



Mercy Primary School
St Francis Street
Galway
Tel. 091-566452
info@mercyprimary.ie
www.mercyprimary.ie
Roll No.: 04515G

MERCY PRIMARY SCHOOL, GALWAY
SCHOOL SWIMMING POLICY
GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

AIMS:

- To provide our pupils with the opportunity of swimming lessons and to develop positive attitudes towards active and healthy lifestyles. We will endeavour to provide these lessons to 3rd and 4th Classes. (This may be subject to change)
- For all children to have basic knowledge of water safety.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will be taught to swim.
- To gain confidence in the water if non-swimmers.
- To improve their strokes and become more competent if they are already swimmers.
- To improve their stamina.
- To improve their general fitness.

STRATEGIES FOR THE TEACHING OF SWIMMING

- The children will most likely receive six 45-minute sessions in the public swimming pool.
- Attendance at this course fulfills the Aquatics Module of the PE Curriculum as laid down by the Department of Education.
- No extra grants are available from the Department of Education for the funding of swimming from schools.
- Parents cover the cost of the course and also that of the transport to and from the pool.
- Each child will be grouped by swimming ability and groups will not exceed twenty.
- **All children** are expected to participate in aquatics lessons as part of the National Primary Curriculum.
- Should a child be unable to attend aquatics, due to a medical condition, a letter must be written to the school requesting exemption – a medical certificate attached will also be required. Arrangements for supervision in this instance will be made on a case-by-case basis.
- Should a child be unable to attend one lesson, a letter must be given to the class teacher and he/she will travel with the class to the pool and remain under the supervision of the class teacher.



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- All children attending the course should wear their tracksuit. (Swimming togs may be worn under tracksuits coming to school). Each child must have a suitable bag to carry his/her swimming gear (Sports bag or similar with secure zip or other fastening).
- All items brought to the pool must be clearly labelled with the child's name. This includes the bag, tracksuit, socks, underwear and shoes.
- Each child must have their own togs, towel, hairbrush and swim cap, all of which must also be marked.
- Pupils will be accompanied by and supervised by a class teacher/teachers on the way to the pool from the school. Pupils will travel by coach to the pool and the class teacher/teachers will provide supervision before and after the swimming lesson.
- Members of school staff will be in a position to see groups at all times when they are in the water.
- All children will be made aware of school rules and behaviour related to travel by bus to and from the pool.
- All children will comply with procedures and codes of conduct specified by the pool provider while at and in the pool.
- All children will comply with specific pool rules formulated by the school.
- Overall responsibility for safety in the swimming pool belongs to the pool management.
- While the swimming instructor conducts the instructional programme and is responsible for doing this safely and effectively; it is important that notwithstanding the role of the swimming instructor, the delegated member of the school staff has overriding responsibility for supervision and may need to seek clarification or to intervene if deemed necessary.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Best practice in relation to the supervision, instruction and child protection procedures as outlined by the Irish Sports Council, Swim Ireland and the National Safety Council will be adhered to at all times. Staff will follow the guidelines of our own Child Protection policies at all times.
- The Kingfisher swimming pool at the University of Galway will be used pupils of Mercy Primary School. The venue may change due to circumstances out of the school's control.
- Pupils are required to behave at all times in a manner that ensures the safety of all involved in school swimming. Pupils must endeavour to obey the instructor's orders at all times and comply with the School Code of Behaviour.



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- Parents/guardians will receive a standard letter providing information on school swimming before their child starts their swimming term.
- Members of school staff should remain on the viewing deck during the lesson in order to supervise the overall group and pupils who may need to use the toilets during the lesson.
- The permission from parents to the school to let children go swimming will be covered in a consent form.
- The pool will be provided with information regarding any child with a Special Educational Need, physical disability or medical diagnosis that may compromise their safety at swimming.
- All adults accompanying pupils to swimming must have appropriate Garda Vetting.

SAFETY WHILE TRAVELLING: SCHOOL RULES

- Each child must sit quietly with a partner, not move from their own seat and must put on a seat belt on the bus.
- All children must line up quietly outside the bus and walk in an orderly fashion to and from the school and pool building accompanied by school staff.
- No child is allowed to enter or leave the pool building without being supervised by school staff.
- School staff will station themselves at the front and end of the entire group while children move between each area.

CHANGING-ROOM RULES

- Designated members of school staff ensure that the “Duty-of-Care” responsibility of the school is maintained at all times.
- Separate sex communal changing rooms are made available by pool management.
- Each changing room is supervised by staff members when in use.
- No running or shouting is allowed in the changing room.
- When ready, each pupil must remain quietly in the changing room until a staff member is ready to accompany them to the pool.

SPECIFIC DUTIES OF THE SCHOOL STAFF

- Ensure that the “duty –of care” responsibility of the school is maintained at all times.
- Understand and supervise the travel and changing routines.
- Assist with the supervision of the lesson by arrangements.
- Maintain a record of attendance at each lesson.



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- Record the progress and achievements of pupils in teacher notes.
- To be aware of and support pool staff in the application of pool procedures.
- Where appropriate, obtain advice (written, if necessary) from the parents of children with additional needs regarding any changes required in school swimming guidelines and procedures.
- Class teachers may assign a buddy system for pupils with additional needs, if deemed suitable and necessary.

POOL PROCEDURES AND RULES

- Pre-shower before your lesson.
- Listen to whatever the lifeguard tells you at all times: they have your safety in mind.
- Walk slowly around the pool area.
- No running in pool area.
- No jumping, bombing or pushing anyone in the pool area.
- In the case of inappropriate behaviour two warnings will be given by the swimming instructor followed by time out with the class teacher.
- Gross misbehaviour will result in withdrawal from lessons the following week.
- Don't jump or push other children.
- No eating gum while you swim.
- Never pretend to be drowning: The lifeguard may take you seriously.
- All children must wear swimming hats.
- No members of the public are allowed to use the assigned changing room while pupils are using the pool.
- Pupils are not allowed into the pool area unless supervised by a class teacher.
- Pupils should not enter the water unless the instructor and lifeguard are visible on poolside.
- Pupils must wear appropriate swim wear; costumes for girls, trunks for boys, swimming hats for all.
- All children attending the course should wear their tracksuit. (Swimming togs should be worn under tracksuits coming to school).
- Each child must have a suitable bag, separate to their school bag, to carry his/her swimming gear (Sports bag or similar with secure zip or other fastening).
- All items brought to the pool must be clearly labelled with the child's name. This includes the bag, tracksuit, socks, underwear and shoes.
- Each child must have their own togs, towel, hair brush, swimming footwear and swim cap, all of which must also be marked.
- Any child who does not have swimming gear on the day of swimming will be supervised at the swimming pool by a school member of staff.



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- Cultural and religious requirements may require special consideration but the school will make the final judgement on suitability of swimwear.

MONITORING / EVALUATION / REVIEW:

- It is envisaged that this policy may be revised/updated annually or at other times if deemed necessary.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Myles Mc Hugh' is written over a horizontal line.

Date: 27/02/24

Myles Mc Hugh
Chairperson