



Aquatics policy

Rationale:

Greystones Educate Together National School (GETNS) has regard to the National School Curriculum and to both the physical and mental development of each of its pupils. Believing that a healthy body promotes a healthy mind, the school arranges for a six week course of swimming instruction in the Shoreline swimming pool for students from 1st Class to 5th class during the school year.

See below a quote from the National School Curriculum Handbook.....

'The aquatics programme is concerned with gaining competence and confidence near, in, under and on water. It provides unique opportunities for enjoyment, allowing the child the sensation of buoyancy. The term 'aquatics' is used to include not only the teaching of swimming strokes, but the provision of opportunities for enjoyment of water play and other aspects of aquatics'

The aquatics curriculum recognises that there is more to swimming than learning to swim strokes and competing in swimming competitions. It is important that the child gains confidence in the water and gains eagerness to participate. It is also important that the child learns willingness to listen to instructions and an understanding of and respect for rules before the development of a stroke is attempted. Each strand in the curriculum contains a strand unit 'Understanding and appreciation' which is designed to foster an understanding and appreciation of the activities experienced by the child as the strand is explored. Observation, discussion and questioning are features of this strand unit. For instance, the child is encouraged to observe particular aspects of aquatics e.g. the Olympic Games. The class may also engage in other strands of Aquatics such as **water safety, hygiene**, etc.

Aims/Purposes:

- To enable pupils to acquire basic swimming skills while they are at GETNS.
- To comply with the requirements of the Revised Curriculum in aquatics.

Procedures/Guidelines:

- Each pupil will attend a 6 week session in a swimming pool annually from 1st. – 5th class. Junior Infants and 6th class will engage with other strands of the aquatics curriculum (see appendix 1).
- Parents/Guardians give their consent for their children to go swimming upon registration of their child in the school.
- The swimming pool at Shoreline has been reserved for a period of the school year from 11.00 a.m. – 12.00 p.m.
- Attendance at this course fulfills the Aquatics Module of the PE Curriculum as laid down by the Department of Education. Parents defray the cost of the course and also that of the transport to and from the pool.

- A combination of pupils attending the course at any given time will usually be made up of a senior and junior class e.g. 2nd & 5th class, 1st & 4th class, etc. as far as possible. Where feasible, a swimming buddy system will be set up by the teachers in question, in advance of the swimming lesson.
- Inability to pay will not preclude a pupil from participating fully in swimming classes.
- All children attending swimming should wear their tracksuit to school on the day of their scheduled swimming lesson. Swimming togs may be worn under tracksuits coming to school. Each child should have a suitable bag to carry his/her swimming gear such as a sports bag or similar type of bag with a secure zip or other fastening.
- While in the pool, pupils must obey the instructors' orders at all times and comply with the School Code of Behaviour and the Shoreline swimming pool policy (on the school website). The Health and Safety Guidelines outlined by the pool authorities will be strictly adhered to.
- Deodorants, shampoo, food, money, mobile phones etc. must not be brought by the pupils to the swimming pool.
- Children with additional medical needs e.g. inhalers are advised to bring them.

Instructional Arrangements

- Teachers and SNAs will remain at the viewing area during the swimming lessons, promoting good behaviour, participation and safety for all concerned and being available to the pool instructors and / or pupils if / when required.

Travel and Supervision Arrangements

- Pupils will be transported by bus to the pool and class teachers and SNAs will provide supervision before and after the swimming lessons.
- Seat belts must be worn by pupils while travelling to/from the swimming pool. Teachers will do a headcount and check that seat belts are fastened.
- Pupils will be accompanied and supervised by class teachers and SNAs (if applicable) on the way to and from the pool.

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.
- Pupils are required to behave at all times in a manner that promotes the safety of all involved in school swimming.
- Parents/guardians will receive a standard letter providing information on school swimming tips a few weeks before their child starts their swimming term (See appendix 2)
- Where a parent is helping their own child to dress, a separate cubical can be availed of.
- Where a parent/guardian has a health concern regarding their child's participation in swimming, professional advice should be sought before the child participates in the swimming lesson.



