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**COVID-19 OPERATING GUIDELINES**

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**COVID-19 OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Introduction**

This document sets out a framework/guidance on how to work safely during Covid-19 restrictions. It gives practical considerations of how this can be applied in the pool environment. This will not only apply to staff members working on the poolside but also User Groups using the swimming pool.

Each User Group will need to translate information given in this framework into specific actions, via a Risk Assessment, that it needs to take, depending on the nature of the activity, how it is organised, operated, managed and regulated.

The pool management must carry out an appropriate COVID-19 risk assessment to assess actions needed, just as you would for any other health and safety related hazards. It will not always be possible to cover all eventualities but procedures should have sensible and realistic outcomes.

This guidance does not supersede any legal obligations relating to health and safety and will be under constant review. This guidance is in addendum to existing Pool Safety Operating procedures.

The information in the following pages will be updated as the Covid-19 restrictions and more guidance become available from Government and Swimming authorities.

**Pool user guidance**

**General Safety Statement.**

* Do not come to the facility if you are showing any symptoms of Covid-19 (temperature, cough, difficulty breathing, or anosmia e.g. loss of taste or smell).
* A more rigid cleaning procedure will be introduced, with more regular cleaning of high contact areas.
* Regular total surface sanitisation will be introduced by use of a disinfectant fogging equipment.
* A number of hand sanitisers will be located around the pool building

**At the pool**

* Whilst in the building and the pool, follow the operator’s guidance on social distancing, direction of travel and other risk control measures that are put in place.

**Entering /exiting the pool building**

* Signage will indicate entrance and exit routes to and from the pool building to assist in keeping social distancing. Due to the physical construction of the building there will be pinch points, e.g. foyer area, where inevitably crossover will take place and social distancing will be difficult. Where this occurs users should make this crossover time as short as possible.
* Looking to the front of the pool building users will enter the building using the normal pathway to the left-hand side. User will exit via pathway to the right-hand side of the building through the gateway onto to footpath between Grammar School lane and Gourleys lane.

**Social Distancing**

* Wherever possible pool Users should adhere to the prevailing guidance on social distancing.
* Where this is not possible direct face to face contact should be avoided and for shortest times possible.
* All members of User Groups should vacate the pool buildings and surrounding pool grounds immediately after their session.
* In closer contact areas consideration should be given whether to recommend face masks.

**Pool Entrance Foyer**

* Until further notice the entrance foyer will **not** be used by User Groups for registering swimmers or as a waiting area.
* It will be up to individual Groups to arrange alternative arrangements, possibly on the poolside.
* No entry to the pool other than staff via steps by pool office.

**Changing Rooms**

* Hand sanitising dispensers will be located at the entrance to both changing rooms.
* All persons must sanitise their hands before entering the changing rooms.
* Extra care/signposting will be provided to maintain social distancing in this area.
* It is recommended that all swimmers arrive at the pool “Beach Ready” I.e. swimming costume under outdoor clothing to reduce time. Alternatively clothing that enables quick dressing such as “onesies” or “dry robes”.
* Limited time spent in changing rooms will help reduce the risk of infection.

**Showers**

* Until further notice there will be no showers available and swimmers are requested to shower at home before and after swimming.
* The use of hand-held hairdryers will not be allowed and pool hair drying facilities will be switched off.

**Toilets**

* Toilets will be available and will be part of a rigid cleaning regime as for other high contact areas.
* Thorough hand washing is required before and after using the toilet.

**Access to/egress from the poolside**

* All swimmers will access/egress the poolside from the changing rooms via the shower areas.
* There will be a one-way route marked on the poolside. For most User Groups this will be through existing routes from individual changing rooms (male/female).
* The use of the changing rooms will be dictated by the numbers in each group that satisfy prevailing social distancing guidance. For example, commercial swim schools and Trust lessons may have to adopt a different procedure to accommodate larger numbers and reduce changeover time between sessions. See Appendix 1 for an example changeover procedure.

