



Expectations of a Swimming Lesson

A National Governing Body Guidance Document for Learn to Swim Providers, Swimming Teachers and their Customers in Wales

Everyone has the right to learn to swim **regardless of** age, gender, race, disability, economic status, religion or language spoken.

The Learn to Swim Wales Framework aims to ensure that regardless of any differential factors or circumstances, every participant can learn to swim and therefore have the opportunity to choose aquatic activities as a part of a healthy lifestyle.

The aim of any aquatic experience is to ensure **every** participant has a **safe** and **positive** experience building **motivation** and **confidence** in the water, progressively developing fundamental movement, core aquatic and water competence skills.

The experience is more important than the activity...

Participants will remember past experiences of swimming and all associated activities, e.g; changing, showering, the water temperature, feeling anxious, impacts on all the senses, feeling vulnerable and exposed. Ultimately these experiences shape our future relationship with swimming, water, and all aquatic activities and could have a lasting impact and influence on behaviour and decision-making in and around water.

Swimming Teachers have a responsibility to evolve their delivery of the aquatic experience to ensure it is participant-focused, positive and purposeful for all learners.

Do not 'do what you have always done' - every individual and group is different and will require specific input from the Teacher.

Together we can ensure all children in Wales are able to have fun and be safe in and around water.

Swim Wales - Aquatics for everyone for life.



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Table of Contents

1. Safety and Safeguarding	3
2. Inclusion	3
3. Preparation	4
4. Lesson Delivery	4
5. Interaction and Engagement	4
6. Communication	4
7. Lesson Format	5
8. Teaching Practices	5
9. Observation and Correction	5
10. Physical Literacy	6
11. Resources	6
12. Organisation of Group	6
13. Positive Behaviour Management	6
14. Assessment	7

1. Safety and Safeguarding

- 1.1 Lessons follow the Pool Safety Operating Procedures (PSOPs) for the facility and take into consideration any measures identified in the swimming lesson risk assessment.
- 1.2 **Teachers observe all participants at all times.**
- 1.3 Teachers have the relevant qualifications to deliver the class, a current DBS, appropriate insurance and current, relevant safeguarding training.
- 1.4 Lessons and Teachers follow the '[Safe Supervision](#)' and '[Teaching in the Water and Handling of Children](#)' guidance documents.
- 1.5 A register is taken at the start of the lesson, and all participants are handed over to their responsible adult at the end of the lesson.
- 1.6 Fixed buoyancy aids (active aids) are utilised where appropriate.
- 1.7 Jumping in should only be taught in appropriate depth water (minimum depth 1 metre depending on the size of participant). Full Jumping Guidance can be accessed [here](#).
- 1.8 Diving should only be taught in a minimum depth of 1.8 metres by a Level 2 Teacher. Full Diving and Water Depth Guidance can be accessed [here](#).

2. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 2.1 All providers and teachers should ensure that lessons are inclusive to all.
- 2.2 Providers and Teachers should ensure that participants with a disability or individual needs are accommodated and that sessions are adapted if and when required; this includes lessons having assistant teachers if necessary.
- 2.3 Providers and Teachers should endeavour to provide each individual with the most suitable and positive lesson experience.
- 2.4 Group allocation should be made by individual assessment and needs and not umbrella classification; for example, some participants with a disability are best served in the main programme, whereas others may require bespoke provision or additional support.
- 2.5 It should be recognised that some participants may only be able to achieve limited outcomes due to their individual needs. So it is essential that appropriate exit routes are identified for these swimmers and that they are progressed through the pathway according to their needs and motivations.
- 2.6 Most public organisations who operate education courses (swimming lessons) that are open to the public, must provide this opportunity in the Welsh language ([Welsh Language \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#), Standard 84).
Wherever possible, Providers and Teachers must promote and facilitate the Welsh language, and ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language in their swimming lesson delivery.
- 2.7 All personnel involved in the learn to swim programme promote equality, inclusion and diversity, behaving professionally at all times.
- 2.8 All personnel are expected to attend regular training to ensure that they are current in their knowledge and understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion.

