

West Sussex County Council
SUPERVISION OF SWIMMING SESSIONS IN SCHOOL OR PUBLIC
SWIMMING POOLS

To take effect 1st April 2006 (reviewed January 2013)

Introduction:

The guidance outlined below indicates the **minimum** requirements for the supervision of swimming for school children. Responsibility for the pupils' safety and welfare is at all times the duty of the qualified teacher employed by WSCC/Governing Body.

Specialist swimming instructors (with an appropriate qualification) are often engaged to assist with tuition, and the class teacher and the instructor should liaise closely in the planning and delivery of the swimming sessions.

Qualified teachers are permitted to teach swimming (within the ratios shown below) however, it is recommended they hold an appropriate swimming teaching award (e.g.: National Curriculum training programme for Primary School teachers or ASA teachers award or STA teachers certificate for teaching swimming).

Each school should undertake its own risk assessment to determine the level of supervision and the competence of that supervision. One member of the school's staff needs to be designated as the leader for the visit. (Reference should be made to the Association for Physical Education's publication (2012): "Safe Practice in PE & School Sport".

Special Educational Needs:

It is not possible to recommend rules for SEN relating to supervision levels and numbers in the pool. Therefore, schools should pay particular attention to the individual requirements of pupils with special educational needs and ensure that adequate supervision is in place.

1. Curriculum Activities

a) SCHOOL POOLS

The following minimum ratios for supervising and teaching swimming (as recommended by the RLSS) shall be adhered to: -

- 1: 12 for primary aged (Key Stage 1 & 2) school children and non swimmers

- 1: 20 for Key Stage 3 and older children who are swimmers (25 metres)

NOTE:

There must be at least one qualified adult (with a life saving qualification min: RLSS/ASA Rescue Test for teachers or National Pool Lifeguard qualification.) **and 1 other supervisor (able to demonstrate the competencies indicated below) on the poolside.**

NB: if a QTS teacher is not present poolside, it is important to remember that the supervisors/instructors must still be working under the direction of a qualified teacher (QTS).

The '**Rescue Test for Teachers Award**' is a 12hour RLSS/ASA training course which includes theory and practical work and covers the competencies and skills that enable teachers/supervisors to deal with an emergency in a pool. A section of the course is devoted to First Aid and the qualification has to be renewed every two years.

Where a Nationally qualified Pool lifeguard is present, the Rescue Test for Teachers is not required for supervisors, however, the above supervision ratios still apply. (Lifeguards can be included in the supervision ratios.)

Shallow Water Pools no more than 1.2 metre deep:

Where the perceived risks are minimal a local assessment needs to have been conducted and written. (The children or young people must be 'within their own depth' at all times.) It may be acceptable to vary from the required qualifications outlined above but the minimum supervision competencies shown below **MUST** be adhered to.

SUPERVISION COMPETENCIES

All teachers and/or supervisors who are on the poolside, and **not** Rescue Test or life-guard qualified, must be able to demonstrate the following:

- have a thorough knowledge of the pool's routines, normal and emergency operating procedures, i.e. Location of telephones, emergency equipment, first aid kit, etc. and aware of potential risk factors
- to be able to administer expired air resuscitation (EAR)
- to be able administer cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- be able to initiate emergency procedures

- be able to recognise pupils in potential difficulties
- be able and willing to effect a rescue using throwing and reaching methods using the equipment on the poolside, e.g.: pole, buoyancy aids, etc. or, if necessary and appropriate, able and prepared to enter the water to rescue and land a casualty.

b) PUBLIC POOLS

The following minimum ratios for supervising and teaching swimming (as recommended by the RLSS) shall be adhered to: -

- 1: 12 for primary aged (Key Stage 1 & 2) school children and non swimmers
- 1: 20 for Key Stage 3 and older children who are swimmers (25 metres)

NOTE:

There must be at least one qualified adult and one other supervisor on poolside in all circumstances.

NB: Where a qualified teacher (QTS) is not present on the visit to the pool, the Head of Establishment must have carried out a written risk assessment indicating that the situation is safe and under whose direction (the named qualified teacher) the activity is taking place. This should include evidence that the staff in attendance are confident and competent in the demands of their role.

Where a nationally qualified pool lifeguard is present, there is not always a need to provide Rescue Test qualified supervisors. The above supervision ratios must, however, be maintained and all supervisors must be able to demonstrate the listed supervision competencies. (Lifeguards on the pool side can be included in the supervision ratios.)

All supervisors must be aware of the pool's emergency procedures including emergency and evacuation procedures, the location of safety equipment, first aid posts and fire exits.

The LEA regulations on ratios and qualifications for school swimming groups take priority over local regulations. Where local regulations are more stringent than those required by the LEA, it is the schools responsibility to adhere to them.

Where the services of a qualified lifeguard have **not** been acquired, the relevant number of supervisors with the **Rescue Test for Teachers** qualification will be required.

In the event of an emergency, following initial emergency action, the public pool's own emergency procedures will normally be put into action and will be managed by the pool's staff.

Where the services of a nationally qualified pool lifeguard have been secured, they must be solely responsible for that school group and have no responsibility for any other groups.

Where a group of swimmers has been split between two pools, each pool shall be treated as a separate pool, therefore the above supervision ratios will apply for each pool.

APPENDIX

Head teachers are expected to make a judgement on suitable staffing ratios. These examples of the **minimum** levels of supervision required are to be used as a guide: -

Situation	Total number of supervisors required	Number of Rescue Test Qualified adults
A class of 20 primary aged children in a shallow school pool (less than 1.2m deep)	2 adults able to demonstrate the supervision competencies (including at least one who is employed and approved by the school)	0
A class of 30 primary school aged children in a school pool (more than 1.2 metres deep)	3 (including at least 1 adult employed and approved by the school)	2
A class of 30 primary school aged children in a public pool with a lifeguard acquired for that purpose	3 (including at least 1 adult employed and approved by the school and the qualified lifeguard)	*0 (*depending on local pool regulations)
A class of 20 competent secondary school aged swimmers in a <i>school pool</i>	2 (including at least 1 adult employed and approved by the school)	1

14 beginners in an extra curricular school club in a shallow school pool	2 adults able to demonstrate the supervision competencies (Including at least one who is employed and approved by the school)	0
18 secondary school swimmers in an extra curricular school club in a <i>school pool (over 1.2m deep)</i>	1 adult employed and approved by the school	1

2. Extra curricular activities

When an extra curricular swimming club takes place, i.e. when children are taught or coached in **structured** activities before and after school and during lunchtimes, the same supervision levels must be adhered to.

3. Recreational swimming activities

For any **unstructured**, non-curriculum, general or recreational swimming activities, (where children are not in a club situation and the activity is not structured) a National Pool Lifeguard qualification shall be the minimum qualification with a ratio of 1:20. It is the responsibility of the school to put in place all safety, supervision and lifeguard requirements.

4. Public use of school pools

The National Pool Lifeguard qualification must be the minimum accepted qualification. Supervision ratios will be based on the number of users and the age and ability of the users, but a minimum ratio will be 1:20.

NOTE: (for paragraphs 3 & 4 above) *Where the school pool is small and shallow (maximum 1.2 metre deep) the recommended assessed competences, outlined above in paragraph 1a, may be acceptable after a risk assessment has been conducted by the Head of Establishment, but the minimum ratios must be maintained.*

5. Schools hiring other school pools

The guidance given above in point 1 shall be followed. In addition, it is essential that the school hiring the pool is fully aware of the local emergency systems that are in place. All safety, supervision and lifeguard requirements are the responsibility of the school hiring the pool.

