



BUCKS SCHOOL SWIMMING PARTNERSHIP

NEWSLETTER, MARCH 2026

www.bssp.org.uk @bssppartnership

Welcome to the Summer Term!

As we dive into the final stretch of the academic year, we wanted to take a moment to express our sincere gratitude to the schools we've partnered with so far.

Meeting your dedicated staff on our courses is always a highlight for us; their energy and creative ideas are truly inspiring. Plus, getting out to the leisure centers to see your sessions in action is a constant reminder of the great work being done across the county!

School Swimming Policy Checklist: Next Steps

A huge thank you to the schools that have already submitted their School Swimming Policy Checklist. We are currently reviewing your responses and if we haven't already, will be in touch shortly with your outcomes.

If you haven't completed the form yet:

- Action Required: Please visit our [website](#) to find all the necessary information.
- Requirement: **This checklist is compulsory for all schools**, as the data gathered is reported directly to Bucks Council.

Celebrating Excellence: The BSSP Kitemark

A massive well done to all the schools that have already achieved 'Green Status'!

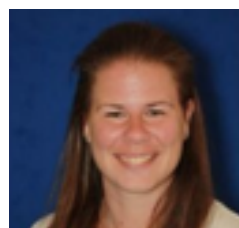
You are now officially authorized to display the BSSP Kitemark on your letterheads, website, or social media platforms. This achievement is a fantastic way to showcase your school's commitment to excellence and diligence in School Swimming and Water Safety.

It's a badge of honor you've truly earned—wear it with pride!

We're here to help! Whether you have a quick question or need more detailed guidance, please don't hesitate to reach out. We love hearing from you and are always happy to support your swimming programs.



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



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



New Statutory Requirements: Water Safety Education 2026

From September 2026, water safety education will become a mandatory part of the statutory Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum for all primary and secondary schools in England. Integrated into PSHE-related lessons, this requirement focuses on the Water Safety Code and essential self-rescue techniques to equip young people with life-saving skills.

Key Details on the September 2026 Changes:

- **Mandatory Curriculum Integration:** The Department for Education (DfE) has updated RSHE statutory guidance to include water safety as a required component for both primary and secondary pupils.
- **Core Focus Areas:** Lessons will cover the Water Safety Code and high-quality safety education, specifically teaching pupils how to float and behave safely in and around water.
- **The Driving Force:** This change follows successful campaigns by organizations such as the [Royal Life Saving Society UK \(RLSS UK\)](#), aiming to reduce drowning incidents through early education.
- **Broader Context:** While 25m swimming proficiency is already mandatory in primary PE, these new rules ensure that comprehensive water safety knowledge continues throughout a student's entire school career.

Looking Ahead

Schools are expected to use the period leading up to September 2026 to adapt their curricula to reflect these updated statutory requirements. For further details, staff and parents can refer to the latest [Bucks Council guidance](#).

Supporting Swimmers with Down Syndrome

Toolkit for Coaches, Swim Teachers, Parents and Carers

pg. 1

Making Waves: Supporting Swimmers with Down Syndrome

Recently, members of our staff had the wonderful opportunity to attend the Swim England Conference, where we met with representatives from Down Syndrome Swimming Great Britain (DSS-GB).

Swimming is a uniquely beneficial sport for individuals with Down syndrome, offering significant improvements in muscle tone, coordination, and confidence. However, we know that the pool environment, with its echoes, splashing, and complex instructions, can sometimes present challenges. Our discussion focused on how we can make our local swimming community more inclusive and supportive for every child.

If you would like to learn more about supporting a swimmer please see the linked [comprehensive guide](#) detailing physical, communication, and behavioral strategies.

At BSSP, we are always on the lookout for tools that make life easier for our students and educators. This week, we wanted to shine a light on the incredible work being done by our friends over at SwimPix.

They specialise in making swimming truly inclusive for students with SEND, and their latest article is a must-read. It's a Step-by-Step Visual Guide that maps out the entire journey from the classroom to the pool. Transitions can be the most challenging part of a school day. This guide uses clear, visual cues to help students understand exactly what comes next—reducing anxiety and making the water a place of joy rather than stress. Check out their Newsletter [here](#).





Drowning Prevention Week (13-20 June 2026) is more than just a date in the diary—it is a lifesaving campaign.