3. Preparation

- 3.1 Timekeeping – lessons start and finish on time.
- 3.2 Teacher should be dressed appropriately and behave professionally. The appropriate clothing that should be worn by the teacher and assistant, whilst in the water, includes rash vests or other full-length t-shirts, as well as shorts. These should be worn over the top of standard swimming wear.
- 3.3 Equipment and resources are prepared before the start of the lesson.
- 3.4 Lesson planning is critical to successful delivery.
- 3.5 Lessons should respond to learner progress and individual needs.
- 3.6 Teachers self-reflect and evaluate their teaching performance for future development.
- 3.7 Schemes of Work are produced for every block of lessons. Where a programme is continuous; a Scheme of Work of appropriate length should sit behind the programme.

4. Lesson Delivery

- 4.1 All personnel are expected to attend regular training to ensure that they are current in their knowledge and understanding of current best practice and guidelines for lesson delivery.
- 4.2 **All lessons** should be fun, varied, positive and engaging. Swim Wales promote 'learning through play'. (There should not be a 'fun week' as all lessons should be fun!)
- 4.3 Teachers are positive, approachable and engaged in their lesson delivery.
- 4.4 Teachers use a variety of progressive activities, games, themes and scenarios to make their lessons engaging and memorable.
- 4.5 The warm-up should incorporate a movement game across all ability levels.
- 4.6 Resources such as the Water Smart Delivery Plan and messaging, LTSW Games Resource and a range of equipment are utilised.

5. Interaction and Engagement

- 5.1 Teacher interacts positively, effectively and inclusively with participants, peers and responsible adults.
- 5.2 Teacher responds to individual needs.
- 5.3 Teacher provides accurate and individual teaching points and feedback on performance, using vocabulary appropriate to the participant.
- 5.4 Teacher provides appropriate praise for effort and achievement.
- 5.5 Teacher motivates participants both individually and as a group.
- 5.6 Learners are engaged in activities throughout the lesson.

6. Communication

- 6.1 Verbal communication is effective, clear and concise considering vocabulary, tone, volume and language/medium.
- 6.2 Non-verbal communications (gestures, body language, facial expressions) are effective, clear and appropriate.
- 6.3 Demonstrations provided are accurate, effective and clear.
- 6.4 Teacher positioning on the poolside enables all participants to see them and the teacher to observe all participants and the relevant skill being taught.

- 6.5 Delivery method is positive, encouraging and empathetic, providing support for those participants who might be nervous or new to the aquatic environment.
- 6.6 Relevant and correct teaching points are provided and reinforced.
- 6.7 Effort and progress are recognised and acknowledged.
- 6.8 Teachers attempt and utilise effective communication methods for each participant, e.g. British Sign Language, Am Dani cards, Flash Cards, Posters, and different languages.

7. Lesson Format

- 7.1 Clear sections of the session are visible, include appropriate skills and for an appropriate time period:
 - Register and introduction of session content
 - Safe entry – a variety of methods.
 - Warm up – whole body movement game/fun activity
 - Main Theme – approximately 50% of lesson time, utilises Part-Whole or Whole-Part-Whole according to the stage of development
 - Contrast – a different skill to the main theme
 - Cooldown – an appropriate lower-intensity skill to lower heart rate (floating, gliding, sculling etc.).
Jumping in **should not** be used as a final activity in any class. This skill should be developed in other sections of the lesson that link more appropriately to it as a method of entry.
 - Safe exit – encourage participants to climb out over the poolside.
 - Summary / Debrief – confirming what was covered, what they enjoyed and what will be covered in the next session.
- 7.2 Session summary is provided, and participants safely handed over to their responsible adult.

