

Swimming Charter



department for
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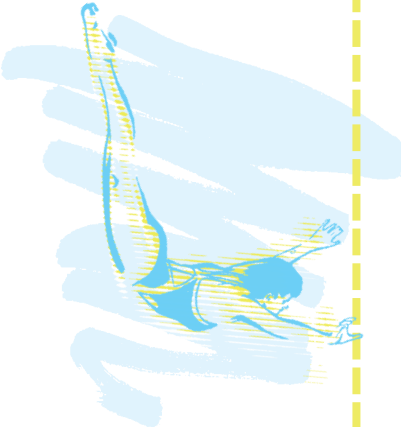
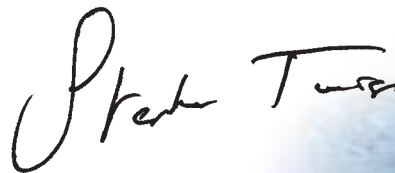
Ministerial Foreword



Our national strategy for Physical Education (PE), School Sport and Club Links, is being implemented jointly with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. It aims to ensure that three quarters of 5-16 year olds spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum by 2006. As part of this overall strategy, swimming has a significant role to play.

There are many excellent examples where schools and local authorities have established clear swimming strategies in consultation with parents and the wider community. This Charter draws on their best practice and provides practical advice and guidance to schools, local authorities and local education authorities on how best to meet and move beyond the minimum requirement for swimming at Key Stage 2. A leaflet for parents and young people outlining their contribution sits alongside this Charter and will be published in 2004.

I am confident that this Charter will help build on the successful practice that already exists in teaching children to swim, and will help us to raise the swimming achievements of all young people.

A stylized illustration of a hand holding a small blue fish, positioned to the left of the signature.A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen Twigg".

Stephen Twigg MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools



Introduction

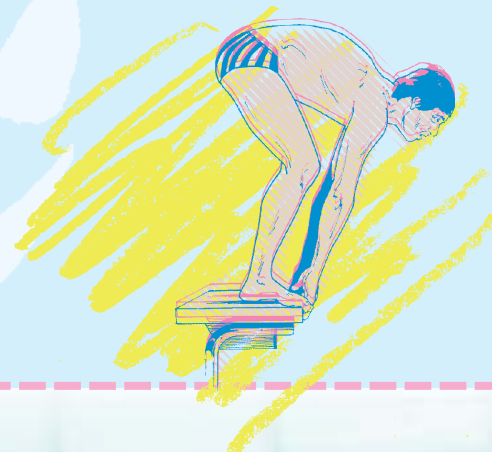


This guidance is intended for everyone involved with school swimming and water safety, and particularly people who work with pupils in years 3 to 6 (Key Stage 2), who should be able to swim at least 25 metres unaided.

This Charter provides advice for schools, sports and recreation departments within local authorities and local education authorities on how to work and plan effectively, with guidance on how to encourage more children to take part, and how to improve their health, well-being and behaviour.

For schools and local authorities it deals with issues such as:

- timetabling for swimming;
- transport to and from off-site pools;
- better use of budgets;
- ways to encourage reluctant swimmers;
- teaching children with special educational needs; and
- encouraging children from minority groups to participate.



Local Authorities

Local authorities have a central role in providing school swimming and should develop a range of options. Their plans should include: service coordination; transport; pool access; swimming teachers' training needs; top-up lessons for those not meeting the minimum 25 metre requirement and timetabling advice to schools.

Local authorities should be proactive in promoting the benefits of swimming and encouraging schools to develop their own swimming policies.

Partnership and Coordination

To make the most efficient use of their resources, local authorities should:

- constantly monitor the use of their swimming facilities;
- develop and strengthen partnerships between public, private and voluntary sectors;
- improve planning by assessing users' future swimming needs;
- take account of the social and health benefits of effective swimming provision – recognising it as one of the most cost effective ways of engaging a large number of people in sport;
- consider centralising the coordination of schools' swimming provision, including pool hire, transport, staffing and monitoring;
- consider the provision of a dedicated swimming development manager to coordinate an authority-wide service, which includes liaison with schools, School Sport Coordinator partnerships and swimming clubs; and
- support out of school provision for those young people that are gifted and talented.

