**Kingfishers Swim School Submersion Policy**

‘Forced infant submersion is not recommended by Swim England. Swim England believe submersion should be voluntary, as and when the child is ready. Progressive aquatic breathing activities should be taught by a qualified Level 2 Teacher to help a child establish water confidence.’

Our programme will not include forced submersion. However, we will encourage your child to gain confidence in getting their faces wet and towards child led submersion when they are able to make the choice themselves. We have made this decision based on hours of research whereby it was decided that there is no benefit to your child’s swimming journey.

We will do this by doing ‘wet activities’ such as bobbing up and down, pouring water onto the back of the head and jumping in.

Accidental submersion may occur during these activities. This is not forced infant submersion.

Infant submersion is a grey area of risk which we are not willing to take. This article published by Swim England may help you to understand why we came to this conclusion.

‘Submersion

During the course of a lesson it is possible that accidental submersion may occur but this is very different to forcing babies or children’s heads under the water. Due to the pressure of the water on the ears, the child does not have to be very far beneath the surface before experiencing pain.

Submersion of young babies

The forced submersion of young babies is not recommended by the ASA, a position fully supported by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA). It has been suggested that young babies have a natural breathing reflex which will prevent them from attempting to breathe underwater. This view point is not universally accepted within the medical profession and attempting to breathe underwater can lead to water intoxication (hyponatremia) caused by the young baby swallowing large amounts of water, the result of which can adversely affect the electrolyte levels of the baby.

The ASA recommends a gradual process leading towards voluntary submersion by the child, without this being a forced activity. Acceptable forms of submersion are incidental submersion, voluntary such as the retrieval of objects and accidental.’

Written September 2018 S.Jones

Updated and Reviewed September 2019 S.Jones