



Swimming Pool Normal Operating Procedure

March 2026

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Objective and Scope

This procedure identifies the processes designed to control the pool:

- Supervision.
- Safety.
- Teaching.
- Hiring to external users ('private hirers').

Reference Documents

The following reference documents should be readily available to anyone using the pool:

- Normal Operating Procedure - a copy of [HSG179 \(Health and Safety in Swimming Pools\)](#) must be kept on site.
- Emergency Action Plan.
- County Policy on Swimming.
- Conditions of Swimming Pool Hire.
- Staff Training Register for School Staff (life guarding, teaching and plant maintenance).
- [Code of Practice - The Management and Treatment of Swimming Pool Water](#).

Details of the Pool

Length	12m
Width	6m
Maximum depth	1.2 m
Minimum depth	0.8m
Number of lanes	n/a
Total surface area	72m ²
Maximum capacity (people)	24 (3 per m ²)

The pool is used for swimming lessons for Reception, KS1 and KS2. It is also used for 'splash' sessions during schools hours, at lunchtime and after school hours (these are run by school staff, PTFA or parents). During non-school hours (weekends and holidays) the pool may be hired between 10.30am and 4:30pm.

Plans of the Building and Layout

A plan of the school building and pool area showing emergency exits and evacuation routes can be found in Appendix A. This should also include the location of alarms and safety equipment, and entry and exit points to the pool.

Signs show fire exits and emergency procedures. There are also signs to show depth, and prohibition signs for running and diving.

Potential Areas of Risk - Risk Assessment

A separate documented assessment of the significant risks is undertaken annually as part of the school's annual review of Health and Safety.

Your swimming risk assessment should consider:

- Pool environment (eg changing area, first aid provision, pool and its surrounding, signage).
- Pool supervision (eg ratios, qualifications, emergency procedures).

- Pool plant (eg treatment and management of water, cleaning, use of chemicals).
- Session users (eg dos and don'ts, occupancy, capability, medical or additional needs).

All leaders of groups using the pool must read the Risk Assessments and must be aware of the risks identified at this pool, and the actions necessary to control them.

The findings of the risk assessment should inform processes described in the Normal Operating Procedure and Emergency Action Plan documents.

Known Hazards

- Children accessing the pool when it is not in use and not supervised.
- Children who cannot swim getting out of their depth.
- Diving into insufficient depth of water (leading to concussion or head/neck or spinal injury).
- Recreational swimming.
- Horseplay or misadventure in the pool or on the poolside.
- Prior health problems.
- Absence of, or inadequate response from, pool staff in an emergency.
- Slips, trips and falls around the pool.
- Water contamination/chemical leaks and spillages.

Standard Procedures for School Lessons

- To prevent unauthorised access, the pool must be locked when not in use.
- Swimming will not take place until one hour after a meal.
- All children must be toileted before entry to the pool.
- Before a lesson commences, all emergency equipment will be in place (pole, phone).
- All staff responsible for pool safety must make themselves aware of the location of the rescue equipment, first aid kit, emergency exits etc.
- The person in charge of swimming will keep a register of all those participating in swimming lessons.
- A headcount will be taken of those entering the pool and this will be recorded in the Pool Record Book kept in the pool room. This should be with the pool supervisor during pool use.
- Safeguarding measures and procedures are to be followed.
- All staff responsible for teaching and pool safety should be aware of any existing health issues, eg heart trouble, asthma, epilepsy. Inhalers should be within easy access to swimmers who may need them. Where epilepsy is totally controlled by medication, no special precautions are necessary.
- All supervisors must carry a whistle and use agreed signals (see below).
- Swimmers must practice a simple whistle drill at the beginning of a new swimming programme - one blast stop means stay still, continuous blasts mean go to the side of the pool and exit
- Diving is prohibited and swimmers must enter and exit from the pool steps or ladder or through a controlled method, eg swivel method.
- 'Jumping in' is to only take place during a controlled teaching session or under strict adult supervision.
- If the pool water becomes unclear and swimmers' feet cannot be seen on the bottom of the pool, all swimming activity must stop. This may be caused by the condition of the water or wind or heavy rain creating surface distortion.
- Swimmers must not be allowed to go back into the pool area without correct supervision.
- If a swimmer has a minor injury and requires one of the staff to deal with it then swimming activity must stop with pupils supervised at the side of the pool until both supervisors are able to resume their normal roles.
- At least 2 supervisors should be at the poolside before swimmers are admitted to the pool area from the changing rooms.
- All swimmers should be counted out of the pool at the end of the session, and the register signed noting any concerns in this.
- A supervisor should be the last to leave the pool area and must lock the door behind them.
- No swimmer should cross the yellow line until the teacher/adult in charge tells them to.