Case Study

Stockport Local Authority

- ✓ Local Authority co-ordination
- ✓ Community partnerships & communication
- ✓ Advantages of facility management & Trust status
- ✓ Instructor training & monitoring

Stockport Sports Trust provides strong teacher training and development and clear guidelines on the delivery of school swimming. Currently the Trust organises school swimming for 95 of the 96 primary schools in the area.

The schools benefit from the convenience, planning and efficiency of the service. Clearly established and well-maintained lines of communication with the local schools, education, transport and swimming bodies have been vital to its success. Lesson times, teachers and transport are organised around the schools' preferences. The Trust acts as the point of contact for all parties if there are problems.

The Trust's charitable status helps it manage the swimming facilities more cheaply. The revenue generated is reinvested in the facilities. The facilities remain high quality and financially secure, and more children are able to develop their swimming. Last year 86% of children attained the Key Stage 2 requirement.

To read the full case study visit www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe/swimming

More information:
www.sportinstockport.com
www.stockport.gov.uk/education



Local Authorities

Facility provision and access

An effective local authority should consider:

- the location of any new pools to ensure that the pools available to schools meet the access needs (including disabled access) of all pupils;
- which elements of the curriculum can be delivered away from the pool;
- school visits by a dedicated swimming development team to give water safety classes;
- block booking swimming pool time to achieve economies of scale; and
- supplying help with teaching, training, changing supervision, life guarding etc.

Schools

Swimming is one of six areas of activity for which programmes of study have been drawn up within the National Curriculum for Physical Education.

Key Stage 1

If schools choose to teach swimming at key stage 1, the following non-statutory guidelines may be used.

Pupils should be taught to:

- move in water (for example, jump, walk, hop, and spin, using swimming aids and support);
- float and move with and without swimming aids; and
- propel themselves in water using different swimming aids, arms and leg actions and basic strokes.

Key Stage 2

During the course of key stage 2, pupils should be taught to:

- pace themselves in floating and swimming challenges related to speed, distance and personal survival;
- swim unaided for a sustained period of time over a distance of at least 25m;
- use recognised arm and leg actions, lying on their front and back; and
- use a range of recognised strokes and personal survival skills (for example, front crawl, back crawl, breaststroke, sculling, floating and surface diving).



Key stage 3

If swimming is taught during key stage 3, pupils should be taught to:

- set and meet personal and group targets in swimming events, water-based activities, personal survival challenges and competitions; and
- use a range of recognised strokes, techniques and personal survival skills with technical proficiency.

Key Stage 4

If swimming is taught during key stage 4, pupils should be taught to:

- meet challenges in specific swimming events and water based activities; and
- use advanced techniques and skills with precision, speed, power or stamina and technical proficiency.



Schools

A range of people and organisations, such as schools, local authorities, direct services, trusts, private contractors or pool management companies, provide swimming classes. To manage this provision, schools will want to:

- ensure that swimming and water safety forms part of the school's action planning, target setting and performance management process for the head teacher, senior management team and governing body;
- produce guidance notes for class teachers and teaching assistants that include risk assessment and lifting where disabled pupils are involved;
- make sure they meet class teachers' continuing professional development needs, so they can deliver swimming, either as a teacher or a teaching assistant;
- check that young people's swimming records from primary schools are transferred;
- monitor and evaluate pupils' achievements and progress;
- make arrangements for top up lessons for those students who cannot meet the 25 metre minimum requirement;
- be sensitive to cultural issues when timetabling swimming;
- consider the needs of disabled children, those with long term medical conditions and those with special educational needs;
- use the timetable flexibly to make the best use of facilities;
- establish meaningful links with local swimming clubs to ensure interested pupils are supported;
- consider pooling resources with other schools; and
- work with swimming coaches and parents to support pupils who are identified as talented swimmers.

Schools will also want to ensure that their policies are positive and inclusive and provide opportunities for all young people to enjoy the experience of swimming. Policies will need to reflect and support the cultural background of the community the school serves and include provision for young people with special educational needs.

Case study

Staining Church of England Primary School

is situated in a village outside Blackpool. The pupils on roll are drawn from a wide range of backgrounds. For over twenty years the school has successfully run the Dolphin Swimming Club as an out of school activity, hiring the swimming pool at a local caravan park. The club's membership comprises children from the school and is run by a committee of staff and parents. The instructors comprise teachers and parents who have received training and/or have ASA qualifications.

