



## **Goggles Policy**

**Heathfield Swim School / Swim Stars South East Swim School**

**Policy Written: 17<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

**Policy Review Date: 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

### **Introduction**

At Heathfield Swim School / Swim Stars South East Swim School, we are committed to providing a safe and enjoyable learning environment for all participants. This Goggles Policy has been developed in line with Swim England guidelines, UK Health and Safety regulations, and best practices to ensure the appropriate use of goggles during swimming lessons.

While goggles can enhance comfort and performance in the water, it is important to balance their use with safety and proper swimming technique. This policy outlines when goggles may be used, health and safety considerations, and recommendations for appropriate types of goggles.

### **1. Purpose of the Goggles Policy**

#### **The purpose of this policy is to:**

- Provide clear guidance on the appropriate use of goggles during swimming lessons.
- Ensure that the use of goggles supports Swim England's teaching standards and health and safety regulations.
- Encourage safe practices while maintaining the focus on water confidence, safety, and skill development.

### **2. General Guidelines for Goggle Use**

#### **2.1. Swim England Guidelines**

According to Swim England recommendations, goggles should be used selectively in swimming lessons. While they can help protect the eyes from chlorine and improve underwater visibility, it is also essential for children to learn to swim without goggles for safety reasons, especially in open water or emergency situations where goggles may not be available.

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- **Learning to Swim Without Goggles:** It is important for beginners and young swimmers to build confidence in the water without relying on goggles. This helps children feel comfortable if they ever swim without goggles in an emergency situation.
- **Introducing Goggles Gradually:** Swim England suggests that goggles may be introduced after basic swimming skills, such as breathing control and water confidence, have been developed. Goggles should be introduced gradually and only if necessary for the comfort or safety of the swimmer.

## 2.2. Heathfield Swim School / Swim Stars South East Swim School Recommendations

- **Under 7 Years Old:** Swimmers under the age of 7 are generally discouraged from wearing goggles during swimming lessons to encourage confidence in the water without them, as per Swim England recommendations.
- **Over 7 Years Old:** For swimmers aged 7 and above, goggles may be worn during swimming lessons once they are comfortable swimming without them. Goggles can help swimmers focus on improving their technique, especially for more advanced strokes.

## 3. Health and Safety Considerations

### 3.1. Safe Use of Goggles

To ensure the safety and well-being of all swimmers, the following health and safety measures must be adhered to:

- **Proper Fit:** Goggles should fit securely and comfortably around the eyes without being too tight. A poorly fitted pair of goggles can slip, causing discomfort or injury.
- **Supervised Adjustment:** Children should be supervised when putting on or adjusting their goggles to prevent injury, particularly from elastic straps snapping back against the face.
- **Inspection of Goggles:** Goggles should be regularly checked for wear and tear. Broken or scratched goggles should not be used, as they can impair vision or cause injury.

### 3.2. Injury Prevention

- **Goggle-Related Injuries:** To prevent eye injuries, goggles should not be pulled or snapped against the face. Swim instructors will teach proper techniques for putting on and removing goggles safely.

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- **No Sharing of Goggles:** Goggles should not be shared between swimmers to reduce the risk of eye infections and to ensure proper fit and comfort for each individual.

### 3.3. Goggles in Emergency Situations

In line with Swim England and Health and Safety Executive (HSE) recommendations, all swimmers must practice swimming without goggles to ensure they can respond confidently in emergency situations, where goggles may not be accessible. Lessons will periodically include exercises without goggles to build this important life skill.

## 4. Types of Goggles Permitted

### 4.1. Approved Goggles

Goggles used during swimming lessons should meet the following criteria:

- **Shatterproof Lenses:** Lenses should be made of shatterproof materials to prevent injury if goggles are accidentally knocked or dropped.
- **UV Protection:** For outdoor lessons, goggles with UV protection are recommended to shield the eyes from harmful sun exposure.
- **Anti-Fog Coating:** Goggles with an anti-fog coating are preferred to maintain clear vision during lessons.

### 4.2. Prohibited Types of Goggles

- **Tinted Goggles for Indoor Use:** Tinted goggles should not be worn for indoor lessons unless specifically required for medical reasons, as they may reduce visibility in lower light conditions.
- **Oversized Goggles:** Goggles that are too large or that obscure the swimmer's peripheral vision are not permitted, as they can compromise safety in the pool.

## 5. Procedures for Goggle Use in Lessons

### 5.1. Instructor Approval

Swim instructors will assess whether goggles are appropriate for each child, based on their swimming ability, confidence level, and the nature of the lesson. Instructors will:

- Encourage children to swim without goggles during beginner lessons.
- Approve the use of goggles once a swimmer has demonstrated water confidence and safety skills without them.

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## 5.2. Parental Guidance

Parents and guardians are encouraged to ensure that their child's goggles fit properly and are in good condition before lessons. If a child requires goggles for medical reasons (e.g., to prevent irritation), this should be communicated to the swim instructor in advance.

## 6. Hygiene and Maintenance

**To ensure the proper care of goggles and prevent the spread of infections:**

- **Regular Cleaning:** Goggles should be rinsed with clean water after each use and left to air dry. This prevents the buildup of bacteria or pool chemicals.
- **No Sharing:** Swimmers should not share their goggles with others to prevent the spread of eye infections such as conjunctivitis.

## 7. Non-Compliance

### 7.1. Failure to Follow Policy

Instructors will monitor the use of goggles to ensure adherence to this policy. If swimmers do not comply with the safe use guidelines or bring unsuitable goggles, instructors may request that the goggles are not worn during that lesson.

## 8. Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to updates from Swim England or changes in Health and Safety regulations. Any changes to the policy will be communicated to staff, parents, and swimmers.

## 9. Related Policies

**This policy should be read in conjunction with:**

- Heathfield Swim School / Swim Stars South East Swim School Safeguarding Policy
- Heathfield Swim School / Swim Stars South East Swim School Health and Safety Policy
- Swim England Teaching and Safety Guidelines

## Conclusion

The use of goggles in swimming lessons at Heathfield Swim School / Swim Stars South East Swim School carefully managed to balance comfort, safety, and skill development. By following Swim England guidelines and health and safety regulations, we aim to ensure that swimmers can learn effectively while remaining safe in the water.

**For any questions regarding this policy, please contact the Swim School Manager.**

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