kick.

#### Arm action

Provides the main propulsion with its simultaneous action, long underwater arm pull and overwater recovery.

Entry:

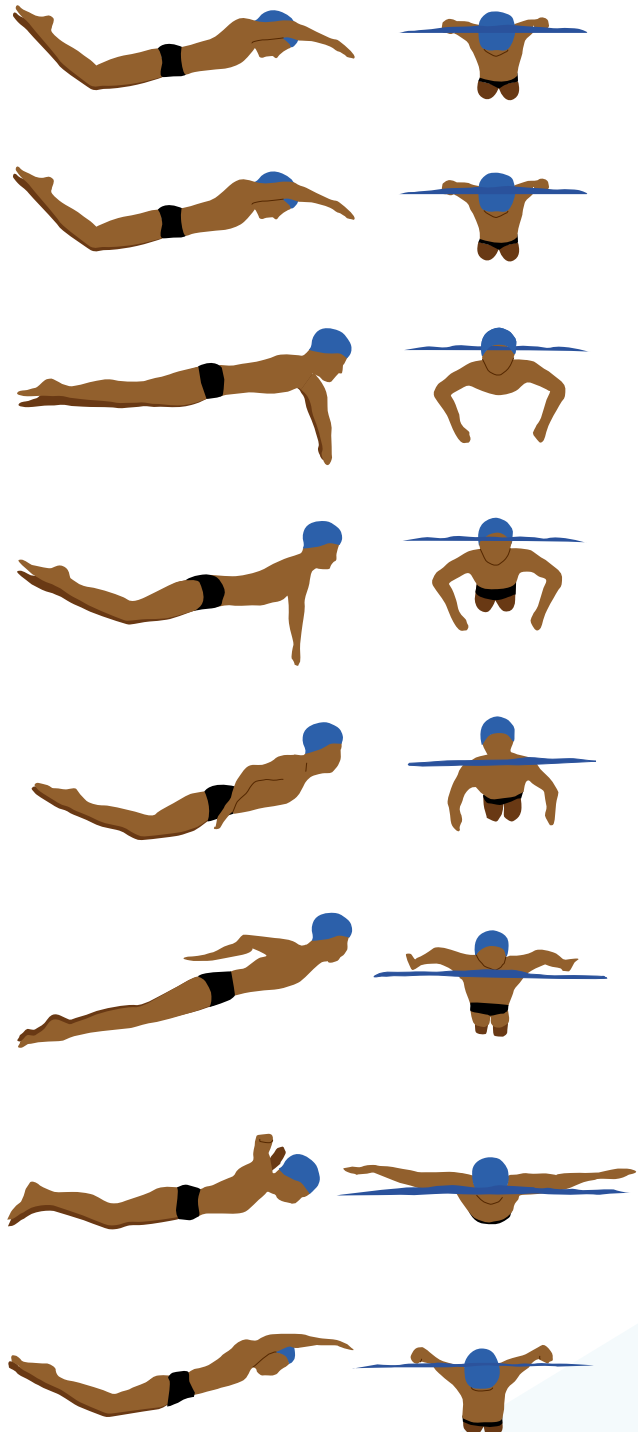
- Palms down, finger tips lead, the hands enter the water, level with or just outside the shoulder line.
- Elbows high and slightly bent on entry, straightening as the hands reach forward under the surface.
- The hands move slightly down and out to catch.

Propulsive phase:

- The hands sweep down, out and back until the elbows bend to 90 degrees.
- The hands sweep under the body towards the centre line.
- The hands sweep out, back and up to the thigh.
- Little fingers exit first.

Recovery:

- Arms recover over the water.
- Elbows slightly bent and high, fingers close to the water.



### **Breathing**

- A powerful down kick helps lift the face above the water.
- The chin is pushed forward on the water surface.
- In breath now takes place and the face quickly drops back into the water before the arms have completed the recovery.
- Breathing out is usually explosive, immediately before the head lifts to take a breath.

### **Timing**

- Typically two kicks to each arm cycle.
- Kick down as the hands enter and kick down as the hands exit.
- The order is kick, pull, kick, recover.
- Regular breathing pattern, ideally every two strokes.

**Progressive practices for butterfly**

Activities/practices	Teaching points
<b>Body position</b>	
Push and glide and undulate in prone (front) position. (Refer to National Curriculum Activity Cards for more undulating practices).	Face in the water, one hand on top of the other.
<b>Leg action</b>	
Push and glide; add leg action in prone (front) position, arms at the side and extended.	Strong downward kick.
Push and glide; add leg action in supine (back) position, arms at side.	Hips up, hips down. Kick your socks off!
Push and glide under water. Add leg action on side, one arm extended, and then change sides.	Legs close together. Feet together.
<b>Arm action</b>	
Standing in the water, with the face in the water.	Throw arms over the water.
Walking with the face in the water.	Fingers in first. Pull and push to the thighs.
Push and glide, add one or two arm strokes, gradually increasing the number of strokes.	Push the water to the thigh. Throw arms over the water.
<b>Breathing</b>	
Standing in the water, arm action, breathe to the front.	Breathe out as hands push to thighs. Breathe in as arms start the recovery.
Walking in the water, arm action, breathe to the front.	Return head to water quickly before hands enter the water.
Full stroke, breathing every stroke.	Breathe out as hands push to thighs. Breathe in as arms start the recovery.
Full stroke, breathing every two strokes, increase distance as appropriate.	Return head to water quickly before hands enter the water.
<b>Timing</b>	
Push and glide and complete one full stroke cycle.	Kick down as the hands enter the water. Kick down as the hands exit the water.
Repeat, building the number of cycles whilst maintaining the skill level.	Breathe out as the hands push to the thighs. Breathe in as the hands start the recovery.

