



BUCKS SCHOOL SWIMMING PARTNERSHIP

NEWSLETTER, JUNE 2026

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

As the summer break approaches and we all look forward to well-earned time by the coast or the pool, the warmer weather brings a renewed need for vigilance. This urgency has been tragically highlighted by the multiple heartbreaking deaths in and around water over the recent bank holiday weekend. These devastating events remind us just how quickly things can go wrong and why proactive education is so vital.

This June, we are proudly supporting Drowning Prevention Week, running from 13 – 20 June 2026. This vital campaign focuses on ensuring every pupil has the practical knowledge to enjoy the water safely, as awareness is the first step in preventing accidents.

Looking ahead to the autumn term, we are busy finalising dates for our Swim England National Curriculum Training Programme. It is essential that all staff members involved in school swimming are equipped with up-to-date qualifications. We are currently highlighting specialised training courses designed to help you deliver the National Curriculum Swimming requirements with confidence, focusing on effective instructional techniques, the integration of essential water safety skills, and robust poolside risk management.

Investing in this training doesn't just meet a curriculum requirement; it helps you to empower your students with life-saving skills. The importance of this is underscored by recent RNLI data, which shows that roughly 50% of coastal fatalities involve people who never intended to enter the water, often as a result of simple slips or trips. By teaching our young people how to react if they find themselves unexpectedly in the water, we provide them with a vital safety net.

Please read on to access a wealth of Drowning Prevention Week resources for your classrooms and to secure training spots for your staff ahead of the autumn term. Let's work together to make 2026 our safest year in the water yet.





Dive into Water Safety with BSSP Resources!

Planning your water safety assemblies or lessons? Look no further! On the BSSP website, you'll discover a treasure trove of resources, including ready-to-use lesson plans, helpful guidance notes, and eye-catching posters, all designed to make teaching water safety engaging and impactful. Click the logo below to head over to the BSSP website and equip your students with essential knowledge for a safer summer and beyond.



We are thrilled to share the RLSS visual stories on our website, specifically designed to make water safety education inclusive for all SEND learners. We know that busy pools and open water can be overwhelming, and abstract safety rules don't always translate well for children with speech, language, and communication needs. These new, free-to-download visual widgets break down vital life-saving concepts into clear, digestible, step-by-step social stories.

Whether you are prepping for summer trips, planning PSHE lessons, or heading to the local pool, these resources are perfect for visual timetables, poolside flashcards, and classroom discussions. Head over to our website today to download your packs and ensure every child has the tools they need to stay safe around water!



The Royal Life Saving Society's (RLSS) campaign is designed to explore a multitude of opportunities to proactively raise awareness of water safety ahead of a summer outdoors. Starting in May, through the summer, the risk to the public through accidental drowning increases significantly – DPW is critical in raising awareness and encouraging the public to enjoy water safely.

Access FREE Primary School teaching resources for a cross-curricular theme week – teaching young people how to be safe near and in the water and prevent a steep increase in accidental drownings this summer.

Further supporting resources can also be found at: <https://www.rlss.org.uk/printable-resources>



According to the latest Child Drowning Update (2024), child drowning deaths in England have doubled since 2019-20. Between April 2019 and March 2024, a total of 165 children lost their lives to drowning, with the annual death rate reaching 3.40 per million children in the most recent reporting year—a 100% increase from four years prior.

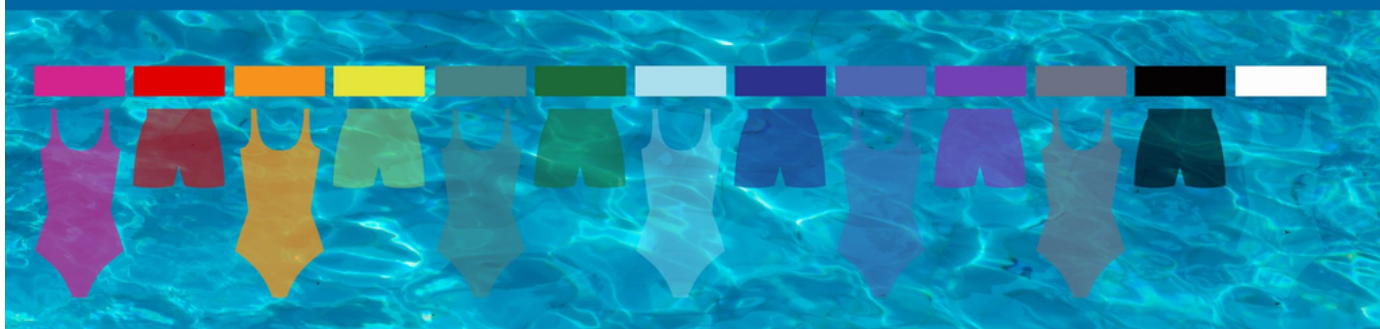
Teenagers remain the group at the highest risk. Data shows that children aged 13–17 years have the highest drowning rate of any age group, at 4.51 per million. Furthermore, nearly half (47%) of all child drownings occurred in inland open water, such as rivers and lakes, often involving older children and teenagers.

