



SWIMMING POLICY

The Board of Management of St. David's National School has put in place the following policy on swimming lessons. This policy is to clarify matters in relation to the teaching of the curriculum content in the aquatics strand of the school's Physical Education Programme.

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 six swimming pool lessons for each of its students during the school year.

Swimming is a compulsory facet of the Primary School Curriculum. Attendance at this course fulfils the Aquatics Module of the PE Curriculum, as laid down by the Department of Education.

AIMS

To enable pupils to acquire basic swimming skills while they are at St. David's National School.

To comply with the requirements of the revised primary school Physical Education Curriculum in Aquatics.

To ensure child protection and the dignity of children in a vulnerable situation.

To provide clarity of rules and responsibilities.

AQUATICS STRAND OF THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The Aquatics strand includes the following strand units:

1. Hygiene
2. Water Safety
3. Entry to and exit from the water
4. Buoyancy and propulsion
5. Stroke development
6. Water-based ball games
7. Understanding and appreciation of aquatics

Lessons will be taught in the school to cover some aspects of the strand units listed above e.g., Hygiene and Water Safety. However, it will be necessary for the children to attend a swimming programme at the local facility to ensure every opportunity is given to them to become competent and confident swimmers. A programme consisting of one lesson every week for six weeks will be organised by the school for the children in the local swimming pool.

PROCEDURE GUIDELINES

Each pupil will attend six sessions in a swimming pool annually from Junior Infants to Sixth class

The swimming pool at K Leisure has been reserved for twelve weeks (six weeks for 3rd-6th class, and six weeks for the Junior Infants-2nd class) between January – April annually.

Costs incurred by hiring of pool, and payment of instructors necessitate a charge being imposed on each pupil.

A pupil who needs to opt out of a swimming class for a medical or other reason should provide a note of excuse, written and signed by the parent. A medical cert will be required if there is a medical condition which precludes the child from swimming on a long-term basis. The school will always encourage all pupils to attend, if possible and the principal will discuss each case on a one-to-one basis with parents/guardians. Arrangements for supervision in this instance will be made on a case-by-case basis. Should a child be unable to attend a lesson, the child will be supervised in another teacher's classroom with work assigned to them by their own teacher. Which class they will go to is left to the discretion of the principal.

Children are expected to dress and undress themselves at the pool.

In exceptional circumstances being mindful of additional needs, and where granted by school authority, children who need help from their parents to change in/out of swimming gear may be assisted only in the parent and child changing room. Parents of these children are advised to make the school aware of these needs in order to ensure:

- 1. the necessary arrangements for the safe hand-over of the child to his/her parent may occur at an agreed safe place on entering the pool;*
- 2. safe return of the child to the care of the teacher in advance of returning to the school.*

*We encourage all children to begin dressing and undressing themselves well in advance of swimming lessons, as assistance from parents will only be granted by school authority in **very exceptional circumstances**.*

All children attending the course should wear their tracksuit. Swimming togs may be worn under tracksuits 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.

All items brought to the pool must be clearly labelled with the child's name. This includes the bag, tracksuit, socks, underwear and shoes.

Each child must have their own togs, towel and swim cap, all of which must also be marked.

While in the pool, pupils must endeavour to obey the instructor's orders at all times and comply with the School Code of Behaviour.

Teachers of all classes should remain on the viewing deck during the lesson in order to supervise the overall group and pupils who may need to use the toilets during the lesson.

In the event of swimming gear being forgotten, it is customary for teachers to send the pupil to the school office to phone home prior to departing for the pool.

INSTRUCTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

A swimming programme for all classes from Junior Infants to Sixth class is organised in September.

Parents/guardians will receive a standard letter providing information on school swimming before their child starts their swimming term.

Instruction in the pool will be provided by K Leisure coaches. It is the 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.

TRAVEL AND SUPERVISION ARRANGEMENTS

Pupils will be accompanied by and supervised by their class teacher and a member of the SET team on the way to and from the pool and the school. Pupils will travel by bus to and from the pool and the teacher will provide supervision before and after the swimming lesson.

School staff will provide supervision in the changing rooms.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Staff will follow the guidelines of our own Health & Safety and Child Safeguarding Statement policies at all times.

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 ensures the safety of all involved in school swimming.

Where a parent/guardian has a health concern regarding their child's participation in swimming, professional advice should be sought and a medical certificate should be provided explaining why the child may not go for swimming lessons.

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.

Deodorant or other sprays must not be brought to the pool as the dressing rooms are confined spaces. The Health and Safety Guidelines outlined by the pool authorities will be strictly adhered to.

As the swimming lessons are taking place in school time and all children participating are in the care of the class teacher, parents are not permitted to enter the communal changing area before, during or after the swimming lessons.

In the interests of child protection, the Board of Management and staff of St. David's National School will fulfil all of the requirements set out in the Department of Education and Skills Circular 0063/2010 relating to Garda vetting.

This circular states:

"Many schools avail of the services of other persons (non-employees) such as sports coaches, volunteers etc to assist in and support school activities. The vetting requirements being introduced in this circular apply to any such persons that have or may have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults. These vetting requirements will assist schools in assessing the suitability, from a child protection perspective, of any such persons to work with children or vulnerable adults. A school authority may also separately determine that it is necessary to check references or past work experience of such persons before they are engaged in any capacity. If a school authority has any doubts about the suitability, from a child protection perspective, of any such persons to work with children or vulnerable adults then they should not be engaged in any capacity. The final decision on the suitability of such persons rests with each school authority."

Appendix 1 - Circular 0063/2010

In order to comply fully with the requirements of this circular:

1. Only parents who have provided the school with proof of their Garda vetting and who have been approved by the school authority will have access to the children during school related activities.
2. Parents are advised that Garda vetting alone does not entitle an adult to work with or have access to the children. Approval from the school authority is also necessary.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed as and when is required.

RATIFICATION

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on date shown below.

Ratified by Board of Management on:

Signed:

Rev Ruth O'Kelly
Chairperson

V. Rank
Principal

Date:

23-1-23

23-1-23