**Faults, causes and corrections for butterfly**

<b>Faults</b>	<b>Causes</b>	<b>Corrections</b>
Excessive undulation.	Trying too hard. Lack of understanding. Kicking too deep.	Return to early body position/leg action practices, focusing on a gentle wave-like action.
Head too high and hips too low.	Fear of putting face in the water. Weak leg action. Lifting head too high to breathe.	Early confidence and aquatic breathing practices. Body position and leg action practices. Early breathing practices focused on the chin remaining in the water.
Excessive knee bend.	Trying too hard with the kick. Kicking from the knee.	Early leg action practices focusing on the kick, starting at the chest and flicking off the feet.
Limited forward propulsion when kicking.	Lack of undulation. Lack of power in the kick.	Early body position practices. Kicking practices, focused on the whip-like action of the kick.
Alternating leg action.	Lack of awareness of what the correct action feels like.	Leg action practices, focusing on the legs being 'glued' together. Let the kick flick off the feet.
Wide hand entry.	Lack of mobility. Head up.	Arm action practices. Focus on the need for chin on the chest.
Arms not clearing the water.	Lack of strength. Tiredness. Weak leg action. Poor mobility. Incorrect timing or stroke.	Recap all early practices. Reduce time and distance of repeats. Focus on throwing the arms forwards over the water.
Arms not simultaneous.	Lack of strength/tiredness. Uneven shoulder strength or flexibility. Breathing to the side.	Recap early practices. Reduce time and distance of repeats. Focus on throwing the arms over the water simultaneously.
Pausing after entry, or at end of propulsive phase.	Tiredness. Incorrect timing of leg and arm action.	Recap early practices. Reduce time and distance of repeats. Focus on continuous, rhythmic arm actions.
Head up as hands enter.	Incorrect timing of breathing.	Recap early breathing practices. Focus on getting the head back into the water before the hands enter.
Too many or not enough kicks.	Incorrect timing.	One arm stroke with two kicks. Gradually increase the number of strokes, focusing on two kicks per stroke cycle.

Faults	Causes	Corrections
Pausing during the stroke.	Tiredness. Incorrect timing.	Reduce distances. Focus on continuous actions.
Taking a breath too early or too late.	Incorrect timing.	Recap early breathing practices. Focus on exhale as hands push out to thigh – inhale as arms start the recovery. Gradually increase distance of repeats.

## 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 pupil has time to practise the skill after the demonstration.
- Try to get pupils to try the whole skill where possible, before breaking it down into its component parts.
- In a group learning environment, if the majority of pupils are struggling with a new skill, recall the whole group and make adjustments.
- If only a few pupils are struggling, then work with these pupils to make adjustments in a small group situation.
- If only one pupil is struggling, create an environment in which you can work with them individually.

## Communication

Communication is the process of sharing information with others. It's essential in your role as a swimming teacher. You need to be able to communicate fully with your pupils, swimming assistants and other responsible adults.

There are three basic methods of communication:

1. Verbal – using words and sounds to express oneself.
2. Non-verbal – communicating without speaking.
3. Manual – physically assisting a pupil to achieve the correct movement.

Good teachers will vary their style of teaching to meet the needs of different pupils and will change the way they communicate if instructions are not being fully understood.

### Verbal communication

The swimming pool environment usually has poor acoustics and background sounds, as well as noise from other activities, pupils, teachers and spectators, so it is essential for your verbal communication to be effective.

Key points include:

- Speak clearly and pitch explanations and instructions at the level of the pupils.
- Be concise – don't say more than you have to.
- Look at pupils when you are speaking, remembering that if you turn your head away, your voice will travel in the direction you are facing and some might struggle to hear you.

Volume is how loudly you speak. You will need to project your voice so that pupils and swimming assistants can hear what you are saying. Check at various points in your lesson that everyone can do so. It's important to remember that although you need to make sure you can be heard, consistent shouting can be a strain on you, and can also be a distraction for other classes working around you.

Tone is the way in which you say something and can help illustrate your message. For example, if you say 'jump up', raising the tone of your voice on 'up' will help describe the action you want pupils to do. Similarly, if you want pupils to 'drop down under the water', lower the tone of your voice on 'down'. There are many other words such as 'fast' and 'slow' where adjusting the tone can be effective. The tone of your voice can also affect the overall mood of the lesson. If you speak sharply, you could sound annoyed, making pupils feel uneasy or upset even though it wasn't the intention. Sounding enthusiastic about activities will be motivating, and if you keep your tone even and light, it will be very encouraging, especially to nervous or anxious pupils.

