

Progression Stages

Parent and Child

Baby swimming is a safe and gentle activity designed to introduce children to the water. A qualified teacher will lead the class through gentle progressions teaching you how to handle baby in water. Through nursery rhymes and songs a fun atmosphere is created making your baby feel happy in the water. Progressions are as follows:

6 weeks –8 months 9–18 months 18 months plus 18 -24 months
Advanced Parent & Child

Once your child can stand unaided, usually 2years 9months, they will be introduced to classes without parents.

Small Pool Classes

The small pool is hot, shallow and can be seen on our TV screens in reception so you won't miss a thing. There are two separate stages these are: Under 5's (3 & 4 years)

Advanced under 5's

These classes are for preschool children in small groups (6 maximum). Children will develop confidence floating and gliding, evolving a leg kick and simple arm movements.

Beginners

These classes are for school aged children developing water confidence, simple stroke technique, floating and breathing control. They will continue with their duck badges, 5m and the first skills badge. To progress from a beginner's class children will have a good leg kick on front and back for 5m and be attempting an inversion.

Main Pool Classes

The unique layout of the main pool, shallow both ends and deep in the centre allows us to maximize safe teaching areas with the capacity to gently introduce deeper water techniques.

Tadpoles

Specifically designed to bridge the leap from the cosy learner pool, this class gently introduces the main pool. Building on the foundations

established in the beginners, good body positions and sound leg kick are reiterated, backstroke practiced and simple front crawl are introduced. Control of the breath during movement is seen as a key skill to future learning.

Each week the children have an “underwater tea party” in the deep section, allowing them to gradually discover that it is safe, as long as you don’t panic! Your child can now swim on their back and front using a basic arm movement and are now ready to improve their strokes in detail. To progress from this class your child will be able to somersault, with a nose clip, swim 25m just kicking and be happy to jump in the deep section.

Backstroke

Every week, the “warm up” practices key swimming skills such as underwater swimming, sculling and leg kicks, as well as the movements they have already learnt. As the name suggests, a more advanced technique is now introduced for the backstroke. Breathing for the frontcrawl in a simple format is progressively learnt and the first stages of diving begin. At the end of each session, just before playtime, jumping and diving progressions are attempted. To move on from this level the children will be able to somersault, tread water, swim 50 metres backstroke and have their attained the ASA Water Skills 2 badge.

Frontcrawl

Now the children will learn “proper” frontcrawl. Already they know how to blow out and rotate to their backs to breath. Turning onto the side, just enough to gasp new air is a tricky skill and takes time to master. Good quality repetition in small classes is the key. Once they can demonstrate “proper” frontcrawl, pupils will be able to swim 100m, 25 meters frontcrawl and 75 meters on their back. They should by now have passed the initial Diving stages and be attempting free standing dives.

Breaststroke

The most complicated stroke. Now the unique frog style leg actions is carefully practiced, initially on the poolside, then on their backs and eventually face down. Once mastered in a basic but correct manner, the children don flippers and work on the arm action and breathing. Next the arm and leg action are put together and something usually goes haywire.

Once timing and breathing with an arm stroke are reasonable, an accelerated leg kick is taught. Timing is a difficult thing to teach, it has to be acquired, so progress really depends on the pupil.

Butterfly

This is a simple, elegant stroke that is a joy to introduce to youngsters because they have been practicing the key body movements at every level so far in the warm ups. Conducted entirely in the deep section, stamina and confidence build steadily. The early practices of somersaulting are now evolved into a tumble turn and the underwater skills should enable ASA Water Skills 5 to be achieved. Building on the basic strokes they have learned earlier, we introduce advance techniques in backstroke and frontcrawl. Taking part in the Annual Club Championships, the time taken to learn the strokes thoroughly will reap rewards as they cope with longer distance swimming. Basic diving is developed each week until they are happy on a racing block. Confident in diving with a good grasp of all four strokes, children are now ready to swim for longer over further distances.

Turtles

Now the children have mastered all four strokes and can dive. These groups are held at 5.00pm every weekday, 6pm Thursdays and Saturday at 9.00am or 11.30am for one hour. They will continue to improve their technique, speed and stamina, aiming for the ASA Bronze, Silver, Gold and Honours Awards, Personal Survival and Water Rescue.

Dolphins Club

The fastest swimmers are normally invited at the Annual Swimming Championships to join the competitive section of the swimming club. Full details of the Competitive section can be found in the Dolphins section.