

Normal Operating Procedure

Joy Lane Swim School

October 2025



Executive Headteacher: Ms Debra Hines
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Business Manager: Mr JM Henderson-Varlin
Pool Manager: Mr Robert Dowling

PROCEDURE - POOL NORMAL OPERATING

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this procedure is to provide details on the health and safety working arrangements of the pool to ensure that users experience a safe, clean, warm and friendly pool environment.

In addition to outlining processes relating to pool supervision, it includes rules, hazards and general information relating to the pool facilities.

The Normal Operating Procedures and Emergency Action Plan will be referred throughout this document as NOP and EAP.

The NOP outlines the day-to-day operational procedures for the pool. These procedures also set out the arrangements for users' safety and should be followed by whoever is responsible for any group or persons using the pool.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Pool Manager (RD) to ensure that new staff are made fully aware of this procedure and how to implement it prior to commencing poolside duties.

It is the responsibility of all JLPS Swimming Teachers to supervise the operation of the pool in accordance with this procedure. Further responsibilities and key tasks are outlined below.

It is the responsibility of the Head teacher to ensure that there are sufficient resources on site to enable full compliance with this procedure.

2.1 Pool Characteristics

The main pool is 5.9 m wide and 16 metres in length. At the deepest point it is 1 metre 44cm, at the midpoint it is 1 metre 14cm and at the shallow end 0.84m.

The learner pool is 6 metres by 3 and a half metres. At the deepest point it is 0.6 metres deep and at the shallowest point it is 0.3 metres deep.

The maximum bather load for both pools is **35**.

There are 2 sliding doors into the pool which automatically lock when fully closed. Each door has an emergency release button.

There is a telephone located within the pool building for emergencies (extension 205/206 for main office).

The chemicals are kept in separate rooms away (outer pool building) from the pool hall area and are called Sodium Bisulphate (Acid) and sodium Hypochlorite 14/15%.

The pool is checked daily (RD / LG) for any chemical imbalances. All recordings are noted down in the chemical file.

Pool filters are cleaned daily (RD / LG).

Ratios:

Swimming teacher to swimmer ratios vary depending on the swimmers' ages and abilities. Key Ratio Guidance is listed below:

Swimmer ability / group	Suggested ratio
Pre-school	1 swimming teacher: 1–2 swimmers
Non-swimmers and beginners (cannot swim 10 m comfortably)	12 : 1
Improving swimmers (who have mastered strokes, can swim 10 m safely)	20 : 1
Mixed ability groups (excluding beginners; swimmers able to swim 25 m minimum)	20 : 1
Competent swimmers (can swim at least 25 m, unaided; can tread water for 2 mins)	20 : 1
Swimmers with special educational needs / disabilities (SEND)	1: 1 upward - depends on individual needs; risk assessment required.

From "A Guide for Swimming Teachers — Teaching Swimming and Water Safety at Key Stage 1 or 2":

These are recommended starting points, but the Swimming Pool Manager (RD) will risk assess each group or class and adjust as needed, taking into consideration factors such as water clarity, swimmer confidence, disabilities, number of helpers, and the swimming teacher's qualifications and experience.

3. PROCESS

3.1 Pool Details

Any associated key risks and particular restrictions to the pool areas e.g. access, will be detailed in risk assessment. Further general details relating to pool features are included later in this procedure.

3.2 Poolside Rescue Equipment

There is a range of equipment on poolside for use in rescuing swimmers in difficulty. This equipment will be checked daily to ensure it is in its correct position and is fit for use.

All JLPS Swimming Teachers will ensure they are familiar with the emergency rescue equipment, where it is situated and how it is used before undertaking poolside duties. This equipment should remain in place until required for a rescue.

3.3 Poolside Alarms

There are two fire alarms located next to the entrance and exit doors. The action to be taken on hearing the fire alarm is outlined in the pool's Emergency Action Plan (EAP).

There are 2 emergency door release buttons located next to the doors.

There is a telephone located on poolside with all the relevant extensions for internal communications.

The pool does not have poolside panic alarms; however, in the event of an incident, the swimming teachers can use radios to contact the main office for assistance.

3.4 First Aid

Pool staff must be aware of the location of the pool's First Aid equipment before undertaking poolside duties. All JLPS swimming teachers hold their Swimming Teachers' Association Poolside Safety Award, which qualifies them to deliver basic first aid.

All accidents involving Joy Lane Primary School children must be recorded in the Accident Recording Book. A slip will be provided to the child, parent, or teacher. All injuries must also be communicated to the classroom teacher, parent, or carer.

Additional First Aid boxes will be located in various areas of the school, including the First Aid Room. Checks of first aid boxes will be undertaken to ensure sufficient stock is present.

