



# BUCKS SCHOOL SWIMMING PARTNERSHIP

NEWSLETTER, JANUARY 2026

[www.bssp.org.uk](http://www.bssp.org.uk) @bucksschoolswimming

As we all recover from eating one too many Maltesers (in my case!), it is time to look ahead to the start of the Spring Term.

With the weather constantly shifting, it is important to stay aware of how these changes impact our safety around water. Cold water shock can affect you even on a hot summer day, but during the depths of winter, the risks are significantly higher.

Please take a few moments to read and share the important Winter Water Safety information included in this newsletter. Staying informed is the first step toward staying safe.

With Ramadan approaching for some of our learners (expected dates: Tuesday, 17th February – Wednesday, 18th March), we want to ensure everyone can continue their progress comfortably.

To support continuous learning, Swim England has developed a range of dry-side activities that can be completed during this time. While these activities offer a great alternative to the pool, please remain cautious when exercising while fasting, regardless of the intensity involved. Listen to your body and prioritize your wellbeing.

Should you have any specific queries or health concerns regarding exercise during this period, please consult a medical professional.

Ramadan is an incredibly important time for all Muslims, it is a time of sincere devotion in terms of fasting, prayers and alms giving but equally serves as an opportunity to connect with family, friends, and the wider community especially those who are less fortunate.



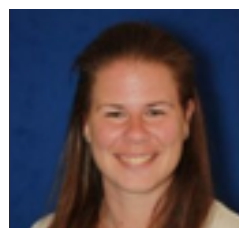
-  **01** Keep a large bottle of water or squash with you from Iftar to Suhur.
-  **02** Try to avoid caffeine until Suhur
-  **03** During a competition avoid any unnecessary periods of time poolside.
-  **04** Research useful food and drinks for after dark.
-  **05** Avoid getting too full quickly at Iftar by breaking of your fast with liquids.



If a learner is feeling light-headed, dizzy or has a mild headache they should speak to their teacher straight away to inform them as it is advised that they should stop their lesson.



Anna Nicol  
Bucks School Swimming  
Partnership (BSSP) School  
Swimming Administrator



Zoe Rogers  
Bucks School Swimming  
Partnership (BSSP) School  
Swimming Adviser



## Ramadan Activities

### Push and glide (Streamlining)

Pupils can either start by crouching down with their fingertips touching the floor. The pupil should keep their face looking forwards with their head staying neutral. Once they have held the position for a few seconds, they should jump vertically by extending their legs and bringing their arms above their head, squeezing them against their ears and positioning their hands together. Alternatively, pupils can start standing vertically and hold their arms above their heads like a pencil. When they are ready to jump high they should carefully bend their knees and lower their hips before extending their legs and pushing off their feet to reach the highest point in the air they can.

### Star, ball, pencil, incorporating a log roll (Rotation and orientation)

Laying on their back, on the floor, the pupil will start with their arms and legs stretched out to the side in a star float position. They will then count for three seconds before moving into a tucked position with their knees drawn into their chest and arms wrapped around their knees. After three more seconds, pupils must extend their arms and legs into a streamlined position and rotate onto their front, retaining their streamlined position.

### Bean game (Travel and coordination)

Pupils will recreate the 'bean' movement that someone from the household gives them, for example:

- Jumping Bean – Jump up and down or forwards.
- Runner Bean – Steadily jog in their area.
- Kidney Bean – Perform a tucked position on the floor.
- Broad Bean – Perform a star jump in the air.
- Jelly Bean – Pupil wiggles their whole body like jelly.

Or, why not set up Water Safety Quizzes/Scenarios on some of the following topics:

- Water Safety Code
- Beach Flags
- Self rescue skills - recreate positions on land, such as the HELP and Huddle.

**Resources to support you can be found online for free on the [RNLI website!](#)**

## SCHOOL SWIMMING POLICY CHECKLIST

We would like to remind all schools that the School Swimming Policy checklist was distributed last term. Completion of this questionnaire is **compulsory**. To align with your school's swimming schedule, please ensure your submission is received no later than;

- **12th January 2026: Schools that swim all year round or during the Autumn Term.**
- **13th April 2026: Schools swimming during the Spring Term.**
- **6th July 2026: Schools swimming during the Summer Term.**

[Links to the questionnaire and additional guidance can be found on our website.](#)



## THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING TO SWIM AT SCHOOL

Swimming is the only sport specifically included within the National Curriculum Physical Education programme of study. All primary schools must provide swimming and water safety lessons in either Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2, with every pupil required to achieve the following:

- Perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations.
- Swim competently, confidently, and proficiently over a distance of at least 25 metres.
- Use a range of strokes effectively, such as front crawl, backstroke, and breaststroke.