Language needs to be positive to have a motivating effect – 'do' something rather than 'don't do'. Your language needs to be appropriate to the level of participant – younger pupils will have a more limited vocabulary than older ones.

Terminology, like language, should reflect the level of pupil. Using the correct terminology will help pupils to understand what instructions mean, and what they need to do, whoever is teaching them. Technical terms should be introduced early on.

Swimming assistants should hold a recognised Swim England qualification and should therefore have a good understanding of the terminology but if you are working with an unqualified helper, or you see that your swimming assistant is struggling to understand you, be prepared to use less technical terms and check that they have fully understood you.

When communicating with responsible adults, remember that some may be experienced swimmers themselves, so if they are using technical terms effectively, use the same level of terminology. If this is not the case, check that they have understood what you have said or explain again using more familiar vocabulary.

Teaching points are given to reinforce good practice and help pupils to perform technique correctly. They should be succinct and accurate with just one or two per practice. This allows the pupil to focus on exactly what is required such as 'keeping legs long'. Teaching points can be delivered to the whole group or to individual pupils depending on need.

### Providing and receiving feedback

Providing feedback is a very important part of teaching. A teacher who allows pupils to make the same mistakes over and over without providing quality feedback, is not helping them achieve their potential, or to enjoy their swimming experience as much as they could ... and should.

Below are some guidelines on how to provide effective feedback:

- Keep it positive.
- Make it constructive.
- Make it specific.
- Provide it at an appropriate time, i.e. when the action/behaviour requiring improvement is being demonstrated.
- Don't overload the pupil(s) with too much information.
- Assess whether the pupil(s) has/have fully understood the "meaning" of your message.
- Provide specific and simple improvement strategies for the pupil(s) to try.

Feedback is about supporting improvement. It's not a one-way process. Where a teacher provides feedback to others, they should expect to receive feedback as well. This may be from pupils, parents or other staff members. Taking feedback on board will help a teacher to continually improve the quality of their teaching and to reach their full potential.



Below are some guidelines on receiving feedback:

- Always encourage feedback from others.
- Understand that you will receive negative feedback. Try to use it to improve your skills.
- Some people providing you with feedback may not be able to communicate it effectively. Remember not to take it personally.
- Seek clarification or expansion on the feedback if required.
- Consider all feedback as a positive thing to help you achieve your potential.

## Questioning

This can be used to check understanding and, rather than telling pupils the teaching point, you could ask them what they should be thinking about when they do a particular practice. If they come up with the right teaching point, you know they have understood you.

This table contains some of the common types of questions that can be used by teachers.

Question type	Purpose	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 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 a pupil's understanding by rephrasing an answer or response.	"So what you're trying to say is...?"

## Non-verbal communication

In many cases, your teaching points will be accompanied by non-verbal communication, such as gestures or demonstrations to help illustrate what pupils should be doing.

This can be used alongside verbal communication, especially in situations where it is difficult to be heard and, in a noisy swimming environment, it may be the main method of communication. Remember that non-verbal communication will not work if the pupils are not looking at you.

Personal presentation should be a key consideration. You should look the part to reassure pupils and responsible adults that you are professional and trustworthy. Long hair should be tied back, jewellery removed, clothes should be appropriate, clean and well presented. You should also present a professional image by arriving on time, being approachable and helpful.

Body language plays a large part in non-verbal communication. Use open and positive body language to show that you are approachable and want to make others feel at ease. Avoid keeping your arms crossed in front of you which acts as a barrier towards other people, or standing with your hands on your hips which has the effect of making the body look bigger and more dominant and intimidating.

Other forms of positive body language include:

- Smiling to make pupils feel at ease or when praising good work.
- Making eye contact with pupils so they know you are paying attention to them.
- Nodding when a pupil is talking to you to show you are interested in what they are saying.
- Sitting or standing up straight to show that you are keen and ready for action, rather than slouching or leaning on the swimming pool steps which gives the impression of being tired or bored.

## Gestures

Gestures are quick, easy and motivating. They have many uses during swimming lessons. When pupils can't hear you because of hats covering their ears, the noise levels, or their distance from you, non-verbal praise will let them know that they are doing well. This could include clapping, giving a thumbs-up or an 'OK' hand sign. You can also use gestures to help to reinforce verbal communication. For example, if you are explaining to pupils that they will be swimming three widths, you could hold up three fingers at the same time so that they can see what you are telling them to do as well as hear it. Gestures can be used to give instructions. For example, if you want pupils to set off, you can move both arms away from you, and when you want them to come back, you can wave your hands back towards you.

Gestures can also be used to reinforce teaching points during an activity, such as using hands to show how feet should be turned out in breaststroke, or pointing to the face and then the water as a reminder to put faces in the water. Gestures form a key part of non-verbal communication and can be effective with pupils, swimming assistants and responsible adults.