Funded through subscriptions, the club provides an annual programme of approximately 30 half hour swimming sessions and a gala – meeting on a weekly basis. Attendance at the Dolphin Club is a significant factor in attaining the Key Stage 2 statutory requirement. Children who show high levels of potential are encouraged to join the local amateur swimming clubs so they can be supported into the world of competitive swimming.

To read the full case study, go to www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe/swimming



Schools



Safety

Schools and other swimming providers must always meet health and safety guidelines. Schools must ensure that teachers and adults other than teachers:

- are appropriately qualified for the range of pupils they teach;
- observe recommended pupil/teacher ratios;
- always observe the pupils and the pool, both for safety and for teaching purposes;
- ensure that pupils comply with water depth recommendations, particularly those relating to entries to the pool;
- are familiar with the pool's life guarding and safety procedures.

Timetabling

Schools and local authorities should work together to try and minimise disruption when timetabling swimming. Effective partnerships will always consider:

- block booking swimming lessons;
- block booking top-up lessons at end of term to achieve savings and make the most effective use of the timetable;
- timetabling to use transport with maximum efficiency;

- 'moving' to a sport and leisure centre for an afternoon to encourage a range of activities such as swimming, PE, school sport, drama, dance or academic studies; and
- religious observances of ethnic minority groups.

Case Study

Suffolk Local Authority

- ✓ Local Authority co-ordination
- ✓ School co-ordination
- ✓ Transport
- ✓ Wider community partnerships

The Suffolk School Swimming Service

is a business unit that operates separately from the council. It serves a rural county with a 2-tier authority. The Service is financed entirely through the revenue raised from schools.

Good communication with all seven districts, the county education and transport departments and the facilities has been essential to its success. The Suffolk School Swimming Service arranges timetables, transport and teachers according to schools' preferences and swimming pool availability. Every effort is made to ensure school participation is as easy as possible. The Swimming Service has its own Personal Safety Awards to test children's swimming beyond Key Stage 2. Currently 270 of 312 primary and middle schools buy into the scheme. Last year 76% of children achieved the Key Stage 2 requirements and 54% achieved the Personal Safety Award.

To read the full case study visit

www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe/swimming

More information:

www.slamnet.org.uk/swimming

Meeting the needs of all young people

Young People with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Children with SEN, like all other pupils, should have the opportunity to learn to swim. Local authorities and schools should look at the way they can support effective swimming provision for those children with disabilities, long term medical conditions or SEN, by offering specialised teacher training and extra help with things like transport, lifting and handling, and poolside aids such as hoists.

Young people who are talented swimmers

Potentially talented swimmers are likely to be identified in the later years of primary school or in the early secondary school years. The Amateur Swimming Association has a comprehensive framework, known as Long Term Athlete Development, for developing talented swimmers, and swimming teachers and coaches need to be familiar with this programme. It provides guidelines for teachers, coaches, parents and facility providers on the development of swimmers at all levels.

Ethnic Minority Groups

The Swimming Advisory Group's report highlighted the fact that many children from ethnic communities were failing to reach the minimum Key Stage 2 target. This is particularly true for children of the Islamic faith background whose parents may object on grounds of modesty and decency. Muslim girls in particular may exhibit reluctance to swimming in mixed classes with boys. Making alternative arrangements such as all male and all female classes can often solve these issues. Schools, local authorities (including LEAs) and pool managers should work together to remove unnecessary barriers to learning. They should consider block booking separate classes for girls and boys (either from a number of schools or with different age

groups from the same school), using same sex teachers for classes, if appropriate, and adopt flexible clothing codes.



Case Study

Valence School in Kent provides for pupils aged from 5 to 19 who have physical disabilities and complex medical needs. The PE co-ordinator has established a 3 level system of achieving the 25 metre swimming requirement and demonstrating the progress that the young people make.

- **Level 1** provides 1 to 1 support to pupils with or without buoyancy aids.
- **Level 2** is for students who can reach the Key Stage 2 requirement with a buoyancy aid but without 1 to 1 support.
- **Level 3** provides for independent swimming using stroke and movement appropriate to the ability of the pupils.

The programmes follow the Swimming Teachers' Association certification scheme and adapts and modifies the Water Skills Award to suit the needs and abilities of every young person.

