



# Parent Guide

Freedom Leisure provides a fun, friendly and inclusive Learn to Swim Programme with continual assessment allowing participants to progress at their own pace.



## Welcome...

This guide will tell you everything you need to know about learning to swim with Freedom Leisure. Our Swim School was created in partnership with the national governing body for swimming; Swim England (formerly the ASA).

Every participant will have the opportunity to become a competent, confident and safe swimmer. This will be achieved by learning a wide range of aquatic skills.

Freedom Leisure Swim School has been tailored to follow the Swim England Learn to Swim Pathway and relevant awards scheme. As part of this scheme you can purchase badges and certificates, whilst also collecting stickers throughout each stage.

We believe that a **FUN & ENGAGING** environment is the best for people to learn in. This is reflected in how our lessons are designed and delivered.



## Why learn to swim?

*"By learning to swim from an early age, you are more likely to enjoy swimming opportunities in the future; the Swim England Learn to Swim Pathway and Freedom Leisure programme creates competent, confident and safe swimmers with a wide skill base to help them reach their potential in swimming and other fun water-based activities such as water polo, diving, canoeing, sailing and snorkelling."*

*(Swim England)*



## Why learn to swim?

*"It is so important that you support your child in learning to swim. Research into school swimming in 2018 revealed that 138,000 children (almost one in four) cannot swim the statutory 25 metres when they leave primary school."*

*One in six parents said they never take their child swimming. However 84% of parents feel that swimming provides fun and 60% feel it helps their children make friends."*

*(Swim England)*

## Let the journey begin!

We believe in rewarding swimmers which is why we follow the Swim England awards system.

The Swim England Learn to Swim Pathway guides swimmers from foundation through the seven core Stages of swimming (and beyond) to development within a particular aquatic discipline. The awards system focuses on the seven main Stages of swimming. Children will be awarded a badge and certificate upon completion of each stage. Swimmers also have the opportunity to make smaller progression steps in between the Stages.

All swimmers will be encouraged to succeed within our programme.





## Your child's journey & Learn to Swim Pathway

### Pre-School Framework

Perfect for pre-school children, building the beginnings of a lifelong love of water.



### Learn to Swim Framework

Ideal for children aged 4 through to 11, developing confident and competent swimmers through fun and enjoyment.



### Aquatic Skills Framework

Perfect for children who have completed the Learn to Swim Stages 1-7 and are now looking to develop skills.



The Swim England Learn to Swim Programme is a world-leading syllabus, helping children and adults to learn how to swim. It's a fantastic experience that opens up new possibilities for everyone, as well as supporting their confidence, enjoyment and safety in the water. Swim England Learn to Swim Awards are a great way to keep learners of all ages and abilities motivated throughout their swimming journey.

### Adult Swimming Framework

For older teens and adults looking to make a start with swimming, build water confidence and / or improve their swimming technique.



Our Awards scheme includes both 'core' and complementary Awards. This diagram shows a swimmer's journey through the core Awards of the four Learn to Swim Frameworks.

## The Foundation Framework

Swimmers will develop basic safety awareness in a class scenario, including movement and water confidence skills. Smaller stepping stones are provided for nervous swimmers with additional needs to help them build more confidence before they move on to Stage 1.

### Stage 1&2

(1: red hat & 2: orange hat)

Swimmers will develop basic movement skills, water confidence and safety awareness.

During Stage 2 swimmers will work towards being able to swim 5 metres, develop safe entries to the water and will continue to practice floating, travel and rotation in the water. Swimmers can still use aids including armbands and floats to help complete these Stages.

### Stage 3&4

(3: yellow hat & 4: green hat)

During Stage 3 swimmers will work towards being able to swim 10 metres on their front and back, and will be able to swim underwater to collect objects from the bottom of the pool. Rotation skills and water safety knowledge will also be developed.

In Stage 4 swimmers will focus on refining kicking techniques for all four strokes and develop a better understanding of buoyancy.