**Session changeovers**

* It is imperative that all User Groups vacate the pool and building as quickly as possible so as not to inconvenience other User Groups in following sessions.
* It is also important that swimmers in the following session do not arrive more than five minutes before their session is due to start.
* Any person arriving earlier will be required to queue outside in specified areas. This will be particularly important if a different User Group is following on.
* It may be possible to introduce a time interval between groups if pool timetable allows.
* It is important that all User Groups co-operate to make this workable.
* The Trust may have to intercede if any User Group is found not abiding by what has been agreed.

**Spectators**

* Only parents of children of 8 years and under will be allowed to spectate.
* Until Covid-19 restrictions are fully lifted only one parent for each child in the session will be allowed on the poolside spectator seating.
* The number of spectators maybe limited by prevailing social distancing requirements.

**Lifeguards**

* Lifeguards will operate normal duties on the poolside while taking account of social distancing.
* Swimmers/spectators must maintain current distancing guidance with lifeguards wherever possible.
* Spectators should not engage in conversation with lifeguards/teachers on the poolside.
* Where distancing is not possible e.g. in an emergency, lifeguards will follow guidelines issued by the RLSS.
* The necessary procedures for emergencies will be introduced in the regular lifeguard training session.
* All lifeguards will be trained with the new Covid-19 emergency procedures prior to the pool re-opening.
* Lifeguards will be issued with suitable PPE in case of emergency situations. This will either personal bum bags to carry protective equipment in, or an emergency grab bag positioned next to lifeguard positions. Bum bags will also contain sanitiser.
* Rescue equipment should be easily accessible, if not being held by lifeguards, to minimise cross contamination.

The following link gives a more comprehensive guide to the latest emergency procedures issued by the Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) Ref: <https://www.rlss.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=d9dff068-014e-4118-92b2-563a352252d9>

**Car Parking**

* Until further notice vehicle parking at the pool will be restricted to **one** vehicle per User Group and pool staff on duty.
* Disabled parking will be available.
* Failure to comply may lead to User Groups being instructed to park offsite.

**Payments for swimming lessons**

* Whenever possible payments should be made by either contactless or on-line
* If not possible cheques are more preferable than cash.

**Swimming etiquette**

**Pool set-up**

* The pool will be divided into 3 lanes for all activities with the exception of those listed below.
* Please note swimming will now be **clockwise** in all lanes.
* Other activities where no lane ropes are used, e.g. Aqua-fit, strict social distancing should be adhered to.
* Swim schools will arrange line ropes to suit lesson sizes.

**Getting in the pool**

* Do not enter the water without allowing other swimmers know you are getting into the lane.
* You could notify them by dangling your legs into the water or positioning yourself at the side of the lane when they are changing course.
* You can jump into the pool if the area around you is clear of other swimmers.

**Respect**

* People of different standards and abilities will use the pool. Please respect their right to enjoy their swim.
* Do not make physical contact with other participants.
* Always attempt to maintain appropriate social distance between yourself and another swimmer.

**Speed and overtaking**

* Choose your lane using the fast, medium and slow signs and by watching those already swimming
* Before pushing off at each turn, check to see if anyone faster is approaching.
* If you want to pass a swimmer, lightly hit the toes of the swimmer in front of you. The swimmer, whose toes you have gently touched, moves to the edge of the lane.
* It is important to note that you do not have to move swiftly when being passed or overtaken.
* Always try to be polite.
* If a swimmer becomes aggressive (lane rage), do not verbally retaliate with that swimmer instead talk to a lifesaver about the circumstance.

**Resting**

* Whether stopping for a rest or catching your breath after completing your swim, please be mindful that others using the lane will want to keep on swimming without stopping; so keep yourself to the edge of the lane allowing others to turn at the wall, turning head away and allowing others to maintain social distancing measures.

**Direction**

* Please follow the directional signs and move across to the appropriate side of the lane for each length.

**Strokes**

* Wide strokes such as butterfly should be avoided when the lanes become busy. If you change to a slower stroke as part of your session, think about moving lanes.