For more information e mail:

jeames@valence.kent.sch.uk

Meeting the needs of all young people

Case Study

Stoke-on-Trent Local Authority

- ✓ Local Authority co-ordination
- ✓ Community partnerships & communication
- ✓ Meeting the needs of all young people
- ✓ Pupil & swimming teacher evaluation and performance management

Schools and pupils are offered a comprehensive swimming and water safety programme to match their needs and resources. The School Swimming Service, funded entirely by Stoke-on-Trent City Council, runs to a very high level in a deprived urban area. Currently 77 of 80 primary schools buy into the scheme.

The School Swimming Service pays particular attention to teacher training and its significant effect on the quality of lessons. It monitors the progress of schools and pupils so it can give specific help to underachievers.

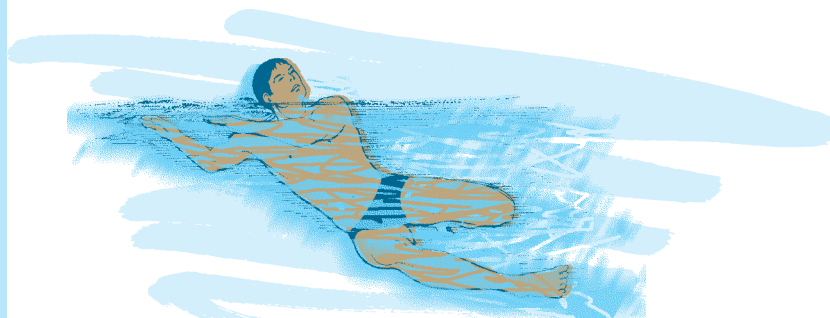
It also organises timetables, locations, teachers and transport centrally as required. Firmly based on education principles, children's swimming education is continued beyond the Key Stage 2 requirements. Securing funding from other sources has made a large difference to swimming education. Last year 89% of children attained the Key Stage 2 requirement.

To read the full case study visit

www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe/swimming

More information:

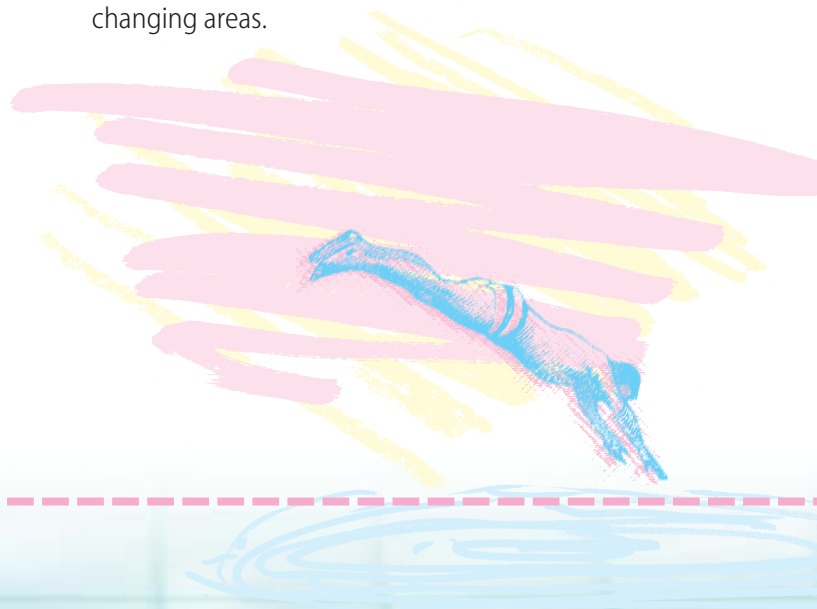
hilary.gough@stoke.gov.uk



Child protection

Child protection issues are important for both schools and local authorities (both LEAs and recreation/leisure departments). Everyone working with young people has a role in protecting them and safeguarding their welfare. Everyone who organises classes, as well as teachers and others in contact with children in this area, must be cleared through official channels to work with children and know the relevant child protection policies and procedures. This means that:

- suitable child protection policies are in place around swimming pools;
- all staff involved in providing swimming for children have been cleared through the appropriate vetting procedures;
- adults other than teachers who are involved in teaching swimming have also been vetted to work with children; and
- suitable supervision procedures are in place in changing areas.



