



From mountain to sea

Swimming for Children / Young People with Additional Support Needs

Draft Guidance to Schools

September 2017



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Version	Status	Date	Reason for update
1.0	Guidance	2004	
2.0	Draft guidance	June 2017	Guidance out of date and requiring refresh
2.1	Guidance	September 2017	GIRFEC information and contents and hyperlinks enabled

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Introduction

A number of pupils with additional support needs in Aberdeenshire schools participate in swimming for a variety of reasons including:

- Exercise in a supportive environment to promote mobility
- Improve coordination and concentration
- Improve communication and social skills
- Develop swimming skills for safety and enjoyment

The purpose of this guidance is to ensure equity of provision for all pupils by providing information and advice to schools on criteria for selection of pupils and arrangements for funding.

GIRFEC

Children and young people have their needs assessed on an individual basis and support will be provided as required in line with [GIRFEC](#). The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is a national approach to improving the Wellbeing of children and young people in Scotland. Aims from GIRFEC which particularly apply in this guidance are:

- Improve outcomes for children, young people and their families.
- Increase prevention and earlier intervention so all children and young people are supported to achieve their potential
- Achieve high standards of multi-agency working, based on a co-ordinated approach to identifying Wellbeing concerns, assessing need, and agreeing outcomes and actions.

Please refer to [Appendix 1](#) for more information about GIRFEC and the 5 questions, together with [website links](#).

There is a statutory requirement for education authorities and their partners to work together to ensure the wellbeing needs of the child/young person as detailed in the [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#).

Benefits of Swimming

Where pupils have a physical disability, movement is facilitated by the buoyancy of the water. Children and young people can achieve more active movement without stress on joints, bones and muscles; as the effect of gravity is lessened due to support from swimming aids / lungs full of air. Swimming may be recommended by a physiotherapist as part of an exercise programme supporting improvement / maintenance of function of muscles.

Pupils with coordination difficulties and/or delayed learning can also benefit, as swimming promotes coordination and concentration on the task to achieve a positive outcome. The motivation from these achievements are important in developing confidence and self-esteem. Physiotherapists and occupational therapists may

recommend swimming as part of a programme to support development of coordination.

The environment of a swimming pool will enable pupils to develop communication and social skills in addition to personal care and hygiene skills through undressing, showering and dressing. These communication and social skills opportunities are important for some children with communication difficulties and sensory integration/processing needs.

Criteria for Selection of Pupils

Participation in swimming for children and young people with additional support needs will allow them to gain more from the education provision available to them.

Recommendation for participation should be on a multiagency basis and may include such as the educational psychologist, community paediatrician, occupational therapist, physiotherapist and/or MOVE coordinator (Movement Opportunities Via Education).

All pupils participating in swimming or hydrotherapy within this context (as opposed to children participating within mainstream classes and PE lessons) must have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which includes a target for which swimming is a specified resource.

The IEP should specify:

- a) The goals/targets which these are expected to achieve
- b) The number and frequency of swimming lessons
- c) Clear success criteria
- d) How these are to be monitored and evaluated

Funding Arrangements

There are three aspects to funding

- a) Swimming lessons
- b) Transport
- c) Staff to support pupils

To ensure equity for all schools the following arrangements are in place:

Swimming lessons

These will be fully funded by the Authority in instances when schools do not have arrangements through their local Community School Network; and may be arranged as part of a Learning Pathway Plus+.

Invoices should be sent to:

The Quality Improvement Officer (Additional Support Needs)
Aberdeenshire Council
Woodhill House
Westburn Road
Aberdeen AB16 5GB

Transport

This is not funded by the Authority as all support is directed towards the cost of lessons.

In event of the swimming being a component of a Learning Pathway Plus+ the school's QIO may agree to the funding of transport through submission of a PTU500.

Staff to support pupils

There is no funding from the Authority but support may be provided by the school to meet needs according to availability of pupil support assistants / other staff. Staffing arrangements may be negotiated through the Local Management Group.

Risk Assessments

A sample generic risk assessment for an Aberdeenshire swimming pool is attached in [Appendix 2](#). Schools should obtain a current copy of the pool risk assessment and file with other risk assessment information.

