



Swimming Policy

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 for a six week course of swimming instruction in the Mayfield Swimming Pool for the students in 1st and 2nd classes during the school year.

Child Protection

All swimming instructors used to supplement the delivery of the Aquatics Module of the PE Curriculum and all school staff involved will be made aware of the school's Policy on Swimming 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.

Other Relevant Policies

- School Child Safeguarding Statement
- Supervision Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- External Coaches, Teachers and Visitors - Policy and Procedures
- School Tours and Outings - Policy and Procedures
- Administration of First Aid
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Healthy Eating Policy
- Health and Safety

Health and Safety

Best practice in relation to the supervision, instruction and child protection procedures as outlined by the Irish Sports Council, Swim Ireland, the National Safety Council will be adhered to at all times.

Aims

- That pupils benefit from learning opportunities offered by external personnel, who help to supplement the delivery of curriculum in a safe and effective manner
- To provide guidelines and procedures for conduct for swimming instructors, teachers and pupils
- To enable pupils to acquire basic swimming skills while they are at Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon
- To comply with the requirements of the Revised Curriculum in Aquatics.

General Guidelines and Information

- Each pupil in 1st and 2nd class will attend swimming lessons once a week for a period of six weeks annually.
- Parents/guardians will receive a letter from the school providing information on school swimming lessons prior to their child starting their swimming term (Appendix A).
- Where a parent/guardian has a health concern or any other concern regarding their child's participation in swimming they should contact the Principal.
- The swimming pool at Mayfield is reserved for 1 hour each week. 40 minutes are spent in the pool under instruction. 20 minutes are set aside to allow the children to change their clothing.
- At the beginning of the first lesson, the children are assessed by the swimming instructors and split into groups according to swimming ability.
- The instructors may change the group the child is in if the child makes progress.
- Parents are welcome to attend but this is not a requirement.
- Children should not be collected by their parents during or after the swimming lesson. Swimming lessons are part of a normal school day and pupils will return to school after the lesson to complete their curricular instruction.

Attendance

- Attendance at this course fulfils the Aquatics Module of the PE Curriculum as laid down by the Department of Education. It is compulsory for all children to participate in aquatics lessons as part of the National Curriculum.
- Should a child be unable to attend school swimming lessons 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.
- It is the duty of parents/guardians to inform the class teacher and Principal with regard to any health condition that may affect the child in the pool. This information may need to be provided to the swimming instructors for insurance reasons and to ensure the safety of the child while in the pool.

Cost

- Parents/Guardians pay for the cost of the six lessons. At present this is €32.00 but is subject to change as costs rise.
- The fee includes the price of transport to and from the swimming pool, hire of the pool, the cost of the instructors and the lifeguard.
- The fees for swimming lessons must be paid prior to the start of the swimming term.

Supervision

- Swimming lessons take place during normal school hours and therefore will be supervised, as normal, by teachers. Please refer to the school's Supervision Policy.
- Pupils will be accompanied by and supervised by a teacher on the bus to from the pool.
- A designated Special Needs Assistant (SNA) will accompany pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN).
- Teachers will provide supervision before, during and after the swimming lessons.
- One teacher will be in each of the dressing rooms in a supervisory capacity.
- He/she will stand in the corridor of the dressing room within sight of the pupils to supervise and ensure that pupils are behaving in an appropriate manner.
- Teachers supervise pupils as they move from the dressing room into the pool.
- Once all pupils are in the pool and in the care of the swimming instructors, and in view of those on the viewing deck, teachers go directly to the viewing deck and oversee and supervise the overall group while lessons are in progress.
- An SNA or teacher must accompany pupils who may need to use the toilet or who need attention or medical assistance during the lesson.
- Pupils are not allowed to enter the toilet area or dressing room unsupervised under any circumstances.
- All children will line up inside the dressing room door once dressed and all pupils will leave the dressing room together with their teacher.
- Before leaving the dressing room, teachers must ensure that no child is left behind in the toilet area, the shower area or the adjoining dressing room.

Clothing

- All pupils must wear swimming togs and a swimming cap.
- It is suggested that swimming togs be worn under the child's school tracksuits which should be worn coming to school on swimming day.
- Each child must have a suitable bag to carry his/her swimming gear, underwear and a towel. A sports bag or similar with secure zip or other fastening is ideal.