## Demonstrations

Demonstrations are a valuable method of communication in sport, helping pupils – especially those who learn by seeing – to acquire new skills. Demonstrations can be given by you or by a pupil. There are advantages and disadvantages to each method, shown in the tables below.

### Teacher demonstration

Advantages	Disadvantages
Shows the correct technique or skill. Effective for introducing new activities. Can be easily coordinated with verbal communication. Caters for pupils who learn through watching. Perception from responsible adult that you are actively engaged in the lesson.	Does not show how the skill works in the water. Might be difficult to keep everyone's attention. Could be over-complicated and confusing. Pupils can become demotivated because they believe they will not be able to achieve what the teacher is showing. Teacher and/or pupil positioning might mean pupils cannot see key parts of the demonstration.

### Pupil demonstration

Advantages	Disadvantages
Shows how the technique or skill works in the water. Can act as a reward and be motivating for both the pupil carrying out the demonstration and their peers. Encourages peer learning. Allows the teacher to oversee all pupils for both safety and to ensure they are all watching.	Demonstrator might not be able to achieve exactly the correct technique which will affect the pupils' understanding. Demonstrator might not understand the teacher's instructions and demonstrate incorrectly. Teacher's explanation might not reflect the demonstration.

Swimming assistants can be used to provide demonstrations. Advantages include showing how the technique or skill works in the water, but the disadvantages can be all those shown for a pupil demonstration.

From the tables above you will see that, to be effective, both teacher and pupil demonstrations need to be:

- Appropriate to the level of ability.
- Accurate.
- Clearly visible, usually with pupils standing on the poolside to be able see what is happening both above and below the water surface.

- Shown from a variety of angles so that key points of technique can be seen.
- Supported by teaching points.
- Followed by an immediate opportunity to copy the demonstration.

Visual aids give pupils a clear picture of what is required where verbal and other forms of non-verbal communication fail – ‘a picture paints a thousand words’. They can work well with complex activities which include different sub-skills such as diving, or where complicated instructions are involved, such as an obstacle course with specific activities required to get around each obstacle.

Useful visual aids include:

- Videos and pictures showing good technique.
- Diagrams.
- Boards with written instructions.
- Movable figures that can be moulded into an ideal body shape for an activity.

## Manual communication

Manual communication means physically manipulating the whole or individual parts of the body to achieve specific shapes or positions. The table below identifies advantages and disadvantages of this method of communication.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Can support very young or SEND pupils who are finding it difficult to understand verbal or non-verbal communication methods.	Possibility of causing injury by manipulating a part of the body inappropriately.
Can be used as a last resort when other communication methods have failed.	Does not provide muscle memory and intrinsic feedback of the correct action.
Can be used by a swimming assistant in the water giving light support, overseen by the swimming teacher.	Can cause embarrassment or invade personal space.
	Can be used to disguise abuse of a pupil.

The disadvantages above mean that you are not likely to use this method as much as verbal and non-verbal methods.

When you do use manual communication, it is important that you make sure that:

- You and your swimming assistants handle pupils with empathy.
- You check that pupils are happy for you to do so.
- You are aware of potential safeguarding implications and make sure that, for example, your hands are appropriately positioned and in full view at all times.

## Positioning

To be able to choose the most effective method(s) of communication for a particular lesson, you need to think about where you will position yourself in relation to the pupils.

This will depend on factors including:

- The size of the pool or area of pool being used.
- The size of the group.
- The ability of the group.
- The type of activities being performed.
- The best position for you to be able to oversee the whole group.
- The best position so that all the pupils can hear and see you.

## Teaching methods and related topics

You will use a variety of teaching methods depending on the pool environment and ability of the pupils. These include:

- Deep water.
- Shallow water.
- Multi-stroke.
- Single stroke.
- Part-whole.
- Whole-part-whole.
- Guided discovery.
- Problem solving.
- Whole group.
- Partner support.
- Manual support.

### Deep water

Pupils will be out of standing depth and may need to use floatation equipment, such as arm discs for non-swimmers and beginners. There may be an increased need for a swimming assistant for safety, particularly when equipment is removed.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Pupils develop a confidence of deep water. Pupils feel a greater up-thrust of the water. Without the floor for support pupils learn quickly how to use the arms and legs for travel and propulsion.	Pupils can be fearful of not being able to put their feet on the floor. Pupils can become dependent on floatation equipment.

### Shallow water

Pupils can touch the pool floor with their heads above the water.

There are two variations:

- Lying depth where pupils can touch the pool floor with both the hands and feet keeping their heads above water.
- Standing depth where pupils can stand on the pool floor with their heads above water.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Generates confidence. Provides comfort for anxious pupils. Floatation equipment is not required. Encourages a flat body position. Encourages an understanding of buoyancy. Pupils can touch the pool floor keeping their heads above the water.	Pupils can become reliant on shallow water. Pupils can become over-confident in their ability. Limited number of swimming pools with suitable shallow water. Deeper water is necessary to learn how to regain an upright position.