### Stage 5&6

(5: light blue hat & 6: navy blue hat)

In Stage 5 swimmers will focus on swimming all four strokes to the expected Swim England standards. Swimmers will also develop skills in sculling, treading water and complete rotation.

During Stage 6 your child will focus on developing effective swimming skills including co-ordinating breathing, water safety and an understanding of how to prepare for exercise.

### Stage 7

(7: purple hat & further Stages)

By the end of Stage 7 swimmers should have reached 10 outcomes. Swimmers should be able to complete these outcomes without support.

Further Stages include water polo, competitive swimming, competitive synchro and competitive diving.



## Why is sticking with your child's lessons until at least Stage 7 so IMPORTANT?

We follow the world-leading Swim England Learn to Swim Programme to teach your child to swim.

Swim England research says that the key reason why many parents want their child to learn to swim is to ensure that they are able to rescue themselves if they got into trouble.

Swim England, the national governing body for swimming, is now leading a campaign to highlight four minimum standards for swimming competency that children should be able to do before leaving swimming lessons. They want to ensure that all children are competent swimmers to enjoy the water safely.

### The four competencies are:

- » Tread water for 30 seconds
- » Know how to call for help if they are in trouble
- » Experience swimming in clothing
- » Swim 100 metres without stopping

Your child will achieve these in Stages 5, 6 and 7 of the Swim England Learn to Swim Programme.

If you want to help encourage your child to progress through the Stages, you can download the Swim England My Learn to Swim app today;

### DOWNLOAD [HERE](#) FOR FREE.

This will help motivate your child between stages, with characters to unlock and stickers to collect.



## The first lesson & how to prepare...

Starting swimming lessons is a big step for many children and parents.

Before the first lesson we strongly recommend that you familiarise your child with the local swimming pool.



### How to prepare

You can prepare for the first lesson by checking the start date, time, Stage and teacher. Ensure that you get to the pool in plenty of time to help your child change and get ready for the start of their lesson.

It is not advised to swim on a full stomach and we discourage swimmers from eating within the hour before their lesson is due to start.

### What to bring

In your child's kit bag should be swim wear, towel, hair band and brush for long hair, coin for a locker, shampoo or shower gel and Freedom Leisure swim hats (recommended & requested). Goggles are optional and are available to purchase from reception.

Each swimmer will receive a swimming hat when they start and different coloured swimming hats as they move through the Stages. Should the hat be lost, a replacement can be purchased from reception for a small fee.



### Payment

#### Direct Debit

There are many benefits of paying for your child's lessons via Direct Debit.

- » Spreading the cost of payments into 12 manageable monthly instalments which are calculated on a pro rata basis.
- » This means that there will be no need to queue at reception.

*(please note: T&C's apply)*

#### All children enrolled on to Freedom Leisure Swim School will receive:

- » a free Swim School Welcome Pack
- » a coloured swimming hat
- » Unlimited **FREE SWIMMING** during public sessions.

*\*(please note: T&C's apply)*

### Go further and make a real splash!

#### One-to-one and private lessons

Individual lessons for both children and adults are available. Swimmers will learn in the way that best suits them.

One-to-one lessons can be extremely helpful when your child is looking to focus on mastering a certain aspect of their swimming. A little boost may be all they need to help them carry on with the rest of their Swim England Learn to Swim Programme.

#### PLEASE ASK AT RECEPTION FOR MORE DETAILS.

#### Crash courses

Throughout the school holidays why not boost your child's progression with our intensive crash courses. Crash courses typically comprise of five consecutive days of lessons for 30 minutes each day. Look out for notices in your local leisure centre as school holidays approach or ask at reception for details.



## Swimming lesson dress code & hygiene

### What to wear

All children should wear appropriate fitting costumes, trunks or shorts designed for swimming. Bikinis and baggy costumes or swim shorts can restrict movement. We also encourage swimmers to shower before they enter the pool.

Goggles should be correctly sized before the start of a lesson. The swimming teacher reserves the right to ask the child to remove goggles for certain water skills.

