

Swimming Policy & Guidelines

September 2025

Boston N.S.

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 Swan Leisure Swimming Pool, Gort for the students from Junior Infants to Sixth class 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.

AIMS

- To enable pupils to acquire basic Swimming skills during their time in Boston N.S
- To comply with the requirements of the revised Curriculum in Aquatics.

SWIMMING GUIDELINES

Each pupil will attend a six-week session in Swan Leisure Swimming Pool each year, from Junior Infants to Sixth class. The swimming pool is reserved for these lessons on dates and times to be shared with parents annually.

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 lessons, 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/Guardians will pay cost of the transport.

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.

Parents/Guardians will receive a standard letter/e-mail providing information on school swimming before their child starts their swimming lessons.

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 and Safety Statement and Child Safeguarding Statement 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 obey the instructor's orders at all times and comply with the school's Code of Behaviour and Swan Swimming Pool's Health and Safety Guidelines.

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

SUPERVISION

Pupils will be accompanied by and supervised by a teacher on the bus to from the pool. If a child is unable to look after their basic care needs i.e. dressing and undressing, a parent/guardian or adult designated by the parent/guardian must accompany the child to assist them.

Pupils can be collected from the pool after the lessons. The pupil's teacher must be notified of same.

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. In the dressing room, school staff and parents of children who are swimming

supervise the children. A teacher/SNA will regularly check the dressing rooms, to ensure the children are not in need of assistance and are safe.

While all pupils are in the pool and in the care of the swimming instructors, teachers remain in the viewing area and oversee and supervise the overall group while lessons are in progress.

Pupils who may need to use the toilet or who need attention or medical assistance during the lesson may enter toilet area or dressing room, accompanied by one of their peers. All children will line up outside the dressing room door once dressed. 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.

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 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.

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. SNAs 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.

SWIMMING FEES

Parents/Guardians pay for the cost of the four lessons. The fee includes the price of transport to and from swimming pool, hire of the pool and the cost of the instructors. The fees for swimming lessons must be paid prior to the start of the swimming term.

RATIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION:

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting on 30/9/25 and shall be reviewed by the Board of Management and changed where deemed necessary and appropriate.

Signed:

Patricia O'Sullivan

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date:

30-09-2025

Signed:

Aine Ní Dhochartaigh

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date:

30/9/25