8. Teaching Practices

- 8.1 Teaching Practices align to current Swim Wales recommendations.
- 8.2 Practices used are appropriate to ability level.
- 8.3 Practices used are progressive.
- 8.4 Teaching points relevant to the needs of the participant.
- 8.5 Teachers work progressively to enable participants to achieve assessment outcomes (the criteria is to move up a class, not to be in the class).
- 8.6 Teachers focus on the quality of skill performance (expected in that class) over repetitions or distance covered.

9. Observation and Correction

- 9.1 Teachers observe performance and provide feedback and corrections – without this intervention, there will be no progress.
- 9.2 Teacher identifies faults and causes and provides ways to correct and improve.

10. Physical Literacy

- 10.1** Physical skills + Confidence + Motivation + Lots of Opportunities = Physical Literacy
- 10.2** Teachers should progressively incorporate the following skills in their lessons:
- FUNdamental Movement Skills (Agility, Balance, Co-ordination, Speed, Running, Jumping, Throwing, Kinaesthetics, Gliding, Buoyancy, Striking (with the body), Catching, Passing, Kicking and Striking (with an implement)
 - Core Aquatic Skills (Entries and Exits, Travel and Co-ordination, Buoyancy and Balance, Rotation and Orientation, Water Safety (such as Treading water, Sculling Water Safety Code), Streamlining, Aquatic Breathing and Health and Fitness.
 - Skills of Water Competence and Water Safety

11. Resources

- 11.1** The Teacher maximises the use of available equipment, space, time, assistant teacher (if available)
- 11.2** The Teacher utilises appropriate fixed buoyancy aids if relevant to the participant or class.
- 11.3** Lessons are delivered to enable independent discovery of the water and acquire skills.
- Examples of resources that should be referred to:
 - Swim Wales Stroke Standards
 - Water Smart Leaflet and Delivery Plan, Beach flags
 - Games Resources

12. Organisation of Group

- 12.1** Variety of methods used, appropriate to ability levels
- 12.2** A variety of Group organisation methods (for example – waves, cannon, chain) are utilised. One at a time is used sparingly.
- 12.3** Available pool space is used in a variety of ways and encourages and maximises activity.
- 12.4** Pool layout is allocated to maximise available space, and lessons are flexible to move into different areas to provide exposure and experience of different areas of the pool.
- 12.5** Teaching areas are designed to maximise quality in line with the expectations for the class.

13. Positive Behaviour Management

- 13.1** Teacher remains in control of the group/lesson at all times.
- 13.2** Sets expectations and has a consistent, positive approach to delivery.
- 13.3** Regularly uses participants' names.
- 13.4** Employs positive, effective behaviour management appropriate to the participant's age and stage of development.
- 13.5** Employs fair control measures where appropriate. Exclusion from activities or the lesson should be a final action, and all other options have been exhausted.

14. Assessment

- 14.1 The Learn to Swim Wales outcomes should be continually assessed as the participant attends lessons.
- 14.2 There should not be a summative assessment; however, to progress to the next level, all outcomes should be achieved competently and consistently.
- 14.3 Ongoing assessments are utilised, recognising participant progress as it happens; summative assessment is not recommended for many reasons!
- 14.4 The participant should complete all outcomes to receive the Bubbles, Splash, Wave, Skills, Water Competence Cymru or Distance award. If a participant continues to struggle to meet all outcomes over a considerable amount of time, an individual support plan should be discussed between the lesson provider, teacher and responsible adult.
- 14.5 Assessments should be recorded and shared with participants and their Responsible Adults.
- 14.6 Any distances referred to in Learn to Swim Wales do not need to be completed in a straight line (e.g. full width or length); distances can be achieved in circuits, diagonals etc. or any other appropriate use of available space.
- 14.7 Where awarding Learn to Swim Wales Distance Awards; Providers and Teachers should follow the Learn to Swim Wales Distance Award Guidelines; available [here](#).
- 14.8 Providers should maximise consistency between sites and teachers, for example, by conducting teacher observations, holding teacher meetings, delivering in-house training and supporting teachers to access CPD training relevant to their needs.

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