Supporting high quality swimming programmes

Transport

Schools often say that transport is the biggest problem in delivering swimming. Many schools are left to make their own transport arrangements, which can be costly and difficult to organise. Local authorities can make it easier and more cost effective for schools to organise transport to and from swimming classes by:

- centralising the coordination of transport to and from swimming lessons;
- offering a travel voucher system to schools at the end of term (when school buses are used less) to help with top-up lessons; and
- in partnership with LEAs, providing schools with a financial subsidy to help them meet any transport costs where transport is not centralised.

The school's educational visits coordinator should be able to liaise with the LEA's outdoor education adviser to ensure that transport reaches acceptable safety standards. All coaches or minibuses used for carrying pupils must have seatbelts fitted, and supervisors should insist that seatbelts are worn.

Teacher training and professional development

Effective local authorities, LEAs and schools will consider the distinctly different training needs of all those involved in teaching swimming, including school teachers, adults other than teachers, and qualified swimming teachers. In coordinating training provision, local authorities should consider:

- authority-wide training schemes for everyone involved in teaching swimming, which schools can then purchase to help reduce costs;
- in-service training in planning and delivering programmes;
- specialised training for teachers working with children with SEN; and



- calling on outside organisations to help with, for instance, teacher training.

The Professional Development programme within the national strategy for PE, School Sport and Club Links will help to improve the quality of swimming teaching throughout the country. More information about professional development for swimming teachers in your area can be obtained from your local delivery agency.

Training will be available for school swimming teachers through the School Club Links programme, which is designed to provide participation, performance and volunteering pathways for young people from school to wherever their ability and inclination takes them.

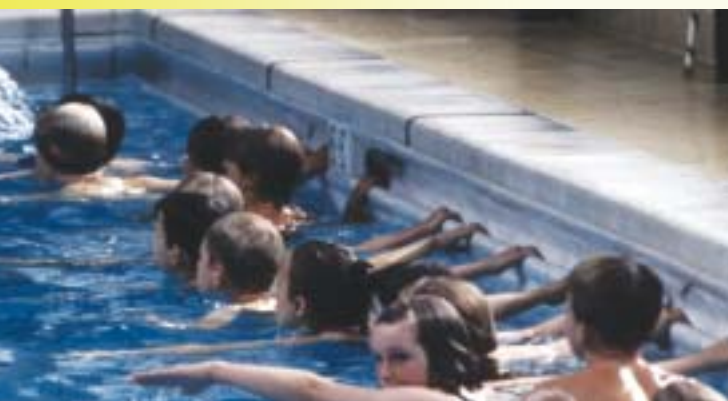
During initial teacher training, higher educational institutions should seek to ensure that adequate time is devoted to preparing all trainee teachers to teach swimming.

For more information in the Professional Development and School Club Links programmes visit:

www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe



Supporting high quality swimming programmes



Charges at pools

The cost of hiring swimming pools can be a major problem for schools where there is an uncoordinated approach. Local authorities and LEAs can help schools to overcome this burden at little cost by providing an authority-wide service that schools can buy back from them. In doing so local authorities and LEAs should:

- where possible, buy pool access during off-peak time when costs are reduced, or negotiate reduced rates;
- buy pool access at end of term for top-up programmes in order to cut costs; and
- seek partnerships with pool management companies to provide summer programmes.

Maintained schools are not permitted to charge parents for the cost of providing swimming lessons that take place wholly or mainly during school hours, or for the cost of transport to and from the lesson. No charge can be made for lessons or transport outside school hours where the lesson is part of the National Curriculum. There is nothing to stop schools asking for voluntary contributions to cover the cost of school activities, but it must be made clear that no child will be treated differently, or left out of the activity, because their parent is unable or unwilling to make the contribution.

Top-up lessons

Top up lessons consist of a daily programme of swimming and can be an extremely effective way of supporting those children who have been unable to pass the Key Stage 2 requirement during regular school swimming lessons. To be fully effective, the recommended pattern of delivery is ten lessons over ten days for a minimum of half an hour each day, with the same swimming teacher. Groups should be as small as possible as many of these children will have already struggled to learn in larger classes.

Lessons should preferably be held close to the end of the summer term, be part of a planned annual swimming programme and delivered by an experienced and appropriately qualified swimming teacher. Transport and swimming facility providers should be booked at the start of the term and likely participants identified by half term so that class sizes and timetables can be organised in advance.