In addition to the above, a generic or specific school risk assessment should be completed to record any risks and control measures associated with the travel to and participation in swimming/use of changing facilities etc. for the child/young person or group as appropriate.



Appendix 1: GIRFEC information and the 5 questions

GIRFEC sets out a vision which aims to:

- Improve outcomes for children, young people and their families.
- Increase prevention and earlier intervention so all children and young people are supported to achieve their potential
- Achieve high standards of multi-agency working, based on a co-ordinated approach to identifying Wellbeing concerns, assessing need, and agreeing outcomes and actions.

What I need from people who look after me:

Play, encouragement, fun: stimulation and encouragement to learn and enjoy life, responsiveness to the child or young person's unique needs and abilities, providing an educationally rich environment. Encouragement to the child/young person's progress by sensitive responses to interests and achievements.

The Five GIRFEC Questions

A child or young person's Wellbeing is influenced by everything around them, and by different needs they will have at different points of their life. Wellbeing concerns may arise from a child or young person's individual experiences or circumstance, or be posed by the impact of a family member or significant person's situation (this could include a non-resident partner of a parent/carer, or a peer).

When a Wellbeing concern is identified or raised for a child or young person, you should ask yourself the 5 GIRFEC questions:

1. **What is getting in the way of this child or young person's wellbeing?**
2. **Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?**
3. **What can I do now to help this child or young person?**
4. **What can my service or organisation do to help this child or young person?**
5. **What additional help, if any, may be needed from others?**

If you don't have all the information you need, you may need to gather further information either by speaking with the child or young person themselves, their parents or carers, or from other people within your own, or other agencies. This will ensure you have as full a picture as possible to inform your own assessment, and informs any Request for Assistance made to other agencies if needed.

Findings from recent Significant Case Reviews tell us that sharing the right information at the right time can help improve outcomes for children, young people and their families. It can often help prevent low level concerns growing into more serious or entrenched difficulties. In the majority of cases, Wellbeing concerns should be openly discussed with the child, young person, family members or other person, including explicit discussions* around what information may need to be shared, why, and with whom.

**Unless there are child protection concerns*.*

Child Protection Prompt: If at any point concerns are raised which suggests a child or young person is at risk, of harm or neglect, or potentially at risk of harm or neglect, Child Protection Procedures must be followed without delay.

Please refer to the [Aberdeenshire GIRFEC](#) website for more information.

Appendix 2

Department: Leisure, Sport and Culture			RISK ASSESSMENT						
Process/Activity: Public Swimming					Location: Xxxx Swimming Pool		Date: 15/05/2015		
Describe activity: General swimming for any member of public					Review:				
Hazard	Person/s Affected	Risk	Risk level before controls are in place LOW MED HIGH			Control Measures	Risk level after controls are in place LOW MED HIGH		
Staff Competence Duty Officer / Leisure Assistants / Coaches			✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff trained to NPLQ level. All Swim Coaches qualified/trained to appropriate levels. 	✓		
Insurance	Instructor	Litigation		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All activities organised under Aberdeenshire council will be covered for legal liability by the council insurers (Public / Employers liability). All activities organised out with Aberdeenshire Council will require to be privately insured. 	✓		
Supervision	Staff / Participants	Major Injury/ Minor Injury	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervision levels required as per NOP and HSG179 'Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools' guidelines to ensure patrons safety. All rescue equipment is in place and serviceable prior to the commencement of the activity. Participant ratios are listed in the NOP and below in drowning hazard section of risk assessment. No public swimming sessions will run without the presence of two qualified Lifeguards. Appropriate signage is in place to mark down depths of the pool. Alarms in place for staff to get the attention of other staff members in an emergency and walkie talkies to communicate information required. NOP Ratios established from HSG179 'Managing Health and Safety in 	✓		