Since 2012, Swim England has monitored primary school attainment and provision. Research has consistently shown that many pupils struggle to meet these standards; however, the most recent Active Lives Survey (24/25) indicates a positive trend, with 73% of pupils able to swim 25m unaided by the time they leave primary school. We recognize that schools face many challenges in delivering these lessons, including cost, travel time, and a lack of staff confidence. At BSSP, we are here to help bridge that gap.

We specialise in developing school teachers' confidence and deepening their understanding of National Curriculum expectations through our Stage 1 Support Teacher of School Swimming training. We fully appreciate that for some staff, the water can cause anxiety—and the thought of attending a swimming course might feel daunting! However, this perspective helps us better understand what our learners are experiencing.

To reassure you, here is just one of the many comments we receive from staff who felt the same way before joining us:

*"Thank you—despite dreading the practical, the session was very relevant and important. I have come away having learnt many new practical skills that I can transfer directly into my school lessons. A very informative and important course."*



### SUPPORT TEACHER OF SCHOOL SWIMMING

The Swim England Stage 1; Support Teacher of School Swimming Course is a minimum requirement for all staff who accompany pupils to swimming lessons in Buckinghamshire.

This Swim England certificated course comprises the National Curriculum Training Programme and is recognised by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and by the Professional Development Board for Physical Education.

Led by a Swim England Licensed Tutor, this course consists of 6 hours contact time and includes one water based practical session and two theory sessions. It provides lots of fun ideas for teaching non swimmers through to more advanced swimmers; examples of how to deliver swimming through aquatics; ideas for cross-curricular activities; the opportunity to explore and use a wide range of resources.

**Course content:**

-  Core Module 1: Roles, responsibilities and relationships; Health and safety; safeguarding and protecting children; organisation of the learning environment.
-  Core Module 2: Physical development; developing key underpinning skills; introduction to strokes.
-  Primary Module: Swimming and water safety in the national curriculum.

**How Much?**

-  £185 (including Swim England course materials and certification).


**How to book:**

-  Please visit the [Bucks School Swimming Website](http://www.bucks-school-swimming.org.uk)

**Contact us:**

-  01296 388222
-  [swimming@ahs.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:swimming@ahs.bucks.sch.uk)
-  Aylesbury High School, Bucks






### TEACHER OF SCHOOL SWIMMING


The Swim England Stage 2; Teacher of School Swimming Course completes the Swim England National Curriculum Training Programme and is recognised by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and by the Professional Development Board for Physical Education. The Swim England Stage 1; Support Teacher of School Swimming Course MUST be completed before undertaking this course.

Led by a Swim England Licensed Tutor, this course consists of 8 hours' contact time, 2 hours' pre-course reading and includes theory and practical.


**Course content:**

-  This course develops learners' understanding of progressive aquatic skills (including water safety); each of the 4 strokes as well as looking at progressive practice and stroke analysis. Delegates have the opportunity to work with pupils to deliver short lessons based on skills learnt during the day.



**How Much?**


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**How to book:**

-  Please visit the [Bucks School Swimming Website](http://www.bucks-school-swimming.org.uk). Eligibility checks will take place prior to receiving a booking confirmation.

**Contact us:**

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-  [swimming@ahs.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:swimming@ahs.bucks.sch.uk)
-  Aylesbury High School, Bucks





## **30TH ANNUAL ESSA PRIMARY SCHOOLS' TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS**

We are pleased to share an invitation for Buckinghamshire primary schools to enter the English Schools' Swimming Association (ESSA) National Championships. Now celebrating its 30th year, this prestigious competition offers your school's strongest swimmers the chance to compete at a national level.

### Regional Qualifying: The Watford Round

While many South East division qualifiers are held south of the Thames, a local qualifying round is conveniently hosted at Watford Woodside. This provides a fantastic opportunity for Bucks schools to compete locally for a place in the National Finals.

### Competition Pathway

- The Heats: Schools compete in their regional division.
- The Finals: The top three schools from each division will qualify for the National Finals, held this June at the world-class Ponds Forge International Sports Centre in Sheffield.

### Who Should Enter?

This is a high-level competitive event and is generally best suited for competent, club-level, or advanced swimmers. While the championships have historically seen strong representation from independent schools, there is a proactive drive to increase participation from state primary schools. We encourage any school with a confident swim team to take part and represent Buckinghamshire.

### How to Register

Previously coordinated through secondary school networks, this opportunity is now being shared directly with primary schools to ensure wider access.

