

**REPORT TO: DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL EDUCATION COMMITTEE -  
17 APRIL 2000**

**REPORT ON: EDUCATION DEPARTMENT RECREATIONAL SWIMMING POLICY**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

**REPORT NO: 265-2000**

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek permission to change the existing policy of no swimming on school trips/excursions outwith Dundee to a policy that allows swimming where laid down criteria are met.
- 1.2 To bring to the attention of the Committee the revised policy and related materials.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to note the contents of this report and approve the proposed policy.

### **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 There are minor costs associated with the printing of the policy materials, which can be met within the existing Education Department budget.

### **4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The change to our existing policy will provide further opportunities for leisure and recreation.

### **5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

Nil

### **6.0 BACKGROUND**

- 6.1 Following representation to the Education Department by a number of parents, teachers and other interested parties a group was remitted to review the present no swimming policy on school trips/excursions outside the city.
- 6.2 An extensive consultation exercise was carried out to determine the views of staff.
- 6.3 The results of the consultation indicated that the majority of staff who responded were in favour of the proposal that a risk assessment of pool facilities be carried out on location using a set checklist to determine whether or not to allow swimming.
- 6.4 The review group developed a revised policy that has been the subject of extensive consultation with Education Department staff, union representatives, Social Work staff, Neighbourhood Resources & Development staff and other interested parties.

**7.0 CURRENT SITUATION**

7.1 The existing policy does not permit pupils to take part in swimming or swimming related activities during a school trip/excursion outwith Dundee.

**8.0 PROPOSAL**

8.1 To adopt the attached policy and related materials which covers:

- Local Authority pools in the UK
- Private/Lido/Public pools in the UK and abroad
- Competitions
- Home to Home Exchanges
- Water Based Activities/Outdoor Adventure Activities
- Open Waters and Rivers

8.2 **Appendix A** details the policy and related materials.

**9.0 CONSULTATION**

9.1 This report has been the subject of consultation with the Directors of Social Work, Leisure and Parks, Finance, Neighbourhood Resources & Development, Personnel and Management Services and Support Services.

**10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

10.1 No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

ANNE WILSON .....  
Director of Education

Date .....

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Contents**

- Swimming policy for Trips and Excursions - 1 page (double sided);
- Appendix 1 - 1 page (double sided)
- Appendix 2 - 1 page
- Parent/Guardian Information Sheet - 1 page;
- Amended back sheet of Application and Consent Form (Parent) - 1 page;
- Small version of our Swimming Code of Conduct  
(This would be in the form of a small folded card!)

## SWIMMING POLICY FOR TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS



The activities covered by this policy are swimming in:

1. Local Authority pools in the UK;
2. Private/Lido/Public pools in the UK and abroad;
3. Competitions
4. Home to Home Exchanges
5. Water Based Activities/Outdoor Adventure Activities
6. Open Waters and Rivers;

### 1. Local Authority pools in United Kingdom.

As the legislation and guidance governing the operation of Local Authority pools are the same throughout the country it is permitted to make use of such facilities providing the supervision ratios required for trips/excursions are met.

### 2. Private/Lido/Public pools in United Kingdom and abroad which are not the subject of a Service Level Agreement.

The trip leader/teacher designated to carry out a risk assessment must carry out the risk assessment of the pool facilities **on location** using the checklist detailed in Appendix 1.

**Note:**

- The teacher organising the trip can decide at the outset of planning of a trip that swimming **will not be allowed** or postpone the final decision of whether or not to allow swimming until the risk assessment has been carried out on location.
- While it is recognised that it may be possible to carry out a risk assessment of swimming facilities during an advance visit it must be confirmed **during the trip, prior to swimming being permitted**, that the risk assessment still meets the essential criteria in full.

If the risk assessment **meets the essential criteria in full**, the trip leader/ teacher designated to carry out a risk assessment should decide whether or not to allow members of the school party to swim.

**Note:** Although the risk assessment may meet all the essential criteria in full the trip leader should not allow swimming if in any doubt as to the safety of the pupils in his/her charge.

**If the risk assessment does not meet ALL of the essential criteria in full then swimming must not be permitted.**

### 3. Competitions.

Swimming/Water Polo competitions under the auspices of organisations such as the Scottish Amateur Swimming Association or other body listed in Appendix 2 are permitted.

#### 4. Home to Home Exchanges

It is recognised that this type of trip brings another dimension to the problems associated with the supervision of those wishing to swim.

However the Education Department cannot abrogate its responsibility for the safety of pupils/adults when they are engaged in swimming activities in, for example, a leisure pool while participating in a trip organised through a school.

Experience has shown that families that host visiting pupils would often wish to take their charges swimming. Given that the venues for such an activity could be many and varied it would be impractical for the teacher organising the trip/trip leader/ teacher designated to carry out the risk assessment (see Appendix 1) to undertake assessments at all possible locations. In addition he/she is unlikely to have any direct control of pupils in such situations.