Behaviour

- The school's Code of Behaviour applies throughout the school day including when travelling to and from the pool and during the swimming lessons.
- 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 instructors orders at all times and also comply with the pool's Health and Safety Guidelines.
- Time is limited so children should not bring shampoo and shower gel to the pool. Instead they should rinse quickly in the shower after the swimming lesson.
- 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 girls with long hair should wear their hair tied up in a turby towel for the remainder of 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 pool staff, parents, teachers and children. This in the interests of child protection.**
- Parents should be aware that our Health Eating Policy applies during swimming lessons. No treats are permitted during this time as the swimming lessons are part of a normal school day.

Instructional Arrangements

- Instruction in the pool will be provided by the swimming instructors employed by the pool. 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.
- **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 leave the pool. The teachers present will have to take the responsibility to supervise this child for the remainder of the time at the pool.

Pupils with Special Educational or Medical Needs

Parents may be required to seek professional advice before a child with Special Needs participates in swimming lessons. A letter/note from the child's GP or consultant outlining the child's condition and/or a letter from the child's parent/guardian giving consent to take part may be required by both the school and the authorities at the swimming pool.

An SNA is required to assist pupils with SEN to undress and dress before and after swimming lessons. They should also assist the child to enter and exit the pool if required and be available at all times during the swimming lesson to take the child from the swimming instructor if necessary.

Where the child has medical needs, the SNA with another adult from the school or the child's parent, may take the child to special dressing room to assist the child with dressing and undressing or to attend to any medical requirements. This arrangement will be previously discussed with parents and a signed letter of consent will be kept on file (see Appendix A).

The SNA is 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 cost is incurred by the parent/guardian. 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 and the cost of same is incurred by the parent/guardian of the child.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting of March 5th 2018. It has been communicated to all staff. It is available to parents and the wider school community on our school website *rathpeaconns.com*.

An original signed copy is on file in the school office.

It will be reviewed after there has been a material change in any matter to which this document refers.

Frank Maguire

Chairperson of Board of Management
Management

Susanna O'Neill

Principal/Secretary to the Board of



SCOIL NÁISIÚNTA MHUIRE RÁTHPEACÁIN

Re: School Swimming Lessons at Mayfield Pool Complex

Dear Parent/Guardian,

In keeping with the requirements of the National P.E. Curriculum and the provision of aquatics, swimming lessons for pupils in XXXX's second class and XXXX's second class will begin (insert date).

Classes take place from (insert time) **for six weeks** in cooperation with the authorities at Mayfield Swimming Pool. Parents who wish to attend may do so, but it is not a requirement.

Please note: Aquatics is part of the school curriculum, and as with every other school subject, every pupil must participate, without exception.

We ask that all parents assist and support us in complying with the following ground rules:

1. Swim caps must be worn.
2. Walk within the pool complex at all times. No running at any time.
3. Listen very carefully to the swimming coach at all times.
4. After the lessons, pupils must leave the swimming area at the same time and only under the direction of the swimming coach.
5. Children should only have a quick rinse in the showers after the swimming lesson. Shampooing and full showers are not allowed due to time constraints.
6. Children are encouraged to dress/undress themselves. Teachers will be present to supervise changing and to ensure that every child is properly dressed.
7. Only hairdryers provided in the dressing rooms may be used. **Personal hairdryers or hairdryers in the corridors are not allowed.**
8. Turby towels are recommended for girls' hair.
9. **Parents who attend must not give food/drinks to their children.** Children will have their proper lunch on return to the school.
10. Do not obstruct the corridor area at any time.
11. Due to large numbers of children and the presence of other schools using the facilities after us, we ask parents to leave as quickly as possible.
12. Pupils will travel to and from the pool by bus, under supervision of teachers unless specifically agreed otherwise in writing.

Payment:

- **The swimming fee is €32.00 per pupil.** The fee includes the six lessons, the cost of the bus to and from the pool, certified swimming instructors, lifeguards and use of the pool.
- **The fee can be paid online via the link in the text you received recently.** You may also pay in cash or by cheque (in full or in 2 or 3 installments) and, as always, please do not hesitate to contact us should this bill pose a difficulty for you.

We request your cooperation, which will ensure best practice with regard to Health and Safety and respect for all other pool users.

Sincerely,

Susanna O'Neill
Príomhoide

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Class Teacher

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Class Teacher