It is vital to teach secondary school-aged children how to stay safe in, on, and around water, especially as the long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be felt. Projections indicate that by the 2025/26 academic year, the number of children able to swim 25 meters will have fallen by nearly 900,000 compared to pre-pandemic levels, leaving a significant “at-risk” generation entering adulthood without basic water competency.

Secondary School teaching booklet and further resources can be found on our website.



SWIMWEAR VISIBILITY IN POOL WATER



SWIMWEAR VISIBILITY IN OCEAN WATER



This image demonstrates how certain swimwear colors effectively disappear underwater, highlighting why high-visibility neon tones are essential for keeping children easy to spot in pools and open water.

OWN SCHOOL POOL?

Staff are required to hold the RLSS National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches (NRASTC) or equivalent. N.B. This qualification is valid for 2 years and can be renewed prior to expiry by completing a NRASTC Light course.

Our trainer, Kelly Jagger of Common Sense Training (kelly@commonsensetraining.co.uk) is an accredited trainer for Buckinghamshire. For further information, or to cross-check staff members qualification status, please contact Anna Nicol - swimming@ahs.bucks.sch.uk



DO YOU HAVE STAFF IN YOUR SCHOOL WHO NEED TO UNDERTAKE THE SWIM ENGLAND SUPPORT TEACHER OF SCHOOL SWIMMING COURSE?

If you are unsure and would like to cross-check staff members qualifications against our database, please contact Anna Nicol - swimming@ahs.bucks.sch.uk A reminder that Swim England recommend that staff refresh qualifications within a 5 year period.



THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Swim England 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. If you are delivering in your own school pool, as per the Bucks Safe Practice Policy, it is recommended that staff hold this qualification.

YOU ASKED, WE LISTENED!

Based on your feedback over the past year, we are trialing two brand-new course options designed to fit flexibly around your school schedule.

COURSE 1: TWILIGHT STAGE 1 – SUPPORT TEACHER OF SCHOOL SWIMMING

Our standard qualification, conveniently split across three twilight sessions—perfect for candidates who cannot afford to miss vital time out of the school day.

- Format: Two interactive online theory sessions (4:00 PM – 5:30 PM) and one in-person pool session at Aylesbury High School (2:00 PM – 5:00 PM).
- Requirements: Full attendance at all sessions is essential to gain the qualification. Because the online sessions are fully interactive, candidates must have a working camera and microphone.
- Dates: Exact Dates TBC however proposed dates are detailed on the below form.
- How to apply: As this is a trial course, places are strictly limited. Please fill out our [Expression of Interest](#) Form to receive updates. Those who express interest early will be prioritised.

COURSE 2: TEACHING WATER SAFETY IN THE CLASSROOM

Date: Wednesday, September 30th | Time: 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM (Online) £25 [Book Here](#)

Starting 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.

We have designed this online workshop to reduce your workload by providing everything you need in one place:

- Ready-made lesson plans and assembly guides
- Interactive games and digital resources
- Practical ideas on how to deliver these concepts in a classroom setting

Note: All digital resources will be sent out directly after the workshop, ready for you to seamlessly integrate into your curriculum.



COURSE DATES 2025/26

STAGE 1: SUPPORT TEACHER OF SCHOOL SWIMMING COURSES

Date	Time	Venue	Cost	Booking Status
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

Please note course dates for the academic year 26/27 will be available soon. Once confirmed these will be published on our website for bookings.

Celebrating Excellence: The BSSP Kitemark



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.

We are pleased to say 62 schools have now been awarded the 'Green Status' and are now officially authorized to display the BSSP Kitemark on their 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.

If you haven't completed the form yet please visit our [website](#) to find all the necessary information.

As we wrap up this newsletter, we are excited to share a [special resource link](#) to a newsletter we've created specifically for parents ahead of Drowning Prevention Week. Please feel free to share this directly with your school community!

We would love to see how your school is getting involved in the campaign. Please share your stories and photos with us, or tag us on [Instagram](#) to show us your activities!

As always, if you need any support or have questions about your school swimming program, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Wishing you all a safe, happy, and wonderful summer!



DROWNING PREVENTION WEEK

STAY WATER-SAFE THIS SUMMER

As the weather warms up and we look forward to the summer holidays, our children naturally head outdoors to enjoy the water. To ensure they stay safe while having fun, we are proud to support RLSS UK's Drowning Prevention Week.

This annual nationwide campaign is specifically designed to equip children and young adults (aged 5-17) with the essential water safety and lifesaving skills they need. By providing this crucial advice every June, we aim to prepare them for the summer months when they are most likely to be near open water.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

While our educators and coaches do incredible work in the classroom and at the pool, the most impactful lessons often happen at home. We are calling on all parents and carers to help extend this learning. By discussing water safety together, you can help ensure that every child has the knowledge to enjoy the water safely and confidently.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR THE FAMILY

- Awareness: Knowing the hidden dangers of open water (like cold water shock or hidden currents).
- Preparedness: Understanding what to do if they—or someone else—gets into trouble.
- Confidence: Ensuring the "Water Safety Code" is second nature before the school gates close for July.

We're supporting



swimming@ahs.bucks.sch.uk | www.bssp.org.uk | Aylesbury High School, Bucks