Pool Rules

- No running on the poolside.
- No diving from the side into the pool.
- Enter and exit the water by a controlled manner.
- Jumping (feet first) from the side is only allowed under strict supervision.
- No jewellery, including earrings, is to be worn in the pool.
- No entry until instructed to do so.
- No shouting - quiet voices - be respectful to the neighbours.
- No acrobatics or bombing.
- No pushing or ducking other swimmers.
- Everyone must leave the pool when instructed to do so.
- The pool will be cleared immediately in the event of an emergency, or where the pool becomes contaminated (eg lack of water clarity, chemical leak, excretion of bodily fluids).

Supervision of all Swimming

There must be a **minimum** of two qualified pool supervisors present at all times; one person must be nominated as the lead supervisor; at least one **MUST** be First Aid-trained. Supervisors must be on the poolside - staff in the water do not count in the pool supervision ratios. If the pool is used to capacity (24 children) then 3 supervisors are essential.

The number of pupils in a swimming lesson class should be determined by the risk assessment, with additional consideration given to:

- The swimming ability of the pupils and how they respond to the teacher in a class environment.
- The age of the pupils and their physical attributes in relation to the swimming pool configuration.
- The temperature of the pool water and its effect on young, older and disabled people.

When dealing with minor first aid and other minor incidents that may reduce the poolside supervision ratios, the class should evacuate the water and remain at the poolside until full supervision levels are resumed.

All pool supervisors must carry a whistle with them at all times.

Pool supervisors must be in position on the poolside before swimmers are permitted to enter the water. In addition, supervisors must remain on the poolside at the end of a session until all swimmers have left the area and the pool is secured.

Supervisors should be positioned so that the pool can be scanned in 10 seconds and a casualty can be reached within approximately 20 seconds.

Supervisors must work together to ensure that they monitor all areas of the pool and all pool users. They should be located on poolside so that they can achieve this and have responsibility for an area of the pool and group of children.

Supervisors are to have a charged mobile phone with them at all times in case of emergencies.

- Emergency Number: 999
- School Office: (01458) 241434

Safeguarding Coaching/Teaching Sessions

Suitably competent teachers and coaches may take responsibility, both for supervision and teaching/ coaching of their class/squad.

The number of pupils in a swimming lesson class should be determined by the risk assessment, with additional consideration given to the:

- The swimming ability of the pupils and how they respond to the teacher in a class environment.
- The age of the pupils and their physical attributes in relation to the swimming pool configuration.
- The temperature of the pool water and its effect on young, older and disabled people.

There is no optimum or maximum ratio but these factors will have an impact on the numbers in the class. Teachers and coaches may take responsibility, both for supervision and teaching/coaching of their class. See www.swimming.org/swimengland/worker-health-and-safety (taken from HSG179).

Social Events

- Social events, such as pool parties, where high noise and excitement will be generated, may require additional supervision.
- Eating and drinking before swimming can increase the risk of vomiting and/or choking so it is recommended that you organise events so that swimming takes place first.
- The alarm will be raised by calling the emergency services. Everyone running a session in the pool must carry a phone.
- Pool supervisors can carry a whistle with them.
- If there is an incident, everyone will be asked to evacuate the pool,
- Pool supervisors must be in position on the poolside before swimmers are permitted to enter the water. In addition, supervisors must remain on the poolside at the end of a session until all swimmers have left the area and the pool is secured.
- Supervisors should be positioned so that the pool can be scanned in 10 seconds and a casualty can be reached within approximately 20 seconds.
- Supervisors must work together to ensure that they monitor all areas of the pool and all pool users. They should be located on poolside so that they can achieve this and know who is looking out for which area or group of children.

Private Hire

The members of staff/committee responsible for swimming shall ensure that private organisations are aware of the requirements and rules when confirming the booking. A formal application and agreement must be issued to confirm the arrangements to be in place. The organisation shall be issued with a copy of this procedure and given a copy of the Emergency Action Plan.

The representative of the pool volunteers shall ensure that all supervisors provided by private organisations are inducted in the necessary operating procedures and emergency action. This training and their First Aid Certificate must be signed off on the hire agreement form.

Responsibilities for the Pool Users' Safety When the Pool is Hired Out

The pool hirer will provide the necessary supervision, 2 adults supervising from the pool edge, one of whom has a First Aid Certificate.

A pool volunteer will do spot checks to ensure that supervision is carried out correctly.

A pool volunteer will share the code of conduct with the hirer.

Agree in advance with the pool hirer as to who will provide the necessary supervision cover, and the number and competencies of any lifeguards. The hire agreement will detail the standard of pool supervision.