Top-up lessons are not an alternative to study. Schools and local authorities may want to offer a range of options to help with these lessons, such as:

- swimming incentives/vouchers entitling pupils to free access to pools and/or out of school hours swimming lessons; and
- suitable supervision procedures are in place in changing areas.



Supporting high quality swimming programmes

Case Study

North Lincolnshire Local Authority

- ✓ Top-up lessons
- ✓ Benefits of applying for further funding

Some schools in the area had been significantly under performing in the Key Stage 2 swimming requirements. North Lincolnshire secured extra government funding specifically to target school swimming results and water safety knowledge.

The four least successful schools have been given 32 extra lessons and top-up lessons at no charge. If necessary the children receive further top-up lessons at the end of Year 6. A full-time swimming support officer now delivers water safety theory lessons to 53 of the 58 primary schools in North Lincolnshire.

In a year the extra funding has made a huge difference. Water safety test results have gone from 0% to approaching the target set of 90%. In the four targeted schools the number of children achieving Key Stage 2 swimming has risen from 27% to 74%. Further sources of funding are being sought after the success of the government grant.

To read the full case study visit

www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe/swimming

More information:

swimlincs@northlincs.gov.uk



Working with the wider community

In planning and delivering swimming provision, schools and local authorities should seek ways to work with members of the wider community to capitalise on their specialised knowledge, experience and resources. In particular, the wider community can train swimming teachers, help with specific content development of teaching programmes and help local authorities on pool design and location. Schools with swimming pools will want to consider making them available to the community outside school hours. Many schools who already do this find that small charges to community groups can soon repay any initial investment.

Children should be encouraged to continue their involvement in swimming beyond school time and in a range of water based activities. To facilitate this, school swimming teachers, School Sport Coordinators, clubs and local authority swimming development officers should work together to provide suitable, high quality opportunities for young people.



Sources of support

Amateur Swimming Association

www.britishswimming.org

The ASA is the national governing body in England for swimming, diving, water polo, open water and synchronized swimming and provides extensive training programmes for all those involved in teaching swimming.

British Association of Advisers and Lecturers in Physical Education

www.baalpe.org

BAALPE is the association for advisers, lecturers, inspectors, consultants, advisory teachers and other professionals with qualifications in PE, sport and dance.

British Swimming Coaches and Teachers Association

www.bscta.com

The BSCTA is a representative organisation for swimming teachers and coaches which gives employment, legal and educational support.

Central Council for Physical Recreation

www.ccpr.org.uk

CCPR is the umbrella body for 270 sport and recreation organisations. CCPR has published a Charter for PE and School Sport and a guidance leaflet 'Group Safety at the Water Margins' – both available on the website.

Health and Safety Executive

www.hse.gov.uk

The HSE and the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) are responsible for regulating almost all the risks to health and safety arising from work activity in the UK.

Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management

www.ILAM.co.uk

ILAM represents every aspect of leisure, cultural and recreation management and is committed to the improvement of management standards.

Institute of Sport and Recreation Management

www.isrm.co.uk

ISRM aims to lead, develop and promote professionalism in the management of sport and recreation and provide opportunities to encourage participation in sport and other recreational activities.

Institute of Swimming Teachers and Coaches

www.ISTC.co.uk

ISTC aims to unite all holders of the ASA or STA Teaching and Coaching Certificates and other recognised certificates or awards.

Physical Education Association of the United Kingdom

www.pea.uk.com

PEAUK exists to promote, develop and sustain high quality PE in the UK.

Royal Lifesaving Society

www.lifesavers.org.uk

The Royal Life Saving Society is the leading drowning prevention organisation in the UK and is the national governing body for Life Saving and Life Guarding in the UK.

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents

www.rosipa.co.uk

A registered charity providing information, advice, resources and training, RoSPA is actively involved in promoting safety in all areas of life.

Sport England

www.sportengland.org

Sport England is responsible for providing the strategic lead for sport in England. It develops the framework for the country's sporting infrastructure and distributes Lottery funding to where it will deliver most value for sport.

sports coach UK

www.sportscoachuk.org

sports coach UK is dedicated to guiding the development and implementation of a coaching system, for all coaches at every level in the UK.