## Multi-stroke

Pupils are introduced to all swimming strokes, with equal emphasis given to each over a series of lessons.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Experimentation with all strokes means pupils can try them all to find early success.</p> <p>Provides a strong foundation for further development of strokes and skills.</p> <p>Adds variety and interest to swimming lessons.</p>	<p>Pupils may find some strokes more challenging than others.</p>

## Single stroke

Pupils learn one stroke to the exclusion of all others until it is mastered. This approach might be suitable for some but is not recommended in a school swimming programme where it can be avoided.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Suitable for pupils with a specific need that limits movement.</p>	<p>Learning only one stroke will limit progression and opportunities to try other aquatic sports in the future.</p>

## Part-whole

This approach is used to introduce pupils to a new stroke or to introduce and develop a skill. The stroke or skill is broken down into small parts and built up progressively, practice by practice, finishing with an attempt at the full stroke or skill.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>New skills are introduced in achievable steps.</p> <p>Skill proficiency is greater and achievement higher.</p> <p>Allows the development of a specific skill component without the need to consider other components.</p>	<p>Some pupils need to see the whole skill before they can understand it.</p>

## Whole-part-whole

The breaking down of a whole stroke into component parts, regularly revisiting full stroke to assess progress.

- The whole stroke is swum first to assess technique and the level of skill.
- Parts of the stroke identified as requiring development are isolated and activities to progress those areas are carried out.
- The whole stroke is repeated to assess whether improvement has been made.
- If improvement has been made, then the pupil can progress.
- If not, earlier practices should be repeated and re-assessed using whole stroke.

This teaching method is used when pupils can travel through the water on their front and back, using arms and legs for propulsion.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Allows the development of a specific stroke component without the need to consider other components.</p> <p>Gives the opportunity to re-visit the whole stroke to check that improvements have been made.</p>	<p>Pupils need to be at a stage in their development where they can already attempt the full stroke.</p>

## Guided discovery

This is a structured process with the swimming teacher planning an activity that is challenging but within the pupils' ability, and which will allow them to make the desired discovery. For example, ask stronger pupils to clap their hands whilst kicking on their backs. Ask whether it was easy or hard, and why. Ask what they did to prevent themselves from sinking. They should have discovered that a strong, continuous kick is the answer.

Other examples include:

- 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.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Engages pupils.</p> <p>Encourages independent decision-making.</p> <p>Allows assessment of learning and understanding to take place.</p> <p>Activities can be developed to include collaboration and competition.</p>	<p>Pupils may feel uncomfortable if they do not know what they are supposed to discover.</p>

## Problem solving

This is more pupil-led than guided discovery. Games are often used to enable pupils to work out for themselves how to do certain activities. For example, leave a variety of floatation equipment on the water. Ask pupils to get to the other side of the pool without touching the pool floor. Most pupils would use the floatation equipment and kick to the other side but, with no clear guidance, a pupil might come up with the 'wrong' answer to the problem such as a 'spider-man' walk round the edge of the pool holding the rail, or climbing up the steps, walking along the deck and back down the steps at the other end. Both actions would solve the problem but would not develop the idea of propulsion.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Pupils are encouraged to find things out for themselves and experiment with possible solutions to suit themselves.</p> <p>Gives the opportunity for independent learning.</p> <p>Activities can be developed to include collaboration or competition.</p> <p>Allows assessment of learning and understanding to take place.</p>	<p>Pupils might not solve the right problem unless activities are carefully planned.</p> <p>Some pupils can be reluctant to take responsibility for learning initially and may need encouragement to get involved.</p>

## Whole group

Pupils learn in a group environment with other pupils, ideally of a similar ability.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Gives opportunities for collaboration and competition.</p> <p>Gives opportunities to share experiences.</p> <p>Pupils can support each other and socialise.</p> <p>Pupils can take part in games and interactive activities with others.</p>	<p>Some may not cope as part of a group if they need additional support.</p> <p>It can be difficult to meet the needs of all pupils with larger groups.</p>

## Partner support

This is when pupils are assisted by a partner to gain a forward or backward position and progress through the water. When teaching younger pupils, a swimming assistant could be used in the same way, instead of a peer.

## Manual Support

Supporting pupils through physical contact can help their progress, and depending on the situation, it might be appropriate to support pupils by the following areas of the body:

- Hands.
- Shoulders.
- Head.

For safeguarding reasons it is not appropriate to support pupils using the following areas of their body:

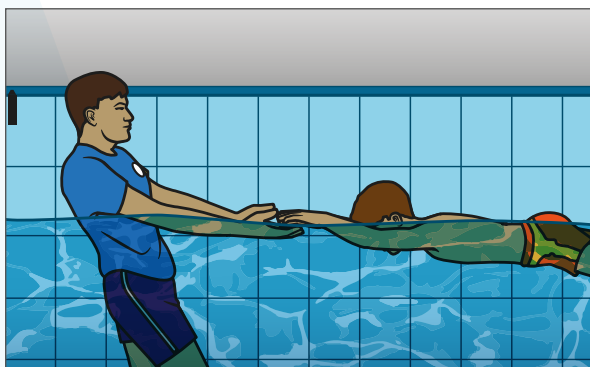
- Chest.
- Torso.
- Thighs.

