

# Swimming Policy

Scoil Ghobnatan National School

## Rationale

The school has regard to both the physical and mental development of each of its pupils. Believing that a healthy body promotes a healthy mind, the school arranges swimming instruction in the Mallow swimming pool for the students in 1st to 6th classes during the school year. Policy initiated in March 2018 and reviewed in November 2018.

## Child Protection

All swimming instructors used to supplement the delivery of the Aquatics Module of the PE Curriculum will be made aware of school policy and act in accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 and the school's Child Safeguarding Statement.

It is of the utmost importance that such persons act in accordance with agreed policies and procedures in order to protect all parties involved.

## Aims

- The aim of this policy is to ensure that pupils:
- benefit from learning opportunities offered by external personnel, who help to supplement the delivery of curriculum in a safe and effective manner
- provide guidelines and procedures for conduct for swimming instructors, teachers and pupils
- To enable pupils to acquire basic swimming skills
- To comply with the requirements of the Revised Curriculum in aquatics.

## Swimming Guidelines

- Each pupil in 1st to 6th class will attend a session in a swimming pool annually.
- The swimming pool at Mallow is reserved for forty-five minute swim sessions.
- Attendance at this course fulfils the Aquatics Module of the PE Curriculum as laid down by the Department of Education and parents defray the cost of the course and also that of the transport to and from the pool. It is compulsory for all children to participate in aquatics lessons as part of the National Curriculum. Should a child be unable to attend aquatics, due to a medical condition, a letter from the child's doctor must be sent to the school requesting exemption and stating the reason why.
- Should a child be unable to attend one lesson due to ill health or any other reason, a letter must be given to the class teacher and he/she will travel with the class to the pool and remain under the supervision of the class teacher for the duration of the lesson. Parents do not need to be present in the swimming pool. It is a normal school day and normal supervision by the class teacher will take place.

- Pupils will be accompanied by and supervised by their class teacher supported by SNA staff on the way to and from the pool. Pupils will travel by bus to the pool and the school staff will provide supervision on the bus and before and after the swimming lesson.
- All children attending the course should wear their tracksuit. It is suggested that swimming togs be worn under tracksuits coming to school. Each child must have a suitable bag to carry his/her swimming gear (Sports bag or similar with secure zip or other fastening).
- Time is limited so children are not encouraged to bring shampoo and shower gel to the pool and to quickly rinse after their lessons.
- 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 pupils with long hair should wear their hair tied up for the day.
- Deodorants must not be brought to the pool as the dressing rooms are confined spaces and they leave a strong smell.
- 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 both teachers and children in the interests of child protection.

#### Instructional Arrangements

- Instruction in the pool will be provided by the swimming instructors employed by the pool.
- 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 has to leave the pool and class teachers will have to take the responsibility to monitor this child.
- 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.
- If pupils need to use bathroom during swim session the facilities on the pool deck will be used.

#### Special Needs Pupils

The SNA's are required to assist the Special Needs pupils to undress and dress before and after swimming lessons in Mallow Swimming. The SNA with another adult from the school will take the child to special dressing room to assist the child with dressing and undressing. This arrangement will be previously discussed with parents and a signed letter of consent will be kept on file. (See Appendix A) They should also assist the child to enter and exit the pool and be available at all times during the swimming lesson to take the child from the swimming instructor if he/she was no longer taking part in the lesson.

The SNA's are 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. It is the decision of the swimming pool whether or not the pupil is capable of being in a group swimming situation or an individual one. This depends on the ability of the individual child in the water. If the child is required to have an individual instructor the matter will be

discussed with the principal, parents/guardians and an agreed arrangement regarding the cost will be put in place. This decision may be reached before or after the child's first lesson in the pool.

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. SNA's 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. The Principal will discuss the cost of same with the Parents/ Guardians of the child.

### 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 & Safety Statement and Child Protection Policy at all times. In the female dressing room school staff will supervise the children. One adult will not be supervising the children on their own at any time. All children will line up in dressing room and leave dressing room together so as no child will be left in dressing room on their own. In the male dressing room, a teacher from the school staff will stand in the link corridor outside the male dressing room to supervise and ensure boys are behaving in an appropriate manner. Along with the teacher a male member of the pool staff will stand at the internal door of the dressing room. School will request to see this staff member's Garda Vetting Certificate. The cubicles in the dressing room will not be used by the pupils.

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 pool's Health and Safety Guidelines.

Parents should be aware that our Health & Nutrition Policy still applies during swimming lessons.

Parents/guardians will receive a standard letter providing information on school swimming before their child starts their swimming term. The fees for swimming lessons must be returned to the class teacher.

At no time should a member of the public be present in the dressing room during a school session. School staff will report to the pool staff immediately should this occur.

Teachers of all classes remain on the viewing deck during the lesson in order to supervise the overall group and pupils who may need to use the bathroom or need their attention during the lesson. Two staff members will monitor children to the bathroom or if they need any kind of medical assistance assisted by the staff in the swimming pool. Also in the case of a child feeling unwell during the swim session they will be monitored by school staff in the viewing deck area.

Where a parent/guardian has a health concern regarding their child's participation in swimming, professional advice must be sought before the child participates in the swimming lesson.

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.

### Implementation and Review

This policy was originally implemented by the Board of Management in \_\_\_\_\_

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management every two years.

Due to be reviewed again in May 2020.

#### Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in March 2018. It has been communicated to all staff and the parent body. It is available for the wider school community on our school website.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_