**Equipment**

* Follow the operator’s guidance on use of any equipment. Take hand sanitiser with you.
* Take any equipment/aids with you (floats, kick boards etc.) ensuring it is clean and identifiable as yours before you arrive.

**Bather Loading**

* Bather loading will be based on a minimum of 6m2 per swimming activity.
* Some pool activities, such as swimming lessons with teachers in the pool, may have to be reduced.
* Further guidance on the above will be sought from swimming authorities.

**Swimming Clubs**

* The above categories are of more concern as generally they are dealing with larger numbers of swimmers and coaches.
* Until further notice **no** spectators will be allowed for these sessions
* Swimming clubs should review their procedures taking account of the above statements on swimming etiquette.
* The procedures should also follow the guidelines issued by Swim England.
* It will be up to each club to produce a workable solution and validated by a risk assessment.
* Clubs may consider adapting the procedure for session changeovers outlined in Appendix 1.
* The following link gives a more comprehensive guide to operating procedures for swimming clubs <https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/guidance-publication-date/>

**Commercial swim schools/Trust lessons**

* The Commercial/Trust swimming lessons have higher number of swimmers per session.
* These sessions also include parent/carer spectators.
* These sessions also involve having swimming teachers in the water with the Children.
* Covid-19 restrictions will require clear guidance from swimming authorities, about teachers in the water for swimming lessons.
* Numbers of children per lessons may have to be reduced.
* They are of relatively short duration and involve numerous changeovers between sessions. (See appendix 1). This is likely to cause a logistics problem to observe prevailing social distancing.
* To reduce this problem operators should consider reducing session times
* Procedures adopted must be validated in a risk assessment.

**Swimming teachers/swim school staff**

* Teachers / swim school staff should arrive for their shift in uniform
* Teachers / swim school staff to bring minimal personal items
* Teachers / swim school staff leave additional personal items in vehicles or at home

**Junior school children**

* At the present time it is unclear how school classes could be accommodated, but more guidance will become available when children are back at school.
* Schools will need to show how they will manage children in the changing rooms with regard to social distancing.
* This may require chaperones for boys and girls.

**Appendix 1**

**Session Changeovers** – Commercial/Trust lessons

The following example assumes that Covid-19 restrictions are still in place but with easing of social distancing down to 1m. It is suggested that to ease congestion at changeovers and maintain social distancing Swim Schools and Trust lessons could adapt the following procedures for swimming sessions.

Note: Each user group should consider reducing lesson time to 25 minutes

**1st Session**

* Children with parent/carer enter building using marked route
* There will be no waiting allowed in the foyer and used only as a transition route,
* Before entering the appropriate changing room, all persons will be required to sanitise hands.
* Hand sanitisers will be at the entrance to each changing room and at selected points around the pool building.
* Children will be advised to arrive “Beach ready” e.g. with costume under clothes and consider dressing in “onesies” or swimming robes.
* Minimum time should be spent in the changing room and observing social distancing wherever possible.
* Parent and child enter pool through shower area onto the poolside. (showers will not be available)
* Parents take child’s clothes with them to spectator area
* Children go straight their specified teachers on the poolside.
* The spectator area will be split into two sections and clearly marked areas.
* Parent/carer will be directed to sit in the right section (looking from the pool)
* At the end of the lesson children will be guided, by one of the teachers, following a route counter- clockwise from the shallow to the deep end to parents/carers in the spectator area.
* Parent/carer help the child quickly dress and immediately exit pool side via pool deep end emergency exit.

**2nd Session**

* Immediately the 1st session has vacated the pool Parent/carer and child attending the 2nd session can enter having followed same procedure as above for entering the poolside.
* Children will proceed directly to their teachers on the poolside.
* Parent/carers will proceed to spectator but wait in left hand section until all children and parents/carers from the 1st session have exited the building.
* Once the 1st session has vacated the building parents/carers from 2nd session will move over to the right- hand section of the spectator area.
* When the second session has been completed the parent/carer and child will follow the same procedure as above.
* This procedure will be repeated for the duration of these swimming lessons.