

*This Handbook belongs to*

*Swimmer's Name:* .....



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## **Mission Statement**

Athlone Swimming Club is dedicated to the promotion and encouragement of competitive swimming in an enjoyable and motivating atmosphere.

As competitors, our swimmers will strive towards excellence to achieve the best they can at their level of ability.

The club supports the values of fair play – respect for self, coaches, team mates and opponents.

## **Vision**

Through the sport our swimmers will have an opportunity to develop healthy behaviours and a lifelong love of swimming.

Our swimmers will develop high self-esteem, responsibility and self-motivation.

Our swimmers will demonstrate teamwork, respect, trust, honesty and good sportsmanship.

## **Contact Numbers**

***Coach:*** Johnny Powell (086) 8358750

***Designated Person:*** Patricia Cleary (087) 2496891

Contact numbers for our Childrens Officers are displayed on the Club Notice Board in the spectator area of the pool

*Our Club Children's Officers' role is to liaise between the children and the adults within the club, ensuring that the children have a voice with regard to Club matters. The Club Children's Officers are available to any child or swimmer if they have a problem or a concern.*

# Rules and Guidelines

## **Information and Guidelines for Swimmers and their Parents**

The following rules and guidelines are designed to ensure the safety of the Clubs members, and provide information to parents on how best to support your son/daughter while swimming in the Club.

- On joining the club, swimmers will be told which group they are in, and the club coaches will decide progression from one group to the next. Times of the club sessions will be displayed on the Club Notice Board (At top of seating area in main pool) and in this booklet. Any changes of times for holiday period etc., will be displayed on the Club Notice Board/website.
- Swimmers and their parent/guardian will be expected to sign a Code of Conduct at the beginning of each swimming year (Sept.)
- Swimmers shall show respect for their Coaches, and obey their instructions at all times when they are under their control.
- Swimmers should turn up on time for Club Sessions and if required should help with preparing the Pool for the session.
- Children, who are conveyed to and from the pool by their parents or other adult, should remain at the pool until they are collected. Children should not walk home alone without parental consent.
- Adults who bring children to the pool should ensure that the session has not been cancelled before they drop their children and depart from the pool. Adults collecting children after a session should be punctual when collecting them.
- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that the Club has up-to-date phone numbers where they can be reached in the event of an emergency occurring during the duration of sessions.
- A swimmer who complains of feeling ill may be told to get dressed and sit in the spectator area until parent/guardian arrives. If deemed necessary, parent/guardian will be contacted.

- The coaching staff are responsible for swimmers throughout the Club session while swimmers are on the pool bank. Responsibility reverts to the parents once the children leave poolside to enter the changing rooms.

**Note: Be aware that the dressing rooms are available for use by the general public during and after training sessions.**

- In order to leave a swimming session early the swimmer should present the coach with a written request signed by his/her parents.
- Athlone Swimming Club recommends swimmers should undergo a medical check before undertaking intensive training.
- It is mandatory for one parent/guardian of a competitive swimmer to have attended a basic officials course.

### *Coaching Sessions*

- A qualified Coach or teacher will supervise all sessions.
- **Parents may spectate during sessions; they should not encroach on the poolside or interrupt the Coaches during the sessions.**
- **Discussion between parents and coaches should take place either before or after the session.**
- Coaches and teachers should be familiar with the “Code of Ethics and Good Practice in Children’s Sport” and “Officials’ Code of Ethics”.

**Galas/Club Trips** – The Committee will appoint officials in charge of all Club Trips, and will ensure there is a gender balance and sufficient ratio of officials to the number of swimmers. Parents must give written permission for their children to go on a Club Trip. (A special Swim Ireland form must be filled in for overnight trips).

- Adults in charge of swimmers who travel to galas should travel to and from the gala on the bus, and remain at the gala until all Club swimmers are ready to depart. If there are drop-off points on the return journey swimmers should not be left alone on the roadside. The bus should wait until a parent or somebody known to them collects them.
- It is important that the adult in charge has a contact phone number for every swimmer who is on an away trip.

## Code of Behaviour

- All members shall show respect and courtesy to other members at all times.
- Do not interfere with any other swimmers in the water.
- Do not leave the pool without the coach's permission
- Offensive language should not be used at any time
- Do not interfere with anybody's property on poolside or in the dressing rooms.
- Take off all jewellery when training.
- No running on poolside.  
During warm-ups, no diving or jumping in.
- No horseplay, handstands etc. in the pool.
- Stay off the lane ropes and do not pull at backcrawl flags.
- Stay away from the Jacuzzi.
- Don't throw water bottles; do not bring any glass bottles onto poolside and no chewing gum.
- Failure to do proper warm-ups and swim-downs is considered a breach of discipline.

*Failure to adhere to the Code of Behaviour may lead to disciplinary measures as outlined below.*

### **Disciplinary/Complaints Procedure**

- Any minor offence by any swimmer will receive a verbal warning by the coach/official in charge on the bank, and the name of the swimmer and misdemeanour will be recorded in a book.
- When any child's name goes into the book three times the parents will be contacted and the issue will be discussed between coach and parents to prevent further breaches.
- If after the parents have been notified, the child continues misbehaving, then the coach/official will bring this problem to the attention of the Complaints Committee, which could lead to expulsion from the Club.

