



## **Swimming Policy**

### **Introduction**

This policy was drafted by the teaching staff in Lankill National School. It was ratified by the Board of Management in October 2018. The aim of the policy is to clarify matters in relation to the teaching of the curriculum content in the aquatics strand of the school's Physical Education Programme.

### **Aquatics Strand of Physical Education Curriculum**

The Aquatics strand includes the following strand units:

1. Hygiene
2. Water Safety
3. Entry to and exit from the water
4. Buoyancy and propulsion
5. Stroke development
6. Water-based ball games
7. Understanding and appreciation of aquatics

Lessons will be taught in the school to cover some aspects of the strand units listed above e.g Hygiene and Water Safety. However, it will be necessary for the children to attend a swimming programme at the local facility to ensure every opportunity is given to them to become competent and confident swimmers. A programme consisting of one lesson every week for six weeks will be organised by the school for the children in a local swimming pool.

It is compulsory for all children to participate in aquatics lessons as part of the National Curriculum. A pupil who needs to opt out of a swimming class for a medical reason should provide a note of explanation, 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.

### **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 special needs, the children will:

1. Remember to take their swimming gear to school on the appropriate days.
2. Take instructions from their teacher and behave appropriately on their way to the pool, at the pool and on their return to the school.

3. Actively engage in the swimming lessons and listen carefully to the swimming coaches.
4. Change and dress themselves at the pool. A buddy system will be in place where a child in an older class will assist a child from a younger class if required.
5. Comply with school and swimming pool rules.
6. Take responsibility for personal hygiene and safety at the pool.
7. Protect their own belongings at the pool.
8. Protect their own privacy and respect the privacy of others.

All children attending swimming lessons should wear their school tracksuit. Swimming togs may be worn under tracksuits coming to school. Each child must have a suitable bag to carry his/her swimming gear with secure zip or other fastening. All items of clothing should be clearly labelled with the child's full name. Each child must have their own togs, towel, hair brush, swim cap and goggles, all of which must also be marked.

Children with special needs and who have been granted access to a Special Needs Assistant (SNA) will be assisted by school personnel. Parents will be informed that this assistance is being provided.

## **Parents**

Parents will:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. Teach their child the necessary personal care skills needed for attending swimming lessons e.g. changing clothes, drying hair etc.
4. Pay the cost for the swimming lessons.
5. Assist their children to organise the necessary swimming gear e.g. swim wear, goggles, swimming cap, towel etc.
6. Trust the school and pool staff to supervise the children in the changing area.

Parents are advised that swimming lessons that take place during school hours will be extremely well supervised by school teachers, special needs assistants and pool teachers.

It is hoped that all children, except those with special needs, will have the basic self-care skills necessary to change dress themselves and dry their hair after swimming lessons. It is recommended that pupils with long hair should wear their hair up coming to school on the day of swimming. For parents who may have concerns about their child's hair being wet it is recommended that waterproof silicon swim caps be worn by their child.

As the swimming lessons are taking place in school time and all children participating are in the care of the class teacher, parents are not permitted to enter the changing area before, during or after the swimming lessons.

In the interests of child protection, the Board of Management and staff of

Lankill National School will fulfil all of the requirements set out in the Department of Education and Skills Circular 0063/2010 relating to Garda vetting.

This circular states:

*“Many schools avail of the services of other persons (non-employees) such as sports coaches, volunteers etc to assist in and support school activities. The vetting requirements being introduced in this circular apply to any such persons that have or may have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults. These vetting requirements will assist schools in assessing the suitability, from a child protection perspective, of any such persons to work with children or vulnerable adults. A school authority may also separately determine that it is necessary to check references or past work experience of such persons before they are engaged in any capacity. If a school authority has any doubts about the suitability, from a child protection perspective, of any such persons to work with children or vulnerable adults then they should not be engaged in any capacity. The final decision on the suitability of such persons rests with each school authority.”*

Appendix 1 - Circular 0063/2010.

In order to comply fully with the requirements of this circular:

1. Only parents who have provided the school with proof of their Garda vetting and who have been approved by the school authority will have access to the children during school related activities.
2. Parents are advised that Garda vetting alone does not entitle an adult to work with or have access to the children. Approval from the school authority is also necessary.

### **Class Teacher**

The class teacher will:

1. Teach appropriate classroom lessons to prepare the children for the swimming-lessons in the pool e.g. water safety, hygiene etc.
2. Collect money from the children to pay for the lessons.
3. Teach 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.
4. Supervise the children on their way to and from the swimming pool.
5. Remain in the viewing area during the lessons and available to assist any child who may need to leave the pool for any reason. Supervise the children in the changing area.
6. Ensure that each child's personal privacy is respected in the swimming pool.
7. Report incidents of serious misbehaviour to the school principal.
8. Ensure that sufficient time is given to the children to
  - a) to shower/rinse off after the swimming lesson – Shampoo, shower gel or deodorant will not be used at this time.
  - b) to dress and dry their hair.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson BOM)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_