Pupils should always be asked if they are happy for support using physical contact. If they are not comfortable, alternative methods of support should be used. Some examples are below.

### Support on front

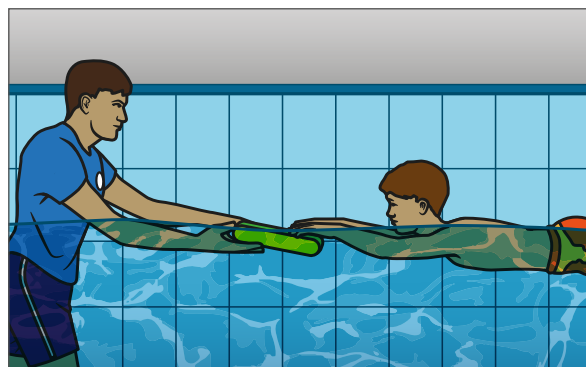
#### Supporting hands on hands

- Supporting hands on hands.
- Place hands underneath pupil's hands.
- Give just enough support to make pupil comfortable.



#### Support using a float

Pupil holds one end of the float and the teacher holds the other.



## Support on back

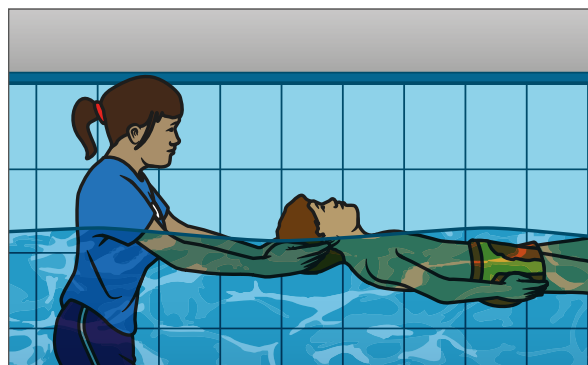
### Support holding noodle

This allows support without direct contact. Both pupil and teacher can hold the noodle.



### Supporting the head

Support the head using flat hands behind the head. This can be with one or both hands.



Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils feel more confident.</li> <li>• Maintains eye contact.</li> <li>• Can give encouragement to nervous swimmers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils can become reliant on support.</li> <li>• Pupils can become over-confident in their ability.</li> </ul>

## Related topics

### Using a pace clock

Most swimming pools have a pace clock on the wall. Pace clocks can be used in a variety of sessions, from those focused on learning to swim through to competitive swimming.

A pace clock can be used to:

- Time a pupil over a set distance or task.
- Time a rest period.
- Provide a start time.
- Give a time, and therefore space, between each pupil.
- Measure pulse rates (from a health and safety point of view).

### Transferring skills (positive transfer)

Learning one skill can have a positive effect on the development of other skills. This is commonly known as 'positive transfer.'

Positive transfer occurs when one skill can be easily transferred into another, or can assist with the development of further skills.

Some examples of positive transfer include:

- 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, or a front crawl or backstroke tumble turn.
- The front crawl leg action can be transferred into the butterfly dolphin leg kick.

### Partner or small group work

Partner or small group work not only develops aquatic skills but also introduces pupils to valuable life skills such as co-operation, communication, team work, and leadership. For example, small-sided games of water polo (mini-polo) can be used both as a stepping stone to this aquatic discipline and as a way of introducing pupils to the rules and tactics of structured game play.



### Sequence building and linking of skills

Sequence building and linking of skills involves putting a range of skills and movements together, appropriate to the developmental stage of the pupils. This method is a great tool for building more advanced aquatic skills and can be used as an introduction to synchronised swimming. The skills chosen for a sequence can be the pupils' own choices, or certain skills can be called out by the teacher for the pupils to incorporate into a routine.

Music could also be introduced for this activity. After a period of time allocated for rehearsal, each pupil or team can present their routine to the rest of the group to observe, comment on and copy.

### Races and relays

The introduction of races and relays can develop water-confidence and techniques. These can be fun activities which see pupils working together in a fun environment, rather than being solely focused on strokes.

## Planning

It's important to plan your sessions for the following reasons:

- Helps teachers to maintain structure and organisation.
- Ensures all aspects of sessions are considered.
- Gives pupils the opportunity to achieve their goals and potential.
- Allows teachers to measure their effectiveness, as well as the effectiveness of their programme.
- A clear plan helps to motivate teachers and pupils.

When planning, it's important to consider the following:

- Stage of pupil development and ability.
- What is the session trying to achieve?
- What equipment and learning resources are available at the site where the session is being held?
- How can the session be varied?
- How can the success of the session be measured?
- Contingency plans ("Plan B").