With this in mind it is important that the teacher organising the trip/trip leader ensures that the host families are aware of:

- a central swimming facility that will be approved, following a satisfactory risk assessment, by the trip leader/teacher designated to carry out the risk assessment;
- the swimming abilities of the pupils they are looking after (reference should be made to the information provided by parents on the "Application and Consent" form);
- any conditions pupils have that may be aggravated by swimming;
- the Education Department's policy not to permit swimming in open waters or rivers.

Pupils should be issued with a copy of the Swimming Code of Conduct and reminded of the risks associated with swimming and the common sense precautions to be observed.

Parents/Guardians should be made aware of the difficulties faced by teachers organising trips/trip leaders in carrying out risk assessments of all possible swimming locations and therefore **swimming will only be authorised in a location approved by the trip leader.**

#### 5. Water Based Activities/Outdoor Adventure Activities

Activities such as canoeing/sailing are permitted where they are part of an external approved Service Level Agreement or where tuition, under the Outdoor Adventure Activities Regulations, is provided by the Council's in-house instructors.

#### 6. Open Waters and Rivers

**Swimming in open waters and rivers is not permitted.**

It is felt that it would be inappropriate to allow pupils to swim in such waters as it would be difficult for a risk assessment to be completed appropriately without knowledge of currents, underwater terrain etc and there is also the difficulty of providing adequate supervision in open/beach situations.

**ADDITIONAL NOTES**

- 1. With the exception of Home to Home Exchanges staff must be present during swimming activity.**
- 2. The Council's Public Liability Insurance Policy automatically extends to include any authorised activity.**
- 3. Cover automatically extends to the individual employee, providing he/she is acting within the scope of their identified duties.**
- 4. Disabled Pupils or Pupils with Medical Condition**  
**Pupils with a disability or medical condition should have an existing protocol for management drawn up in conjunction with the School Medical Officer or the Occupational Therapy Service. This will detail any special arrangements for management including moving, lifting and handling.**

## TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS - SWIMMING



### Parent/Guardian Information Sheet.

The trip/excursion that your son/daughter has applied to participate in may involve swimming.

It is important to note that the trip leader will, if the pool is not a Local Authority pool in the United Kingdom, carry out a risk assessment **on location** before making the decision whether or not to allow swimming. (He/she may however decide during the planning stage not to allow swimming.)

This decision will be made only after a comprehensive check of pool facilities, equipment and supervision has been carried out.

If the pool fails to meet the laid down criteria, or if the teacher has **any concerns** about the safety of pupils he/she has been instructed **not to allow pupils to swim**.

This information has been/will be given to those participating in this trip/excursion. However it would be helpful if you could discuss this issue with your son/daughter to ensure that they understand that their teacher may **not** allow them to swim when they are in the hotel/centre etc if the pool does not meet the criteria or if he/she has **any concerns for their safety**.

Swimming in open waters and rivers **is not permitted**.

It is felt that it would be inappropriate to allow pupils to swim in such waters as it would be difficult for a risk assessment to be completed appropriately without knowledge of currents, underwater terrain etc and there is also the difficulty of providing adequate supervision in open/beach situations.

The 'Application and Consent Form' for the trip/excursion requests information on the swimming ability of your child. If you are unsure of your son's/daughter's ability to swim **continuously**, without the use of a swimming aid for 50/25 metres then please indicate that he/she is a non-swimmer.

If you wish further information please do not hesitate to contact your child's school.

## TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS - SWIMMING



### SWIMMING POOL RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

The trip leader/teacher designated to carry out the risk assessment must carry out a risk assessment of the pool facilities **on location** using this checklist. Where a risk assessment of swimming facilities has been done during an advance visit it must be confirmed **during the trip, prior to swimming being permitted**, that the risk assessment still meets the essential criteria in full.

If the risk assessment **meets the essential criteria in full**, the trip leader/ teacher designated to carry out the risk assessment should decide whether or not to allow members of the school party to swim.

**Note:** Although the risk assessment may meet all the essential criteria in full the teacher organising the trip should not allow swimming if in any doubt as to the safety of the pupils in his/her charge. In this regard the swimming abilities of the pupils (reference should be made to the information provided by parents on the "Application and Consent" form) and the outcomes of the desirable elements (over leaf) will help in forming a judgement.