### Swimming hats

All children should wear swimming hats. You will be given a coloured swimming hat when joining and transferring to the next stage. Lost or broken hats can be replaced by purchasing a new hat from reception. All children should wear swimming hats for hygiene and to assist with supervision of classes.

### Jewellery

No jewellery should be worn during a swimming lesson. Religious or medical bracelets are allowed but should not distract the swimmer from their lesson.

## Behaviour, conduct, time keeping and spectating

### Behaviour and conduct

Parents accept that their child is under the supervision, control and care of the swimming teacher during the lesson period. We reserve the right to remove your child should they persistently disrupt classes or be seen to be putting themselves or others at risk. We will consult parents or guardians before this decision is made. If a child is removed under these circumstances and suitable alternatives arrangements cannot be made no refund will be provided.

### Time keeping

**PLEASE ARRIVE IN TIME** for the start of your lesson. Swimmers cannot be accepted into the class if they are more than 5 minutes late as this will disrupt the lesson for the other children.

Children must also be collected promptly at the end of each lesson. Lessons are typically conducted over a 30-minute time slot (certain classes are 45 minutes or one hour), this includes time allocated to take registers.

### Spectating

Where spectating is permitted, parents must not interfere with lessons or distract the swimming teachers. No photography or filming is permitted in any area without the prior approval from centre management. **PARENTS AND GUARDIANS MUST REMAIN ON THE PREMISES** whilst the swimmer is attending their lessons. This is in case of a medical emergency, building evacuation or other emergency situation.





## Other important information...

### Illness and medical conditions

Please ensure that you have advised a member of staff of any medical conditions, injuries or special needs your child may have. The teacher, and any subsequent teachers throughout the programme, should also be told in the first lesson.

If your child has been ill with diarrhoea, ear infections, infectious diseases, open wounds or sore eyes they must not attend their lesson until 48 hours after symptoms have subsided.

### Changing and moving lessons

You may request a change of time, day or teacher.

Should you wish to make a change please speak to the reception team and they will try to accommodate your request. Please remember, swimming ability and speed of progression will vary depending upon the swimmer...



### Payments and cancellation policy

Lesson fees are non-refundable and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the manager. All fees are to be paid in advance of the first lesson.

The monthly direct debit is taken on or around the same date each month as confirmed at point of sale. If you wish to cancel you are required to give one calendar month notice in writing.

*(please refer to T&C's)*

Failure to provide the full notice period to cancel your payment when on Direct Debit may result in Freedom Leisure taking recovery action for the outstanding payment.

If payment cannot be made then we can no longer reserve the place in the class.

### Pool closure

In the event of a pool closure you will be contacted as soon as possible. Swimmers will be credited on their swimmer account for the missed session (please contact your local Freedom Leisure Centre - terms and conditions apply). Freedom Leisure reserves the right to cancel classes for operational purposes. If this happens you will receive notice and alternative arrangements will be made.



### Swimming teachers

Every effort will be made to provide the same swim teacher for each lesson. However, relief instructors may be used without prior notification due to illness or for any unforeseen circumstances. If a teacher is absent the facility reserves the right to join classes together if considered appropriate and safe according to the Swim England guidance on teaching.

**Would you like to work for us as a Swim Teacher? Training available. See current vacancies [HERE](#).**

### Communication

We actively encourage communication and welcome all feedback. Centre management will be on hand to resolve any poolside issues. Please ensure that we hold your most up to date telephone number and email address on our system.

### Feedback

Freedom Leisure is committed to providing a service that will meet your needs. If you have any feedback please speak or contact a member of management at your local leisure centre.

### Freedom Leisure Swim School provides:

- » instructed classes for children and adults
- » continuous assessment
- » class sizes that follow Swim England recommendations
- » **FREE** access to Public Swimming sessions
- » Direct Debit payment to spread the cost, providing affordable monthly instalments



Learn to Swim  
Programme



ROYAL  
LIFE SAVING  
SOCIETY UK



**For more information please contact us:**  
[freedom-leisure.co.uk/swimlessons](https://freedom-leisure.co.uk/swimlessons)