Here is why your school's participation is so important:

- Targeting the "Peak Season": Statistics show that 71% of child drownings occur between May and August. As the weather warms up, the risk increases fivefold on days where temperatures exceed 25°C.
- Closing the Education Gap: For many children, school is the only place they will receive formal water safety education. While swimming is on the curriculum, Drowning Prevention Week allows us to focus on the "dry" safety skills—like the Water Safety Code—that are just as vital as physical swimming ability.
- Combatting "Silent" Dangers: Drowning is often silent and fast. By teaching children to "Stop and Think" and "Stay Together," we empower them to make safer choices before they even enter the water.
- Preparing for the Unexpected: From garden ponds and local canals to holiday swimming pools, water is everywhere. Educating students now ensures they know exactly what to do if they—or a friend—fall in unexpectedly.

How Your School Can Get Involved

To help your school make a splash during Drowning Prevention Week, we've put together everything you need to get started:

- Quick Classroom Activities: Short on time? You don't need a full hour to save a life. These 10-minute activities are perfect for morning registration or the end of the day to keep water safety top-of-mind during Drowning Prevention Week. Follow these links to download our [Water Safety Starters](#) and the [Teacher's Cheat Sheet](#).
- Ready-to-Go Assembly: Planning a whole-school session? We've created a Water Safety Assembly template just for you. It's fully ready to use—simply [follow this link](#) to download and personalize it for your students.
- [The Royal Life Saving Society](#) (RLSS UK) provides a wealth of free resources, including lesson plans, assemblies, and activities that fit easily into your existing timetable.

Show Us Your Safety Skills!

We would love to see how your school is bringing these messages to life. Whether it's a creative display, an assembly in action, or classroom discussions, please share your plans and photos with us!

- Email us: swimming@ahs.bucks.sch.uk
- Tag us on Instagram: @bucksschoolswimming



We always like to highlight the image below as a crucial reminder of how to stay safe and visible. Whether at the pool, a lake, or the beach, high-visibility swimwear makes a life-saving difference by ensuring children can be easily spotted by lifeguards and supervisors.



THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM TRAINING PROGRAMME

Our National Curriculum Training Programme is made up of two training programmes. They use both theory and practical sessions to teach you the most effective ways of delivering school swimming for success.

1. **Support Teacher of School Swimming (STOSS)** - once completed the holder will be able to actively assist and support a more qualified teacher. Candidates can then progress to the second training programme.
2. **Teacher of School Swimming (TOSS)** - once completed the holder will be qualified to plan and evaluate session plans in line with the national curriculum, and teach independently in a school swimming programme.

These courses are open to anyone working in a school swimming environment:

- school teachers,
- classroom assistants,
- learning support staff,
- nursery nurses,
- qualified swimming teachers,
- parents, helpers or homeschoolers,
- PGCE students.

The programme also includes digital activity cards, giving fun, varied and progressive introductory activities for pupils learning to swim, and a learner guide to support them through the training.

Our course candidates all receive BSSP & Swim England certificates on completion of the training.






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 for course dates and to book your place.



STAGE 1: SUPPORT TEACHER OF SCHOOL SWIMMING COURSES

Date	Time	Venue	Cost	Booking Status
30.04.26	09:30-16:30	Aylesbury High School (AGS pool)	£185	Open
14.05.26	09:30-16:30	Aylesbury High School (AGS pool)	£185	Open
18.06.26	09:30-16:30	Aylesbury High School (AGS pool)	£185	Open
02.07.26	09:30-16:30	Aylesbury High School (AGS pool)	£185	Open




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?

 £195 (including Swim England course materials and certification).

How to book:

 Please visit the Bucks School Swimming Website for course dates and to book your place. Eligibility checks will take place prior to receiving a booking confirmation.



STAGE 2: TEACHER OF SCHOOL SWIMMING COURSES

Date	Time	Venue	Cost	Booking Status
04.06.26	09:30-16:30	Aylesbury High School (AGS pool)	£195	Open

Please take a moment to review our updated booking process:

- Invoicing: Invoices will now be issued immediately upon booking.
- Payment Terms: All payments are due within 30 days of the invoice date.
- Cancellations: Please note that our 14-day cancellation policy remains unchanged.