

Citywest Educate Together National School

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## Swimming Policy

The Board of Management of Citywest ETNS recognises the importance of education in water safety and the priority given to the strand of Aquatics in the Physical Education (P.E.) curriculum.

### Aims/Purposes

The aims/purposes of this policy are:

1. To comply with the requirements of the Revised P.E. Curriculum in aquatics
2. To ensure child protection and the dignity of children in a vulnerable situation
3. To provide clarity of rules and responsibilities

### Procedures and Guidelines

- Each pupil will attend a block of swimming lessons annually from First to Fourth Class\*.
- Costs incurred by hiring of pool, transport to and from the pool and payment of instructors necessitate a charge being imposed on each pupil. This will be sent to parents via payment request on Aladdin, 4-6 weeks before lessons commence. This cost will also be noted on the book list in June prior to lessons starting, so parents are aware of the fee which will be payable during the academic year. Inability to pay will not preclude a pupil from participating fully in swimming classes.
- A pupil who needs to opt out of a swimming class for a medical reason should provide a note of excuse, written and signed by the parent or guardian. A medical cert will be required if there is a medical condition which precludes the child from swimming on a long-term basis. It is the policy of the school that all pupils attend swimming lessons unless exempted by a doctor.
- 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.
- 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 an Additional Needs Assistant (ANA) will be assisted by the ANA.

- 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, arm bands if required, towel, hair brush (if necessary) and swim cap, all of which must also be marked.
- No toiletries (e.g. shampoo, shower gel, deodorant) are permitted. Hairdryers are not permitted.
- While in the pool, pupils must endeavour to obey the instructor's orders at all times and comply with the School Code of Conduct.
- Teachers will 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.

\*Please note: For the 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 school years, pupils in 1st - 5th classes will attend swimming lessons, as approved by the Board of Management. This is to make up for the cancellation of lessons in 2020 and 2021, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

### Instructional Arrangements

- The school will organise the swimming programme for all classes from First to Fourth\*.
- Instruction in the pool will be provided by qualified instructors.

### Travel and Supervision Arrangements

Depending on the location of the swimming pool, pupils may travel by bus, or walk. They will be accompanied by their class teacher, other member(s) of staff and parent volunteers, on the way to and from the pool, in keeping with the pupil:teacher ratio set out in the school tours policy.

### Roles and Responsibilities

School-related outings are enjoyable and provide wonderful authentic learning opportunities for children. Everyone, including each individual child, must be responsible for making these activities enjoyable and worthwhile. The essential roles and responsibilities of children, parents and staff are outlined below:

#### *Pupils*

Except in the case of children with additional needs, the children will:

- Remember to take their swimming gear to school on the appropriate days.
- Take instructions from their teacher and behave appropriately on their way to the pool, at the pool and on their return from the pool.
- Actively engage in the swimming lessons and listen carefully to the swimming instructors.
- Change and dress themselves at the pool.
- Be mindful of their own privacy and respect the privacy of others. Comply with school and swimming pool rules.
- Take responsibility for personal hygiene and safety at the pool.
- Take responsibility for their own belongings.

Expectations will be adjusted in the case of pupils with additional needs. Swimming instructors will be notified of any pupils with additional needs, who may require support.

## Parents

Parents will:

- Understand that swimming lessons are part of the Primary Curriculum and, therefore, all children are expected to participate fully. Children will only be exempt for medical reasons. In such instances parents are advised to inform the school principal in writing.
- Support the work of the teacher by encouraging their child to participate fully in the learning activities relating to the aquatics strand in the classroom and in the swimming pool.
- Teach their child the necessary personal care skills needed for attending swimming lessons, e.g. drying their bodies, dressing themselves, repacking their bag, etc.
- Pay the cost for the swimming lessons.
- Assist their children in organising the necessary swimming gear, e.g. swim wear, goggles, towel, etc.
- Trust the school staff to supervise the children in the changing area.
- In infrequent cases of children who have real difficulties in dressing themselves (but do not have access to an Additional Needs Assistant), parents may, in consultation with the class teacher, decide upon attending the swim sessions to assist their own child.

## Teachers

The class teacher will:

- Teach appropriate classroom lessons to prepare the children for the swimming lessons in the pool, e.g. Water safety, hygiene, privacy.
- Remind the children about road safety so that the journey to and from the pool may be used as an exercise to support learning in relation to road safety.
- Supervise the children on their way to and from the swimming pool.
- Coordinate with other adults to ensure that someone from the school is in the viewing area during the lessons and someone is available to assist any child who may need to leave the pool deck for any reason.
- Supervise the children in the changing area.
- Report incidents of serious misbehaviour to the school principal.
- Ensure that sufficient time is given to the children to shower/rinse off after the swimming lesson, dress and towel-dry their hair

## Health and Safety

- The Health and Safety Guidelines outlined by the pool authorities will be strictly adhered to.
- Pupils are required to behave at all times in a manner that ensures the safety of all involved in school swimming.
- Parents and guardians will receive a standard letter providing information on school swimming and including recommendations regarding preparing their children for swimming lessons, before their child starts their swimming term.
- Where a parent/guardian has a health concern that would affect their child's participation in swimming, a doctor's letter must be submitted to the school.
- In the best interest of the child, it is the duty of the 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 may be provided to the swimming instructors.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy is reviewed every five years or at other times if deemed necessary.

## Schedule for Swimming Lessons

Swimming lessons take place for pupils in 1st - 4th classes each year, generally in Term 2/3.

\*Note above: For the 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 school years, pupils in 1st - 5th classes will attend swimming lessons, as approved by the Board of Management. This is to make up for the cancellation of lessons in 2020 and 2021, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.