- In the interests of Health and Safety, children presenting with infections such as flu/cold/sore throat etc. should not attend swimming lessons. Similarly children presenting with contagious untreated skin infections e.g. verrucae should not attend or should, in the case of verrucae, wear swim socks. A written note should be sent to the teacher in this event.
- Staff will follow the guidelines of our own Health & Safety and Child Protection policies and procedures at all times (see appendix 3).

Ratification and Communication

This policy was formulated by the School Staff at a staff Meeting and at In School Management meetings.

This policy was reviewed and approved by the Parents, PA and students council.

The policy was subsequently reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management at its Meeting on the 13th May 2013.

A copy of this Policy was made available to all members of Staff. Parents were made aware of the availability of the policy by means of Textaparent, and this Policy is also uploaded on to the GETNS website at www.greystoneset.ie.

Implementation Date:

Implementation of this Policy shall commence with effect from the 1st September 2013

Timetable for review:

It is the intention of the BOM to review this policy from time to time. In this regard, feedback from all members of the school community is encouraged.

Signed..... Date.....

Michelle Thunder

Chairperson

Board of Management Greystones Educate Together NS

See Appendices

1. Curriculum Aquatics Strand
2. Parent Swimming Tips
3. Swimming Procedures

Appendix 1

Aquatics for infant to sixth classes

Strand unit: Hygiene

The child should be enabled to

- Appreciate the importance of hygiene when using the pool using the footbath, shower, toilet, keeping the pool area clean.

Strand unit: Water safety

The child should be enabled to

- Observe the rules of the local pool.
- Recognise hazards of water, depth, currents, tides, weather conditions, pollution, and hypothermia.
- Identify correct procedure for dealing with *hazards* practising personal survival skills (e.g. safe entries, HELP, huddle, treading water).
- Summoning assistance in an emergency while maintaining own safety.
- Demonstrating on land or in the pool environment a reaching and throwing rescue.

Strand unit: Entry to and exit from the water

The child should be enabled to

- Enter the water using the steps or ladder by sitting, turning and slipping into the water, by stepping in from the poolside, by stepping in and placing the face in the water with comfort:
 - *blowing bubbles while the mouth is in the water*
 - *picking up lightweight objects from the bottom of the pool with the eyes open*
 - *looking at a partner under water*
- By jumping into the water, by diving in:
 - *surface or plunge dive (sitting, crouching, standing)*
- Climb out of the water, using steps, getting out with support, going directly onto the side

Strand unit: Buoyancy and propulsion

The child should be enabled to

- Walk in shallow water, walking making patterns, walking to a rhythm, changing direction on a heavy beat, negotiating a person or obstacle.

- Jump, side-step or run across the pool, relay races: *children jump or side-step or run across the pool.*
- Observe that some objects float and others sink, blowing, nosing or heading objects (ball, toy, ducks) around floating objects.
- Practise balance, rotation and recovery exercises with and without float
regaining standing position from the prone or supine position
rolling over from the prone or supine position
floating forming wide and narrow shapes in prone or supine position
linking shapes to form sequences floating in mushroom shape
turning through 360 degrees horizontally or vertically
- Explore use of arms and legs to travel in water:
kicking like a frog
playing Simon Says game, where activities are matched to abilities
practising sculling in prone or supine position, head first, feet first
chasing games (e.g. What Time Is It, Mr. Shark? Crows and Cranes)
- Glide forward or backwards along the surface in a stretched position
- Glide to the bottom of the pool

Strand unit: Stroke development

The child should be enabled to

- Develop a selection of swimming strokes, *front crawl, backstroke, breast stroke, and butterfly.*

Strand unit: Water-based ball games

The child should be enabled to

- participate in pair and group play
throwing and catching a ball, including using a one-arm throw
over and under game, where a ball is passed along a line over heads and under legs
water push-ball