						Swimming Pools' and RLSS guidelines as per below, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 1 – 15 swimmers to 2 lifeguards ➤ 16 – 40 swimmers to 2 lifeguards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional lifeguards can be put in place in addition to the ratios above if deemed necessary or entrance numbers restricted if lifeguarding cover is limited. Lifeguards will need to do a dynamic assessment each time they go onto poolside and may need to move Chair or Patrol positions and/ or request additional lifeguards, if conditions require it i.e. Glare etc. Any adjustments in positioning need to be communicated with the Duty Officer. 			
Persons / Group Ability	Staff / Participants	Major Injury Minor Injury		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure compliance with Aberdeenshire Council Admission Policy. • Ensure all participants understand and comply with the pool rules. • Village changing facilities available. • All incidents will be reported to the duty officer who will record it on Aberdeenshire Councils corporate Incident reporting database on Arcadia. • Only competent swimmers allowed into deep water. 	✓		
Slips, Trips and Falls (Pool Side)	Staff / Participants	Strain, Sprain and / or Fracture		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A visual inspection of the pool side prior to the activity commencing and remove or place out of bounds potential trip hazards. • Signs indicating pool rules to be displayed clearly at pool side. • Staff carry out regular daily maintenance and cleaning in all areas. 	✓		
Slips, Trips and Falls (Changing Rooms)	Staff / Participants	Strain, Sprain and / or Fracture		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A visual inspection of the changing rooms prior to participants arriving and remove or place out of bounds potential hazards. • Signs indicating pool rules to be displayed clearly at pool side. • Staff carry out regular daily maintenance and cleaning in all areas. 	✓		
Reduced water clarity	Staff / Participants	Major Injury Minor Injury		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular pool water checks should be taken throughout the day and necessary chemical adjustments are carried out to ensure water clarity is maintained. • Automatic dosing and control unit is in place. • School Janitorial staff are trained to check pool water clarity prior to commencement of activity, and make a judgement to whether it is safe 	✓		

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						to run activity, and should suspend or cancel the activity if water clarity deteriorates.			
Lifting & Moving	Staff	Back Injury		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff trained in correct Manual Handling Procedures. Adequate number of staff on poolside when moving equipment. 	✓		
Equipment	Staff / Participants	Major Injury Minor Injury		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A visual check of the equipment should be undertaken prior to commencing the activity to ensure it is safe to use. Where applicable a weekly inspection of the equipment will be undertaken and repair or replace as necessary. Poolside equipment is safe and in good condition. 	✓		
Rescue Equipment	Staff / Participants			✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All rescue aids are in place and serviceable prior to the commencement of the activity A daily inspection to be undertaken on all rescue aids and repair or replace damaged equipment as necessary. 	✓		
Overcrowding	Participants	Minor/ Major Injury/ Cuts/ Bumps/ Knocks		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that maximum bather load limits are not exceeded. There will always be a minimum of two lifeguards on duty on the poolside to monitor session. 	✓		
Poor environmental conditions	Participants Staff	Major / Minor	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff trained to undertake regular checks of environment conditions. Monitor ambient conditions in pool area (air temperature, visibility) and should suspend or cancel the activity if conditions deteriorate. 	✓		
Non Participants	Participants	Major / Minor	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non participants to remain in the spectator area and are not permitted to interfere with the safe supervision of the bathers. No glass containers should be taken into the Pool Hall. No mobile phones allowed to be used in spectator area. 	✓		
Inappropriate behaviour e.g. overaggressive play, general misbehaviour	Participants	Major Injury/ Minor Injury		✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasis placed on rules concerning potentially dangerous play. Bathers are excluded from sessions in behaviour is inappropriate. Pool lifeguards also make regular checks of the changing area/ reception/ foyer/ dry side toilet area. 	✓		
Loose / Inappropriate clothing, footwear and jewellery	Participants	Minor Injury/ Entanglement	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise on correct clothing during the activity to be worn at the poolside. Participants instructed to remove all potentially hazardous jewellery. 	✓		

						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If leaving Poolside to enter Foyer Area- All Swimmers MUST wear appropriate footwear. 			
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Further action necessary to control risks

The overall risk rating is deemed **LOW** as there are suitable and sufficient procedures in place suitable and sufficient procedures in place. Additional safety measure should be listed below.

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Please list any incidents/ accidents and any control measures added below and any incidents should be noted below.

Date	Incident/ Accident	Control Measures Adequate Yes/ No	Risk Assessment Reviewed by	List Any New Control Measures

Author signed		Print Name		Position	CLO	Date	12/05/2015
Witness signed		Print Name		Position		Date	