Swimming and water safety website

www.nc.uk.net/safeswimming

This site provides guidance and ideas for teachers in planning and teaching swimming activities and water safety as part of the PE national curriculum.



Swimming Teachers Association

www.sta.co.uk

The STA's primary aim is to ensure that everybody is taught to swim and survive in water and can carry out basic rescue techniques.

Youth Sport Trust

www.youthsporttrust.org

The YST aims to create opportunities for all young people to receive a quality introduction to PE and sport, and structured pathways for them to continue participating and progressing.

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

www.qca.org.uk

The QCA is a guardian of standards in education and training. It works with schools and others to maintain and develop the school curriculum and associated assessments, and to accredit and monitor qualifications in schools, colleges and at work.



More information

For more information on the national strategy for PE, School Sport and Club Links visit:

www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe

For information on the Professional Development Programme e-mail:

nationalpesscpd@youthsporttrust.org

Advice on transport is available in documents listed at:

www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/healthandsafety/

For guidance on Child Protection visit:

www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/childprotection

For further advice on minibus safety - A Code of Practice RoSPA & others 2002

www.rospa.com/pdfs/road/minibus.pdf

To get a copy of 'Safe Supervisor for Teaching and Coaching Swimming- Amateur Swimming Association and others. 2nd Edition 2001'

telephone: 01509 618700

To read more examples of best practice and detailed case studies visit

www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe/swimming

Copies of this Charter are available from:

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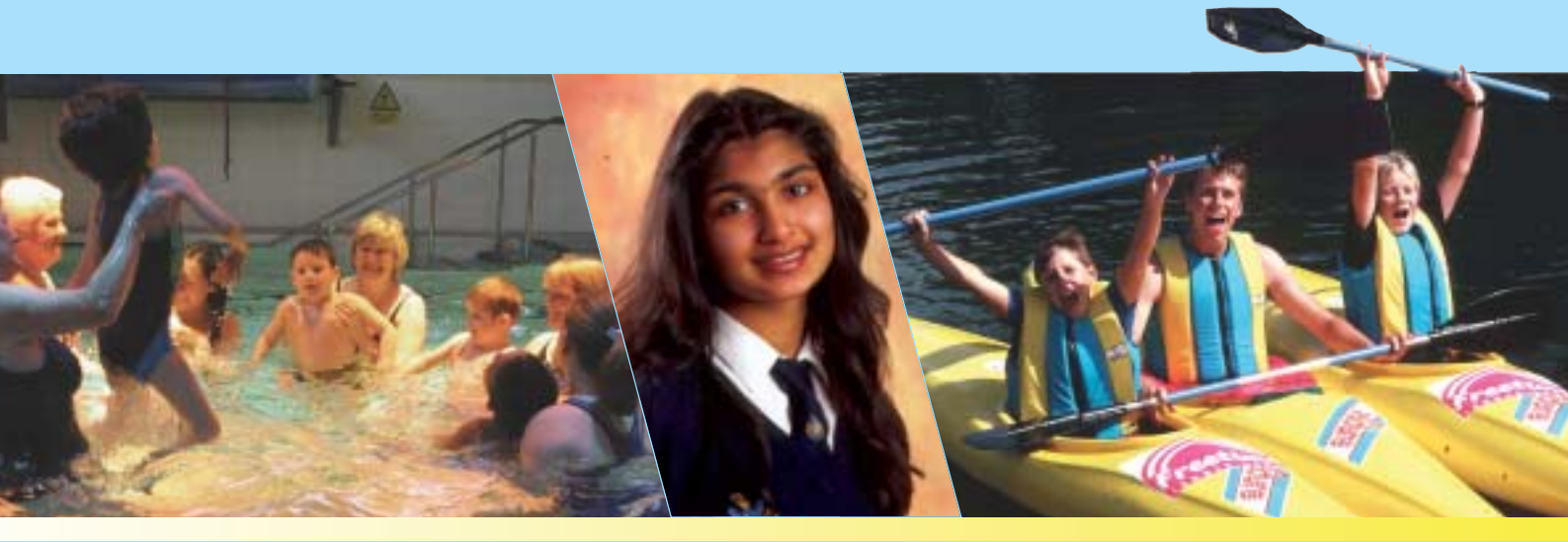
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