3.5 Qualifications of Pool Staff

All Swimming Teachers will have a minimum of a STA/ASA Level 2 (or equivalent) in-order to take a class/group for lessons.

Level 1 Swimming teachers are permitted to teach under the supervision of a level 2 teacher.

There will be at least 1 Swimming Teacher with a current Swimming Teachers' Association Pool Safety Award on pool-side at all times. The award covers:

- Basic pool rescue skills (safe rescue techniques without specialist equipment).
- CPR and basic life support.
- First aid relevant to a swimming pool environment.
- Emergency procedures, such as raising alarms and contacting help.

The Swimming Pool Manager (RD) will complete a three-day Plant Operators' training course every three years (covering the use and operation of pool systems). This training will include water testing, disinfection, temperature control, and management practices.

3.6 JLPS Swimming Teacher– Key Tasks / Responsibilities

Key tasks of the pool staff whilst on duty include:

- To plan and deliver quality structured lessons which is appropriate for the abilities of swimmers in the group/class.
- To work as part of a team and to communicate as necessary to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of lessons.
- For in-school lessons, instructors are to supervise the children for the entire duration of lessons. This includes safe and sensible entry into the pool, supervision of the changing rooms (both pre and post swimming), delivering swimming lessons and exiting the pool.

- For after-school lessons, the instructor is responsible for the safety of swimmers during lessons until the child has been passed back to a parent/carer.
- Maintaining a concentrated observation of the pool and its swimmers in order to anticipate any problems before they occur and identify any emergency quickly.
- Carrying out rescues and initiating other emergency action as required.
- Carrying out initial first aid to a bather in the event of an injury or any other emergency.
- Ensuring that all swimmers are behaving in an orderly manner.
- Ensuring all poolside emergency equipment and first aid equipment is present and free from defects.

3.7 Poolside Rules for Pool Staff

The following rules apply to all pools:

- Staff must not stand together talking on poolside unless it is absolutely necessary and is relevant to the job.
- Normal use of phones is not permitted on pool-side. Exceptions may be made with the authorisation of the Pool Manager.
- Drinking is permitted on poolside from plastic drinking bottles only. Eating is not permitted on poolside.
- Equipment should be stored after use e.g., swimming lesson equipment, pool reach poles.

3.8 Communication on Poolside

The method of communication using a whistle is as follows:

- **1 Whistle Blast** – attracts the attention of the pool users
- **2 Whistle Blasts** – attracts the attention of other pool staff.
- **3 Whistle Blasts** – indicates that the swimming teacher is about to take emergency action
- **1 Long Whistle Blast** – attracts the attention of the pool users to prepare for an evacuation

Whistles will be used sparingly and will be followed by relevant verbal or visual instruction, e.g. hand signals. Consideration will be given, where possible, to the timeliness of the whistle in relation to the activities being carried out in order to ensure users, e.g. divers, are not unduly distracted.

3.9 Potential Risk Factors

A number of hazards exist in swimming pools and therefore pool staff will be alert and vigilant at all times when on duty. Hazards may generally be divided into 5 categories:

- **Swimmer Hazards:** Those that are created by the bathers in the pool.

- **Spectator Hazards:** Parents/carers who are watching lessons.
- **Activity Hazards:** Those relating to the manner in which activities are undertaken.
- **Instructor Hazards:** Those created by staff in the building.
- **Physical Hazards:** Those relating to the design and structure of the pool.

The following have been factors in serious injuries and fatalities in swimming pools in the UK:

- Prior health problems e.g. asthma, epilepsy, etc.
- Youth and inexperience (half of those who drown are 15 or under)
- Alcohol, drugs or food before swimming
- Unauthorised access to pools intended to be out of use
- Weak or non-swimmers straying out of their depth
- Diving into insufficient depth of water (leading to concussion or injury to head, neck or spine)
- Unruly behaviour and misuse of equipment
- Unclear pool water, preventing casualties from being seen
- Absence of, or inadequate response, by pool staff in an emergency

Swimmer Hazards

Wherever possible, it is desirable to observe bathers before they enter the water. This can identify users who may be considered to be a particular risk, i.e.,

- Bathers in poor health
- The young
- Those who appear nervous
- Children with disabilities / special needs

At the beginning of each swimming block, swimmers will be assessed and placed into ability groups.

Spectator Hazards

Parents/carers must act in an orderly manner whilst waiting for their child's lessons. Prior to a child's lesson, it is the parent/carers responsibility to ensure their child is quietly waiting for their lesson and not disturbing instructors who are teaching.