Strand unit: Understanding and appreciation of aquatics

The child should be enabled to

- Understand basic hygiene procedures
- Appreciate the dangers of water
- Understand how to stay safe in water
- Develop an increased understanding of floatation
- Develop an appreciation of the freedom of movement in water
- Extend knowledge of swimming strokes
- Discuss a wide range of aquatic activities:
water polo, synchronised swimming, lifesaving
- Become aware of local organisations and clubs that promote aquatics

Appendix 2 SWIMMING TIPS FOR PARENTS

As you can imagine it is pretty hectic getting all the children ready for swimming and also getting them ready to return back to the school, a few simple actions on your part could greatly assist the teacher with these proceedings:

- Please pack your child's swimsuit etc in a bag that can hold **ALL** their belonging when they are undressed (coat/shoes etc) – this means that all their belongings can be kept all together
- If you can run through how you would like them to get ready the night/morning before their class and stress the following, we would be most grateful
- When your child is getting undressed ask them to take out their swimsuit, cap and towel first and place to one side – as they undress, place their belongings back into the bag
- If they can put their socks in their shoes there is less chance of them going missing (or ending up on the floor as they search for them!)
- Please ensure all your children's clothing is labelled with their name
- We would ask you to dress your children in tracksuits on swimming days as they can easily take them on and off and this makes the whole process run smoothly. Please avoid tights and laced shoes (unless your child is able to tie laces themselves)
- Please pack some additional clothing, in particular socks and underwear, in case clothing gets wet (storing spare socks and underwear in a zip lock bag and this will ensure they stay dry)
- Please ensure swimming caps are marked with your child's name
- Air bands are not required for swimming, but if you wish to pack them please ensure they are blown up and marked with your child's name
- A second smaller towel is useful – particularly for the girls with long hair
- For children with long hair a hair bobbin means wet hair can be kept off their shoulders

As you are aware we have a Child Protection Policy and a Garda Vetting Policy in our school for all volunteers. All parents attending in the changing rooms must be Garda Vetted.

(Garda Vetting Forms available from the School Office or from the Class Teacher).

PERMISSION: Permission must be granted by the parent of a child before attempting to help towel dry that child. So, even if it appears that a child may need assistance with changing of clothes etc please be aware of the Child Protection Policy. Please send in a written note, stating if you wish a parent of another child to be given permission to help towel dry **your child**, they must be Garda Vetted.

CUBICLE: If you have not been Garda Vetted and you would like to assist your own child individually, you may do so in one of the cubicles, but please return the child to the class line up outside the changing room door when ready.

As 1st class will be buddied with the older class group, this will be beneficial to them on the bus and in the changing rooms, as the older children will help and advise.

Teachers will be supervising the children at the doors of the changing rooms.

A bus will pick up the children at 10:30am from the school and they will be in the pool by 11am. The bus arrives back to the school at approximately 12:15pm. There will be 5 instructors for the six weeks. For the first lesson the children will need to be assessed, therefore the children will be standing waiting for a short period of time.

Appendix 3

SWIMMING POOL PROCEDURES

- BUS:** Teachers to escort their own class from the bus to line up at wall of swimming pool. Both teachers escort their classes to door of Pool. Teachers will do a headcount and check that seat belts are fastened.
- POOL:** The Swimming Pool's rules regarding supervision have to be complied with.
- CHANGING ROOMS:** Dads to supervise the boys and Mums to supervise the girls (Dads **only** in boys changing room and Mums **only** in girls changing room). An SNA may also be present in the changing room assisting a child with Special Needs.
- ASSISTANCE:** Children can **only** be assisted in certain things e.g. tying of shoe laces, gathering together of belongings, verbal reminders and directions.
- PERMISSION:** Before attempting to help towel dry another child, a note giving permission by the parent of that child, must be given to the class teacher. So even if it appears that a child may need assistance with changing of clothes etc please be aware of the Child Protection Policy.
- CUBICLE:** Any parent who wishes to assist their own child individually may do so in one of the cubicles, but please return the child to the class line up outside the changing room door.
- RECEPTION:** When half of the children are ready and lined up outside, two parents may lead them to the reception area **in the company of the SNA or teacher**.