Where agreement is reached that the hirer will provide supervision, you are responsible for ensuring that the agreed level of supervision by competent persons is provided.

Where the hirer shares use of the pool with the general public, you retain primary responsibility for the safety of pool users.

You should put measures in place to ensure that the conditions of the hire agreement are being met (eg through random checks).

A code of conduct should be written and provided to the person hiring the pool also be supplied if the school pool is used for community events or local hire.

The members of staff responsible for swimming shall ensure that all qualified lifeguards and supervisors provided by private organisations are inducted in the necessary operating procedures and emergency action. The person(s) representing the hiring body is qualified either in RLSS National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches (programmed session) or RLSS National Pool Lifeguard Qualification (which covers un-programmed sessions) or equivalent.

The members of staff responsible for swimming shall monitor club/private hire use to ensure that the requirements and rules are being adhered to.

All clubs shall also provide evidence of DBS checks for their personnel.

Equipment

Safety equipment (life ring and pole) must be checked prior to the pool being used and records of these checks must be kept.

Problems/shortfalls must be reported to the member of staff responsible for school swimming (in term time) and the representative of the pool volunteers during the holidays.

Records of checks and problems raised are to be recorded in the Daily chemical checklist and reported to the person in charge of the swimming pool.

Floats, woggles and toys are all kept in the locked pump room. These are only for use by the school and organisations with prior consent.

No inflatables are to be used in the pool at any time.

Cleaning

Cleaning procedures need to be detailed specifying frequency, what is cleaned, how and by whom.

Process	Action	Frequency
Full pool clean	Water, bottom, sides, surrounds, changing rooms, toilet, pump room - volunteer group	Start of season
Bottom of pool	Hoover - Purepools	Weekly
Pool covers	Spraying and brushing with mild disinfectant - volunteer group	Start of season

All chemicals used for cleaning pool surrounds and changing rooms shall be listed, a COSHH Assessment must be completed and a risk assessment [Risk Assessment HS F08](#) completed using the Material Safety Data Sheets and kept with the chemicals to advise users of safe methods and dilutions rates, dealing with accidents, storage etc.

Staff using cleaning material should be trained in their safe use.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): face shield, disposable gloves, disposable apron.

Pool Water Testing/Treatment/Statutory Tests

The following should be considered:

- Electrical installations for the pool are to be checked annually.
- Chemical treatment - disinfection, pH correction, flocculation (if appropriate) systems in use.
- Pool water testing, dosing with chemicals, day tanks, ordering, delivery and storage.
- Backwashing - frequency, length of time, when it should be done, how it is done, who does it.
- Strainer cleaning.
- Alternating pumps.
- Legionella testing of showers, hoses and taps.
- Other equipment and the processes.
- Who does what, training and qualifications, updates, and re-validations.
- Volunteers, refresh training from Purepools on chemical use and dosage.

The following chemicals are used for the cleaning and treatment of the swimming pool:

- Chlorine tablets - when needed
- Chlorine - test 3 times a day, add when below 3 as has high usage, 5 is the recommended level
- pH - test 2 times daily, add pH Plus or pH Minus when pH is below 7.2 or above 7.8
- Cyanuric acid - test weekly, if over 65 dump water
- Combined chlorine - test weekly, if over 1.5 dump water
- Scooping out debris daily

Chemical Name	Purpose	pH
Chlorine tablets	Water safety	Water Safety
PH Plus	Water safety	Water Safety
PH Minus	Water safety	Water Safety

Water Testing

Test	Measures	Frequency	Carried out by/when
Free Chlorine	3 - 5	Daily	Volunteers
Combined Chlorine	1.5 or below	Weekly	Purepools
pH	7.2 - 7.8	Daily	Volunteers
Cyanuric Acid	65 or below	Weekly	Purepools

Reporting of Accidents and Incidents

- First aid forms are to be completed for all accidents and, for any accident needing more than basic in-school first aid, a further RIDOR form is to be completed by school staff. All first aid is to be recorded in the First Aid Incident Book in the pool room and a copy given to parents.
- All accidents are to be reported to the pool supervisor and Head Teacher or a representative of the pool volunteers as soon as possible after the incident.
- It is every user's responsibility to notify the authorities of any concerns, near misses or damage seen. Incidents should be investigated by the school to identify any measures or actions to avoid future incidents of a similar nature. Consider:
 - How did the incident happen?
 - Why did the incident happen?

- Could this type of incident happen again?
- What actions have been taken to help avoid a recurrence?

Appendix A :
A plan of the school building and pool area showing emergency exits and evacuation routes

[School plan Appendix A.pdf](#)