**If the risk assessment does not meet ALL of the essential criteria in full then swimming must not be permitted.**

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA	Please Tick		Comments (if any)
	YES	NO	
Constant Pool Supervision <b>by the Pool Operator at poolside</b>			
Rescue Equipment eg Rescue Buoy <b>and/or</b> Throwing Rope <b>and/or</b> Rescue Pole			
Clearly Identified Depth Indicators			
Audible/Visual Alarms for features eg waves			
Operating Instructions eg Slide Use			
Pool Water Clear ie. Can pool bottom be seen at every point?			
Fire exit routes clearly identified			
First Aid points clearly identified			
Control system to monitor and prevent pool overcrowding			
Shared pool activities safely separated eg diving/flume and swimming areas divided			
Safety signage eg No diving			

Comments (if any):



### SWIMMING POOL RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST (continued)

DESIRABLE ELEMENTS	Please Tick		Comments (if any)
	Yes	No	
Poolside Clear ie no obstructions			
Secure Lockers			
Changing Cubicles or separate Male and Female areas			
General information notices			
Clean floors/Toilets			
Sound Floor Surfaces ie No broken tiles			

**Additional comments (if any):**

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**Decision - Please tick      Allow Swimming**

**Not Allow Swimming**

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Name of Pool:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of teacher (Please print)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of teacher (signature)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Risk Assessment  
 carried out/confirmed)

**A copy of this sheet must be sent to the appropriate Education Services Manager/Education Officer on return from the trip.**

**Competitions.**

Swimming/Water Polo Competitions under the auspices of the organisations listed below are permitted.

Amateur Swimming Federation of Great Britain

Amateur Swimming Association

British Canoe Union

Institute of Sport and Recreation Management

Scottish Amateur Swimming Association

Scottish Canoe Association

Scottish Schools Swimming

Scottish Sub-Aqua Club

The British Sub-Aqua Club

The Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management

The Royal Life Saving Society UK

The Swimming Teachers' Association

Welsh Amateur Swimming Association

**Please note:** This list is not exhaustive.

If you are asked to take part in a swimming/water polo competition organised by another body, please discuss with your Education Service Manager/Education Officer.

## Swimming Code of Conduct

(This should be produced in the form of a small folded card.)

### At all times

- Always check how deep the water is and if there is a steep slope in the pool leading to deep water
- Keep an eye open for others, particularly younger children and non-swimmers
- If you see someone in difficulty, call for help immediately. In an emergency keep calm and do exactly what you are told.
- Never swim alone/unsupervised



## SWIMMING CODE OF CONDUCT

### On the poolside

- No pushing or pulling others into the water
- No running
- No entries that may cause damage, danger or inconvenience. Eg Dive-bombing
- No running dives
- No diving in shallow waters
- No shouting or screaming

### In the Water

- No 'ducking' of other bathers
- Make sure artificial aids are used in a proper way
- Do not leap from the poolside onto small inflatables or rafts that are in the water or vice versa.
- No acrobatics
- No unnecessary splashing causing nuisance or annoyance to other bathers
- Do not enter the deep water area if you are using artificial aids. (Except where under instruction.)
- Do not hold your breath and swim long distances underwater
- Do not swim after a heavy meal.

**SCHOOL TRIPS**

**APPENDIX 4B**



10. Does your son/daughter wear spectacles? Yes  No  contact lenses? Yes/ No

11. Communication during the trip. **(Please give STD number if telephone numbers are not Dundee)**

Emergency contact 1.		Emergency contact 2.	
Name:		Name:	
Relationship to pupil:		Relationship to pupil:	
Address:		Address:	
Home Tel:	Work:	Home Tel:	Work:
Times to be used:		Times to be used:	

12. Planned Programme (Please see itinerary for full details of the trip)  
The programme includes the following activities:

**Note: This trip may involve a swimming activity.**

**(Please see attached Parent/Guardian information sheet.)**

If this is the case do you wish your son or daughter to participate? Yes  No

**Swimming Ability** (Please tick)

My son/daughter is able to swim **continuously**, without the use of a swimming aid, for: -

50 metres

25 metres

**My son/daughter is a non-swimmer.**

Parent/Guardian Response (Please detail as required)

I do not consent to my son/daughter participating in the following activities:

13. The hotel locks are of the following style (describe)

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14. Acknowledgement/Consent

- i. I consent to my son/daughter's participation in the excursion and I acknowledge receipt of information. I undertake to see that my son/daughter is provided with the required clothing/equipment and that the appropriate contribution is paid.
- ii. I understand the terms of payment and that the loss of my deposit is possible if I cancel.
- iii. To the best of my knowledge my son/daughter is medically fit to participate in the activities involved. I undertake to notify the school in the event of any relevant changes in fitness, which may take place prior to the trip.
- iv. I agree to my son/daughter receiving emergency medical/surgical/dental treatment as considered necessary by the medical authorities present.
- v. I agree to my son/daughter being included on a collective (group) passport for the trip.
- vi. I have received information on the Councils insurance cover.
- vii. If all the places are full I consent to my son/daughter going on the reserve list.

Name (Please print)

Signed

Date

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