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

1. Gathering information.
2. Planning (including contingency planning).
3. Execution.
4. Evaluation.

## 1. Gathering information

This should include:

- Venue, date and time.
- Size of the group.
- Ability and age range. (This information may be gathered from the details your school holds about the pupils and/or a separate consultation form, which has been completed by parents/carers).
- Accessibility – changing facilities available, access for wheelchairs, etc.
- Space available – exclusive/shared use.
- Equipment available – floats, noodles, lane ropes, etc.
- Water depth.
- Safety equipment available.

## 2. Planning

Every session should vary to keep learning interesting and progressive for pupils, but there are certain elements that all sessions should include. These are:

- **Pre-session talk**

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

- **Warm-up**

Allows pupils to prepare physically and psychologically for the session ahead. Use activities that progress from low to moderate to high intensity.

- **Main activity**

- Skill development – the teacher briefly outlines the skills that will be focused on during the session, explains why they will be focused on and quickly demonstrates the correct techniques and activities. Pupils have the chance to apply and develop the skills introduced. The teacher should make sure that all pupils are included and make adjustments to activities where possible to meet 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. Pupils have the chance to apply and develop the stroke(s). The teacher should make sure that all pupils are included and make adjustments to activities where possible to meet individual needs.

- **Cool-down/contrasting activity**

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

- **Conclusion/evaluation**

Involves a review of the key points from the session and may include aspects that you want the pupils to practise ahead of the next session. The teacher should feed back to pupils and confirm their achievements. Pupils should also be encouraged to feed back on what they have learnt, what they can improve on and how.

### 2.1. Contingency planning (your “Plan B”)

An important aspect of planning is “contingency planning”. This refers to the ability of the teacher to make changes to their individual sessions or weekly plans and activities to meet the ever-changing needs of the pupils 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 their contingency (“Plan B”) skills, as needed. Although some situations cannot be planned for, others can be and should be considered within a contingency. This allows teachers to deal with challenges more effectively when they arise.

Contingencies may include (but are not limited to):

- Sudden changes in pool environment/temperature (i.e. warmer or colder).
- Injury.
- Illness.
- Lack of equipment / water space.
- Lack of pupils/too many.
- Rapid or slow pupil improvement.
- Inattentive or disinterested pupils/ difficult behaviour.

### 3. Execution

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

### 4. Evaluation

Teachers should consider:

- Whether the objectives of the session have been achieved.
- Whether the pupils made progress.
- The teacher's own performance – challenges; successes; what can be improved.
- Reasons why adjustments were made to the original plan.
- Impact on the planning for the next session.

The planning and delivery process for sessions is cyclical, with the evaluation of one session being the starting point for planning the next.



## Schemes of work

When swimming teachers plan for a series of sessions, they often refer to it as a 'scheme of work.'

A scheme of work is usually an outline of what you intend to cover over a number of swimming lessons spanning a period of time (e.g. six sessions over a school term). When producing a scheme of work, it's important to ensure that you have all the information you need to make decisions about lesson content and the teaching approach. Compiling the following information will help you consider the relevant factors.

- Pool size, depth and whether you have exclusive or shared use. This will determine what activities are possible and where difficulties might arise.
- Equipment available. This will help you plan for a variety of activities and consider how equipment might need to be organised in order for it to be accessible and used effectively during the session.
- Information on age and stage of development. This will help you determine your teaching approach, the skills and activities to focus on, vocabulary to use, etc.
- Number in the group/class. This will determine organisation (in relation to space).
- Knowledge of pupils' previous experience and ability. This will help to determine the content and groupings of the session.
- Knowledge of any specific problems, e.g. disabilities, medical conditions. This ensures the needs of all pupils are planned for.
- Knowledge of any cultural influences/traditions within the school/group. These should be respected and adjustments should be made wherever possible to cater for different cultural preferences and religious beliefs.

Once all the relevant information has been collated, you should then be able to produce your scheme of work. Your scheme of work should be structured as follows:

1. **Aim:** A general statement about what you intend to do during the course of sessions.
2. **Objectives:** These cover what you anticipate the pupils will be able to do by the end of the course of sessions. The objectives should be clearly linked to the overall aim of your course.
3. **A list of content areas:** This refers to what you intend to cover to help pupils achieve the aim and objectives of your course.

For example:

**Aim:** Introduce learners/non-swimmers to the aquatic environment.

**Objectives:** By the end of the course of sessions pupils will be able to:

- Enter and exit the water in various ways.
- Regain standing from the front and from the back.
- Demonstrate confidence with submerging and breath control.
- Demonstrate basic propulsion on the front and back (with or without floatation equipment).
- Demonstrate awareness of health and safety around the pool.
- Demonstrate awareness of the importance of hygiene related to swimming.

### Content areas (example table):

Objective	Content area
Enter and exit the water in various ways.	Entry – steps; slide in from poolside; jump in. Exit – steps; climb out.
Regain standing from the front and from the back.	Start in a flat floating position on front/back with the use of floatation equipment, assistant or wall where appropriate. Finishing position is an upright position (floating or standing depending on the depth of the water).

