

Bohermore National School

Swimming Policy

Health and Safety

Best practice in relation to the supervision, instruction and Child Protection Procedures as outlined by the Irish Sports Council, Swim Ireland and the National Safety Council will be adhered to at all times. Staff will follow the guidelines of our own Health and Safety Statement and Child Safeguarding Statement at all times.

Pupils are required to behave at all times in a manner that ensures the safety of all involved in school swimming. Pupils must obey the instructor's orders at all times and comply with the school's Code of Behaviour and the appointed Swimming Pool's Health and Safety Guidelines.

Where a parent/guardian has a health concern regarding their child's participation in swimming lessons, professional advice should be sought before the child participates in same. In the best interest of the child, it is the duty of parents/guardians to inform the class teacher and/or Principal with regard to any health condition that may affect the child in the pool. This information will be held in confidence and provided on a need to know basis to the swimming instructors.

Supervision

Pupils will be accompanied by and supervised by a teacher on the bus to from the pool. A designated Special Needs Assistant (SNA) will accompany pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN). Teachers will provide supervision before, during and after the swimming lessons. In the dressing rooms, school staff and parents of children who are swimming supervise the children (if necessary). One adult will not be supervising the children on their own at any time.

Teachers supervise pupils as they move from the dressing room into the pool. Once all pupils are in the pool and in the care of the swimming instructors, and in view of those on the viewing deck, teachers go directly to the viewing deck and oversee and supervise the overall group while lessons are in progress.

An SNA or teacher must accompany pupils who may need to use the toilet or who need attention or medical assistance during the lesson. Pupils are not allowed to enter the toilet area or dressing room unsupervised under any circumstances. All children will line up inside the dressing room door once dressed and all pupils will leave the dressing room together with their teacher. Before leaving the dressing room, teachers must ensure that no child is left behind in the toilet area, the shower area or the adjoining dressing room.

Clothing

All pupils must wear swimming togs and a swimming cap. It is suggested that swimming togs be worn under the child's school tracksuits which should be worn coming to school on swimming day. Each child must have a suitable bag to carry his/her swimming gear, underwear and a towel. A sports bag or similar with secure zip or other fastening is ideal.

Behaviour

The school's Code of Behaviour applies throughout the school day including when travelling to and from the pool and during the swimming lessons.

Time is limited so children should not bring shampoo and shower gel to the pool. Instead they should rinse quickly in the shower after the swimming lesson. There is not enough time to fully dry children's hair with a hair dryer. Therefore, it is recommended that a silicone hat should be worn and girls with long hair should wear their hair tied up in a towel for the remainder of the day.

All items brought to the pool should be clearly labelled with the child's name. Mobile phones and cameras are forbidden to be used in the swimming pool premises by pool staff, parents, teachers and children. This is in the interests of child protection. No treats are permitted during this time as the swimming lessons are part of a normal school day.

Instructional Arrangements

Instruction in the pool will be provided by the swimming instructors employed by the pool. Instructors should have a recognised qualification in the activity they are to deliver. Instructors must be Garda Vetted. Coaches and instructors should have appropriate experience of working with young people. Instructors will, at all times, work under the supervision of the class teacher. If a child is not following the instructions given by the instructor he/she can request that the child leave the pool. The teachers present will have to take the responsibility to supervise this child for the remainder of the time at the pool.

Pupils with Special Educational or Medical Needs

An SNA is required to assist pupils with SEN to undress and dress before and after swimming lessons. They should also assist the child to enter and exit the pool if required and be available at all times during the swimming lesson to take the child from the swimming instructor if necessary.

Where the child has medical needs, the SNA with another adult from the school or the child's parent, may take the child to special dressing room to assist the child with dressing and undressing or to attend to any medical requirements. This arrangement will be previously discussed with parents and a signed letter of consent will be kept on file.

The SNA is not required to enter the water with the child. They do not have sufficient training to do so. It is the responsibility of the instructor, be it an individual or group instructor to teach the special needs pupil their swimming lessons.

In relation to school tours, where classes are visiting a swimming pool or a water area e.g. an adventure park the same procedures apply. SNAs are not required to enter the water with the special needs pupil. If the parent/guardian feels that their child needs individual assistance in the water, a staff member from the given establishment may be employed and the cost of same is incurred by the parent/guardian of the child.

Swimming Fees

Parents/Guardians pay for the cost of the lessons. The fee includes the price of transport to and from swimming pool, hire of the pool, the cost of the instructors and the lifeguard. The fees for swimming lessons must be paid prior to the start of the swimming term.

Ratification and Communication:

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting on _____ and shall be reviewed by the Board of Management and changed where deemed necessary and appropriate.

The Original, signed copy of this policy is available in the School Office.

Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: _____

16/10/2025

Signed: _____

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: _____

16/10/25