



*Tuam Educate
Together N.S.*

Tuam Educate Together National School

Swimming Policy

March 2023

Introductory Statement

This whole school policy for swimming was formulated by the staff of Tuam Educate Together N.S. in 2023.

Rationale

Physical Education provides children with learning opportunities through the medium of movement and contributes to their overall development by helping them to lead full, active and healthy lives (PE curriculum, 1999, p.2). The purpose of this plan is to provide practical guidance for teachers, parents/carers and other relevant persons on the delivery of the pool-based aquatics strand of the Primary School Curriculum.

Relationship to the Characteristic Ethos of the School

The Swimming Policy reflects the overall ethos of the school. Tuam Educate Together N.S. is one of a number of equality-based schools throughout the country. The representative organisation for these schools is 'Educate Together'. The schools operated by the member associations of Educate Together are fully recognised by the Irish Department of Education and Science and work under the same regulations and

funding structures as other national schools. However, they have a distinct ethos or governing spirit. This has been defined in the following terms:

- Equality based i.e. all children having equal rights of access to the school, and children of all social, cultural and religious backgrounds being equally respected
- Co-educational and committed to encouraging all children to explore their full range of abilities and opportunities,
- Child centred in their approach to education
- Democratically run with active participation by parents in the daily life of the school, whilst positively affirming the professional role of the teachers (Source: Educate Together Charter)

The Swimming Policy recognises and endeavours to adopt the values that are set out in the ethos of the school for those at work in the school. It attempts to support and sustain a harmonious environment in which the potential of all staff is nurtured through the cooperation between staff, pupils, parents, board members and all other relevant parties.

Vision

We envisage that, in PE and in particular through the aquatics strand, that each child will be given the opportunity to develop their physical skills and competencies to their full potential, appropriate to their age and ability and in a safe and supportive environment.

Aims

We aim through this plan, drawn up in accordance with the Primary School Curriculum, to set out our approach to Swimming, as an aspect of the Aquatics strand of the curriculum.

The Swimming Policy aims:

- To comply with the requirements of the Revised Curriculum in aquatics.
- To ensure Child Safeguarding and the dignity of children in a vulnerable situation.
- To provide clarity of rules and responsibilities.

Procedures and Guidelines

The following outlines the procedures and guidelines for swimming:

- Each pupil will have the opportunity to attend a term of 6 weeks of swimming lessons annually from 1st to 6th class.

- Costs incurred by hiring of pool and payment of instructors necessitate a charge being imposed on each family.
- All children attending swimming should wear clothing which they can manage themselves. Swimming togs may be worn under clothing coming to school. Each child must 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. If a child fails to bring the correct gear they will be unable to attend swimming that week. It is not the role of the school office to contact parents if children have not brought in their gear.
- Generally, children who do not have additional needs will have sufficiently developed personal care skills to manage changing/dressing with ease. Children with additional needs and who have been granted access to a Special Needs Assistant (SNA) will be assisted by the SNA.
- The SNA is not required to enter the water with the child. It is the responsibility of the instructor, be it an individual or group instructor to teach all pupils their swimming lessons. On occasion it may be necessary to employ an extra instructor to support a pupil with additional needs. The school will cover the cost of this additional fee.
- It is the sole responsibility of the swimming instructor to decide on what swimming group level each child should be swimming with. This is determined at the first week of the swimming lesson term. The class teacher does not determine what level each child should swim with.
- At least two adults will accompany each class to swimming. They will supervise children dressing and undressing in line with child protection guidelines.
- All items brought to the pool should be clearly labelled with the child's name.
- Each child must have their own togs, towel, hair brush (if necessary) and swim cap, all of which should be marked.
- No toiletries (e.g. shampoo, shower gel, deodorant) are permitted. Hairdryers are available for the pupils to use on their return to school. Pupils are not permitted to use the pool's dryers.
- While in the pool, pupils must endeavour to obey the instructor's orders at all times and comply with the School Code of Behaviour.
- Children are required to comply with the School Code of Behaviour throughout any outing to the swimming pool.
- Teachers must remain on the viewing deck during the lesson in order to supervise the overall group and assist pupils who may need to use the toilets during the lesson.
- Children will be encouraged to use the toilet before and after swimming, not during changing times as it is impossible to escort them to the toilet at this time.
- Pupils will be accompanied by and supervised by school staff on the way to and from the pool. All pupils will walk to the pool and the school staff will provide supervision before and after the swimming lesson.
- Parents/carers may watch their children at the swimming lessons and must remain on the viewing deck at all times. They are not permitted access to the changing rooms at any time before, during or after school lessons. Parents/carers are not