Objective	Content area
Demonstrate confidence with submerging and breath control.	<p>Include water confidence activities and games for submersion e.g. splashing the face.</p> <p>Include water confidence activities and games for breath control e.g. different body positions, floatation, etc.</p>
Demonstrate basic propulsion on the front and back (with or without floatation equipment).	<p>Practise propulsive movements using legs/arms on front and back.</p> <p>Start with floatation equipment where appropriate and move towards reducing use/removing.</p> <p>Full stroke and part practices.</p> <p>Incorporate fun activities and games that help to improve propulsion.</p>
Demonstrate health and safety around the pool.	Teach safety rules for the pool area regarding running, pushing, jumping, etc.
Demonstrate awareness of the importance of hygiene related to swimming.	Teach hygiene rules for the pool area regarding showering before and after, use of swimming hats and goggles, using the toilet before a session, etc.

Once this has been completed the next step is to allocate the content over the number of sessions in the course, for example:

**Session 1:**

- Basic hygiene/safety rules.
- Fitting of floatation equipment.
- Entry/exit by steps.
- Water confidence practices for submerging and regaining standing position with floatation equipment where needed.
- Part stroke practices of one/two strokes.
- Games to develop confidence.

**Session 2:**

- Reminders of hygiene rules.
- Entry by sliding in from the poolside.
- Repeat and develop water confidence practices for submerging and regaining standing position with floatation equipment where needed.
- Full stroke practices of one/two strokes.
- Games to develop confidence.

**Session 3:**

- Reminders of safety rules – question and answer/small quiz.
- Entry by jumping in (where appropriate).
- Repeat and develop water confidence practices for submerging and regaining standing position without floatation equipment.
- Full and part practices of all strokes (multi-stroke approach).
- Games to build skills.

**Session 4...and so on.**

## 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 that must rent pool space and has a considerable distance to travel to get there. However, good organisation and links can often make up for these challenges.

When planning a school swimming programme it's important to look beyond the school day and explore opportunities in the community where pupils might be able to continue their swimming outside of school.

Factors to be considered when developing the programme are:

- The time available for swimming across years one to six (foundation in some situations).
- How the time available can be used most effectively. For example non-swimmers often improve more quickly in a more intensive programme (e.g. three lessons per week over three or four weeks rather than the normal weekly lessons over a longer period of time). However, pupils who can already swim may benefit more from the spaced lessons over a longer period. This ensures regularity and consistency in their involvement with swimming, meaning they're less likely to regress.
- The percentage of time spent travelling to and from a venue in proportion to time spent in the pool during a school swimming session and whether this needs reducing. For example, if a school travels for 30 minutes each way and has a 25 minute lesson, the overall percentage of time spent on travel in proportion to pool time is very high. In this situation, it may be that the timetable needs adjusting or the venue needs changing so that pupils can benefit from 50 minutes of pool time.
- The staffing arrangements:- it's important to ensure the size of groups and level of staffing is appropriate to the pupils' stage of development. Nervous swimmers and those who require additional support often benefit from smaller group sizes. They may also require an assistant to be in the water with them.
- Links with local leisure centres who may be able to provide additional help and support during curriculum time if the school is unable to provide all staff needed.
- Whether links can be established with other swimming providers in the community who may be able to provide additional Learn to Swim lessons outside of school.
- Whether any parents or carers have specific swimming teaching/coaching qualifications and may be available to help with the delivery of a swimming programme, both inside and outside of school.
- The willingness of school staff to help to deliver swimming programmes outside of the normal school day (e.g. for additional one-to-one lessons with pupils who need extra support, etc).
- The opportunities for club-based activity as part of the school swimming programme and the possibility of establishing links with local clubs (some of which will be competitive and some will be more recreational).

Engaging young people in swimming during the school day is not only an essential part of the curriculum, it also encourages active, healthy lifestyles and influences their participation habits outside of school.

For some, there are barriers to joining a community club or Learn to Swim Programme and steps should be taken to break down these barriers. For example, many clubs and swim schools will be happy to be invited into the school to talk to the children and even to offer taster sessions. Others will have qualified coaches who may also be prepared to help with curriculum activities. Building these relationships will remove any barriers associated with club activity.

It's important that any external organisation invited into schools to assist with the curriculum or out-of-school activities goes through the appropriate procedures to ensure that its staff and coaches are safe and qualified to work with children in a school environment. Individuals from an external organisation should be made aware of the school's policies and procedures and should always be accompanied by a member of staff from within the school when around the pupils.

When working in partnership for out-of-school activities, it's important that the school and external organisation regularly communicate to ensure consistency in the activities taught and the style of the delivery.

When a school signposts pupils to community clubs or Learn to Swim providers, it's important to ensure they offer the appropriate level of expertise to teach young people and can offer programmes appropriate to their age and ability.

Where possible, schools should direct pupils to swimming clubs that have Swim England SwimMark Accreditation or swim schools that have Swim England Swim School Membership or Learn to Swim Accreditation. These quality standards help to identify organisations that have shown they have the staff, procedures and structures in place to provide progressive swimming programmes for young people in a supportive and friendly environment.



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