Once bathers have entered the pool, it becomes much more difficult to spot potential problems. Those who need to be carefully observed, in addition to the above, include:

- Non / weak swimmers
- Swimmers wearing armbands or using other buoyancy aids including floats, inflatable's etc.
- Show-offs / boisterous swimmers
- Scum channel / handrail and lane rope crawlers

During school swimming lessons, the only spectators should be children who are not participating. These children should be seated and completing an activity set by their class teacher.

Activity Hazards

Pool staff must be aware that accidents can happen as a result of seemingly harmless pool games or high-spirited activity. In certain cases pool staff will use their skill and judgement to change the activity pattern, thus reducing the risk.

Certain activities however must be stopped: -

- Acrobatics
- Bombing
- Bullying
- Diving (unless in designated areas)
- Fighting
- Misuse of equipment
- Pushing
- Running
- Tag games

Instructor Hazards

Instructors should be role models to swimmers, especially the younger ones using the pool. Therefore the manner in which pool staff behave on poolside can have a profound effect on the standards of bather behaviour.

The positioning of the pool staff can seriously affect their capability to observe the water and may affect their ability to remain vigilant. Staff will therefore remain in close proximity to their designated position.

Physical Pool Hazards

Site specific hazards, which have been identified following risk assessment, will be listed in risk assessment, e.g. blind spots and areas affected by glare. Certain hazards however, may be common to a number of pools and these include:

- Exits from changing rooms leading directly onto poolside adjacent to deep water areas
- Entrapment dangers from inlets, outlets and other grills
- Awareness of pool water depths in different areas
- Pool side Sloping path

3.10 General Poolside Rules for Swimmers

It is essential that the behaviour of pupils does not detract from the enjoyment of others or represent a risk. Notices are displayed around poolside to outline rules to the users (for pupils and parents). Specific safety signs, e.g. depth signs and various "do not" signs will be necessary. Pool staff will also communicate rules verbally to bathers as necessary.

The following are general poolside rules and apply to all pools.

- No acrobatics in or around the poolside
- No diving – varying water depths make it dangerous to dive, except in organised sessions in the diving pool
- No ducking – this is dangerous as it can cause panic and alarm.
- No face masks, flippers, snorkels, or swim paddles accept for in specific programmed session. These are inappropriate as glass can be broken, flippers and paddles have sharp edges and can cut other bathers.
- No food or drink on poolside aside from water.
- No petting – this can be embarrassing to other bathers.
- Prams or pushchairs to be left at the designated area on poolside.
- No photography – do not allow people to film or take photography either from poolside unless prior permission has been granted from the Head teacher.
- Recognised swimwear must be worn at all times – T-shirts may be allowed if agreed with the pool manager beforehand. There may be a need for sensitivity to the religious and cultural needs of some ethnic groups.
- No running – this is dangerous as the floor is wet and therefore may present a slip hazard.
- No shouting or unnecessary distracting of the pool staff

3.11 Maximum Bather Loads

Maximum bather loads will be determined for following a risk assessment. The HSE document – Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools will be used as a guide.

When determining the bather loads and numbers of staff available to supervise / lifeguard, consideration will be given to the various sessions programmed, e.g. swimming lessons and the degree of supervision required for each and not just to the pool size. In addition, the maximum load may be influenced by the type of bather, e.g. large numbers of children may require more supervision than the same number of adult bathers.

Please see the current RISK ASSESSMENT for the swimming pool and the SAFE PRACTICE IN SCHOOL SWIMMING AND WATER SAFETY.

3.12 Controlling Access Onto Poolside

Access to poolside when the pool is not in use will be prevented through the use of physical barriers. The doors to the poolside are secured with a fob system.

3.13 Pool Water Quality

Pool water testing will be carried out, in order to ensure the quality of the water is within parameters recommended by the ISRM and Pool Water Treatment Advisory Group.

Only nominated, trained, qualified and inducted staff will carry out pool water tests.

Any irregularities in the results will be reported immediately to the Swimming Pool Manager (RD).

These tests will be documented on the pool managers daily check sheet and records retained on site.

The pool water should be tested at least twice a day-once before use and once at the end of the day. This requirement applies during weekends and school holidays as well.

3.14 Accidents / Injuries

Due to the nature of activities taking place within the school, accidents will happen, which will result in injuries to either public or staff. The majority of these will be minor accidents and may be treated on site without referring the person to hospital. For minor accidents treatment will be given at either the scene of the accident or in a first aid room.

Accidents will be recorded on KCC's accident/incident report form (HS157) and those reportable to the HSE will be recorded on form F2508 Reporting of Injuries and Dangerous Occurrence forms. The accident/incident may also need investigation using KCC's accident/investigation form (HS160).