permitted to take photographs at the swimming pool or provide snacks for children. We respectfully ask that parents avoid using the pool during their child's school swimming lesson.

- If a parent/ carer has a question on the day of swimming, please direct it to the principal via the school office and not the staff who are accompanying the children swimming.

Instructional Arrangements

The following outlines the instructional arrangements for swimming:

- The school will organise the swimming programme for pupils from 1st to 6th class.
- Instruction in the pool will be provided by qualified instructors in the Coral Leisure swimming pool in Tuam.
- Parents/carers will receive an email providing information on school swimming before their child starts their swimming term.
- All pupils must have a signed permission slip by a parent/carers in order to participate in swimming lessons. Failure to provide this signed permission slip means that the child cannot participate.

Health and Safety

- Staff will follow the guidelines of our own Health & Safety and Child Safeguarding Statement policies at all times.
 - Pupils are required to behave at all times in a manner that ensures the safety of all involved in school swimming. Pupils must endeavour to obey the instructors and teachers orders at all times and comply with the School Code of Behaviour.
 - The pool will be provided with information regarding any child with a Special Educational Need, physical disability or medical diagnosis that may compromise their safety at swimming, eg. Epilepsy, diabetes.
 - If any injury or accident occurs at the pool, the lifeguard on duty will attend to the injury. Any incident reports completed by the swimming pool staff will be copied and brought back to the school.
 - Staff from the school who are supervising swimming are expected to communicate any concerns regarding health and safety of the pupils to the swimming pool staff and the school management.
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- Insurance cover for pool-based aquatics activities is provided by the school's Insurance company (Allianz), who provide a letter of indemnity to the school/Coral Leisure annually.

Pupils not attending swimming

- In a small minority of cases, children who cannot attend swimming will stay in the school and be supervised in another class.
- Where a parent opts out of the swimming programme, they must fill out a form available in the office providing a valid reason and ensure to cover the objectives of the aquatics strand with their child. Pupils will be supervised in another class for the duration of the swimming lesson.

Success Criteria/Evaluating the policy

The criteria for evaluating the success of this policy will be:

- That the school community are clear about and are committed to the principles that are outlined in this policy and correct procedures are being implemented.
- That positive feedback from members of the school community (teachers, pupils, SNAs, parents) is received.
- That positive feedback from Coral Leisure is received.
- That the children are developing skills and progressing in relation to the aquatics strand of the PE curriculum.
- The maximum participation by all children

Implementation

a. Roles and Responsibilities

The 1st - 6th class teachers are responsible for the implementation of this swimming policy, overseen by the Principal and the Board of Management.

b. Timeframe

This policy will be implemented from March 2023.

Review

This policy will be reviewed in March 2028, when we will reflect meaningfully on how well the aquatics programme has been taught and received in the school. The policy will be reviewed at an earlier date should a need arise.

Ratification and Communication

The attention of all newly appointed staff will be drawn to these documents upon their appointment to the school by the NQT/Droichead mentor. This policy will be published on the school website and provided to the Parent's Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills and the Patron, if requested. Hard copies of this, and all school policies, are available at the school on request.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on

Signed: _____ (Chairperson, BOM)

Signed: _____ (School Principal)

Date: 15th March 2023

Date of next review: March 2028