



*Be watchful. Stand firm in your faith. Be strong. Be courageous. And let everything you do be done in love. 1  
Corinthians 16: 13-14*

## **Normal Operating Procedure Swimming Pool and Swimming Area**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that users experience a safe, clean, warm and friendly pool environment. It provides details of all aspects of pool supervision and duties.

In addition to outlining processes relating to pool supervision, it includes rules, hazards and general information relating to the pool facilities.

### **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the Head teacher (or nominated Manager/Supervisor) to ensure that new staff are made fully aware of this procedure and how to implement it prior to commencing poolside duties.

It is the responsibility of the Head teacher to ensure that there are sufficient resources on shift to enable full compliance with this procedure.

It is the responsibility of all pool staff/teachers to supervise the operation of the pool in accordance with this procedure. Further responsibilities and key tasks are outlined in below.

### **Process**

#### *Pool Details*

A description of the pool within the school is included in Appendix 1. This outlines details of the pool including dimensions, depths and safety features.

Further general details relating to pool features are included later in this procedure.

#### *Poolside Rescue Equipment*

There is suitable equipment on poolside for use in rescuing swimmers in difficulty. This equipment will be checked before each session to ensure it is in its correct position and is fit for use.

All pool staff will ensure they are familiar with the emergency rescue equipment, where it is situated and how it is used before undertaking poolside duties. This equipment should remain in place until required for a rescue and will not be carried around poolside, particularly reach poles that have potential for causing an accident if not handled correctly.

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The location of this equipment is shown in Appendix 1.

### *Poolside Panic Alarms*

The locations of the red pool emergency cards are detailed in Appendix 1. Staff will receive training on the use of the card system annually before the swimming season begins.

### *First Aid Rooms and Supplies*

First Aid trained staff are available at all times. First Aid boxes are located in the swimming resources shed, outside Year 5 and in the Reception/Year 1 shared area. Pool staff must be aware of these locations before undertaking poolside duties.

### *Qualifications of Pool Staff*

For each school session to take place, there must be two members of staff who have received Resuscitation and Body Retrieval training. In addition to this, the lead swimming teacher for each session must hold an ASA National Curriculum School Swimming qualification.

### *Staff – Responsibilities Whilst Poolside*

Key tasks of the teaching staff whilst using the pool include:

- working as part of a team to ensure the safe supervision of the pool, communicating as necessary using appropriate whistle, hand signals or speech
- maintaining a concentrated observation of the pool and its bathers in order to anticipate any problems before they occur and identify any emergency quickly. It should be noted that some bathers in difficulty might shout and splash whilst others give little indication of a problem but simply sink below the water. **Concentrated vigilance is needed to detect genuine emergencies.**
- carrying out rescues and initiating other emergency action as required
- carrying out initial first aid to a bather in the event of an injury or any other emergency
- ensuring that all bathers are behaving in an orderly manner.
- ensuring all poolside emergency equipment and first aid equipment is present and free from defects
- maintaining pool positions until relieved by a colleague. **Positions must not be left unattended.**
- maintaining personal water fitness and knowledge through regular training
- not standing with other staff talking on poolside unless it is absolutely necessary and is relevant to the job.
- drinking from plastic drinking bottles only.
- storing equipment after use e.g. inflatables, swimming lesson equipment, pool reach poles.

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### *Communication on Poolside*

The method of communication using a whistle is as follows:

- 1 Whistle Blast – attracts the attention of the pool users
- 2 Whistle Blasts – attracts the attention of other pool staff
- 3 Whistle Blasts – indicates that a lifeguard is about to take emergency action
- 1 Long Whistle Blast – attracts the attention of the pool users to prepare for an evacuation

Whistles will be used sparingly and will be followed by relevant verbal or visual instruction, e.g. hand signals.

### **Potential Risk Factors**

A number of hazards exist in swimming pools and therefore pool staff will be alert and vigilant at all times when on duty.

### *Known Hazards*

The following have been factors in serious injuries and fatalities in swimming pools in the UK:

- Prior health problems e.g. asthma, epilepsy, etc.
- Youth and inexperience (half of those who drown are 15 or under)
- Unauthorised access to pools intended to be out of use
- Weak or non-swimmers straying out of their depth
- Diving into insufficient depth of water (leading to concussion or injury to head, neck or spine)
- Unruly behaviour and misuse of equipment
- Unclear pool water, preventing casualties from being seen
- Absence of, or inadequate response, by pool staff in an emergency
- Steps used for getting into the pool can be slippery when wet

Staff should ensure they are aware of potential risks with the children they are teaching i.e.:

- Bathers in poor health
- Those who appear nervous
- Children with disabilities / special needs
- Non/weak swimmers
- Boisterous swimmers
- Handrail and lane rope crawlers

Particular users at risk: assessed annually before swimming commences.

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Pool staff must be aware that accidents can happen as a result of seemingly harmless pool games or high-spirited activity. In certain cases pool staff will use their skill and judgement to change the activity pattern, thus reducing the risk.

#### **Certain activities however must be stopped: -**

- **Acrobatics**
- **Bullying**
- **Fighting**
- **Misuse of equipment**
- **Pushing**
- **Running**

The positioning of the pool staff can seriously affect their capability to observe the water and may affect their ability to remain vigilant. Staff will therefore remain in close proximity to their designated position, should not, unless absolutely necessary, talk to other lifeguards supervising the pool, and will not leave their position unless cover is available. On sunny days, teachers must ensure they wear sun glasses to limit the glare from the surface of the water.

#### **General Poolside Rules for Bathers**

It is essential that the behaviour of pupils does not detract from the enjoyment of others or represent a risk. During lessons, all activities are planned by teachers; **'free swim' activities are not allowed.** Children not following the instructions given by staff will be asked to exit the pool.

#### **Maximum Bather Loads/Lifeguard Ratios**

Maximum bather load is 20 and the minimum staff requirement is 2.

#### **Controlling Access onto Poolside**

Access to poolside when the pool is not in use will be prevented through the use of the fence and pool cover.

#### **Pool Water Quality**

Pool water testing will be carried out, in order to ensure the quality of the water is within parameters recommended by the ISRM and Pool Water Treatment Advisory Group. Only nominated and trained staff will carry out pool water tests. These tests will be documented on the pool managers daily check sheet and records retained on site.

#### **Accidents/Injuries**

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Due to the nature of activities taking place within the school, accidents will happen, which will result in injuries to either public or staff. The majority of these will be minor accidents and may be treated on site without referring the person to hospital. For minor accidents treatment will be given at either the scene of the accident or in a first aid room.

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**APPENDIX 1**

Dimensions: 10m x 5m x 0.9m; Depth: 0.7m - 0.8m

**Plan of Pool Area**