Please follow [this link](#) to download the entry form to enter your team into the Watford qualifying round. Deadline for entries is Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

Any questions can be directed to Brenda Prescott MBE, [brenda.m.prescott@gmail.com](mailto:brenda.m.prescott@gmail.com) 01494 725117. For full competition regulations, please see [ESSA website](#).

## **DROWNING PREVENTION WEEK (DPW)**

### **13- 20 JUNE 2026**

Aims to empower individuals and communities to take proactive steps to prevent drowning incidents, promote safe water practices, and protect lives.

Why not pop the date in your school calendars now and start using the amazing resources available to your school to support you to deliver these incredibly important messages.

The RLSS (Royal Life Saving Society); RNLI (Royal National Lifeguarding Institution) and Swim England have produced a range of free resources for schools to educate pupils about the Water Safety Code.





## WINTER WATER SAFETY

With the cold weather firmly established, now is the perfect time to engage your pupils with vital winter water safety education. Protecting our young people around water doesn't have to be restricted to the pool; it can be integrated into the classroom too!

Both the RNLI and the RLSS UK offer a wealth of free resources, including posters, presentations, handouts, and coloring activities. These tools are designed to help pupils think critically about keeping themselves and others safe. Consider incorporating the [RLSS UK Rookie Lifeguard Water Safety Award](#) into your curriculum.

A primary focus is teaching children the lifesaving "Float" message—ensuring they know exactly what to do if they ever fall into the water unexpectedly.

**LEARN TO FLOAT**

If you get in trouble in the water, don't panic – follow these steps:

- 1** Keep calm. Don't swim hard. Hold onto anything that floats.
- 2** Lean back to keep your mouth and nose out of the water.
- 3** Push your belly up and stretch out your arms and legs into a star shape.
- 4** Gently move your hands and feet to help you float.
- 5** Do this until you feel more relaxed.
- 6** When you're calm, raise your arm and shout for help. Swim to safety if you can.

The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea  
Royal National Lifeboat Institution, a charity registered in England and Wales (208902), Scotland (SC337796),  
the Republic of Ireland (20020222), the Bailiwick of Jersey (74), The Isle of Man, the Bailiwick of Guernsey and Alderney

Lifeboats

## PROTECTING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE: VITAL SAFETY UPDATE

We are sharing a sobering update from the latest RLSS UK Child Drowning Report. Heartbreakingly, statistics show that child drowning fatalities in England have **doubled since 2019**.

This report serves as a powerful reminder that drowning is preventable. To protect young lives, we must deepen our understanding of water risks and ensure that "constant supervision" is never compromised. We urge all schools to take a moment to provide water safety education to ensure every child stays safe.

Learning doesn't have to stop in the classroom; the RLSS also provides a wealth of resources that can be sent home to educate parents on key water safety messages.

[Please click here to read the full update provided by the RLSS.](#)



## COURSE DATES 2026

### STAGE 1: SUPPORT TEACHER OF SCHOOL SWIMMING COURSES

Date	Time	Venue	Cost	Booking Status
29.01.26	09:30-16:30	Aylesbury High School (AGS pool)	£185	<b>FULL</b>
12.02.26	09:30-16:30	Aylesbury High School (AGS pool)	£185	<a href="#">Open</a>
05.03.26	09:30-16:30	Aylesbury High School (AGS pool)	£185	<a href="#">Open</a>
30.04.26	09:30-16:30	Aylesbury High School (AGS pool)	£185	<a href="#">Open</a>
14.05.26	09:30-16:30	Aylesbury High School (AGS pool)	£185	<a href="#">Open</a>
18.06.26	09:30-16:30	Aylesbury High School (AGS pool)	£185	<a href="#">Open</a>
02.07.26	09:30-16:30	Aylesbury High School (AGS pool)	£185	<a href="#">Open</a>

### STAGE 2: TEACHER OF SCHOOL SWIMMING COURSES

Date	Time	Venue	Cost	Booking Status
16.04.25	09:30-16:30	Aylesbury High School (AGS pool)	£195	<a href="#">Open</a>

**REFRESHER Course (MUST be completed within 5 Years of original qualification). Eligibility will be checked prior to confirmation**

Date	Time	Venue	Cost	Booking Status
22.04.26	16:00-18:00	Online	£45	<a href="#">Open</a>

We hope you find these updates and resources helpful as you navigate the busy Spring Term. At BSSP, our goal is to ensure that every school feels confident, supported, and equipped to deliver high-quality swimming and water safety education.

Whether you are looking for staff training, school swimming guidance, or ideas for the classroom, we are here to help. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions or require further assistance.

Best wishes for a safe and successful term ahead,  
The BSSP Team