- Any major offence will automatically be brought to the attention of the Complaints Committee.
- Complaints from Club members should be put in writing to the Club Secretary, who will forward it to the Complaints Committee.
- Complaints to the Complaints Committee will be dealt with expeditiously and in accordance with Swim Ireland guidelines.

We hope by supplying this booklet that you as parents will have a better understanding of the Club's operations and how your child fits into the club and to swimming in general. The Club's Constitution and this Rule/Handbook are available to all.

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# ATHLONE SWIMMING CLUB

## Timetable

Group	Elite	A	Junior	Development
<b>Mon</b>	5:30 – 6:45pm			
<b>Tues</b>	6:00 – 7:30am*			
<b>Wed</b>	6:00 – 7:30am*	5:30 – 6:45pm	5:30 – 6:45pm	
<b>Thur</b>	4.00 – 5.30pm		4.00 – 5.15pm	
<b>Fri</b>	6:00 – 7:30am* 5:00 – 6:15pm	4:00 – 5:15pm	5:15 – 6:15pm	
<b>Sat</b>		6:00 – 7:30pm		12:30-1:15pm <i>Swimzone</i> 1:15-2.00pm <i>Dolphins</i>
<b>Sun</b>	7.30-10.00am			

*\* Parents of Elite swimmers are required to participate in a rota for supervision of early morning sessions.*

*Parents of competitive swimmers are required to timekeep at galas.*

## **Athlone Swimming Club Squads**

***Development – 1:15-2:00 pm (Dolphins):*** This group introduces swimmers to the deep end for the first time. Technique will be taught on all four strokes and this will also incorporate simple dives and turns. Promotion from this group will be based on qualifying times as set out on page 8 of this booklet – the coaches at their discretion may promote a swimmer they feel is showing potential in another stroke other than freestyle. For any other information you require you can contact Johnny at 086 8358750.

***Development – 12:30-1:15 pm (Swimzone):*** This group caters for swimmers with ages ranging from ten to sixteen years of age who can comfortably complete 100 metres. All aspects of swimming will be included and this group is ideal for anyone who may wish to compete in triathlons in the future. Swimmers in this group are entitled to compete in Connacht Graded Galas and information regarding these competitions will be given out by the coach on poolside. There is no obligation to compete at these galas as we understand not everyone enjoys competition. Promotion into our 'A' Squad will be based on a time trial and the qualifying times are set out on pages 8 and 9 of this booklet. If you have any queries you can contact Johnny at 086 8358750.

***Junior Squad:*** Promotion out of this group will be decided by time trial and please refer to the top of page 9 for these standards. The only competitions open to this group are Schools Gala and Community Games. Generally we expect swimmers to remain in this group for at least one year and a swimmer must be eight years old or over before they can progress into the 'A' Squad.

***'A' Squad:*** This squad will train 3 times a week. Swimmers are expected to swim distances ranging from 25 metres to approximately 800 metres. All aspects of training will be covered, with a larger emphasis now being placed on fitness levels. Swimmers will be expected to participate in competition throughout the year. Generally most of these swimmers will attend Graded Galas, but any swimmer who achieves an 'A' time, as set out in the Graded Tables, will now be eligible to swim in all open competition throughout Connacht (Graded Tables can be accessed via Club website/facebook page). In certain cases a swimmer may be asked to swim on a relay with Elite members at an 'A' gala, and if it is possible they will be given the opportunity to

swim in an individual race at the same meet. Any swimmer who achieves a Division II Irish Age Groups time (displayed on Club notice board) will be automatically promoted into the Elite Squad. An extra Sunday morning session will be provided for any swimmer aged at least 10 who can achieve the following times:\*

Under 10 years	+ 5 seconds on Div. 2 qualifying time
Under 11 years	+ 5 seconds on Div. 2 qualifying time
Under 12 years	+ 5 seconds on Div. 2 qualifying time
12 years and over	+ 5 seconds on Div. 2 qualifying time

\*It is at this stage that you as a parent may be a little confused regarding all of the above so we would encourage you to talk to Johnny at poolside at the end of a session or you can contact him at 086 8358750.

**Elite Squad:** This group comprising of swimmers ranging in talent from a good Connacht standard up to international level. Swimmers now train 7 times a week and will attend Galas countrywide and abroad. Fitness levels will be of the highest standard and ages range from 11 upwards. The aim for this group is to qualify for the Division I Irish Age Groups or the National Open Championships.

## **Club Time Trials & Promotions**

Time Trials will be run every term to determine who is promoted from our Development Squad to our Junior and 'A' Squads. The following are guidelines for promotion: 6,7,8 and 9 year olds may qualify for the Junior Squad by competing in a 25 metre Time Trial. All other age groups must compete in a 50 metre Time Trial to win promotion to the "A" Squad. There will also be two 100 metre Time Trials during the year for swimmers aged 10 and over (see next page). Please note that these qualifying times do not guarantee promotion as there may not be enough spaces to cater for all swimmers.

### **25 metres Frontcrawl**

6 years	30 seconds & under
7 years	26 seconds & under
8 years	24 seconds & under
9 years	20 seconds & under

### **50 metres Frontcrawl**

10 years	42 seconds & under
11 years	37 seconds & under
12 years	35 seconds & under
13 years+	33 seconds & under


*Any swimmer who shows ability in another stroke may, at the discretion of the coaches, be promoted to a higher group.*



To be promoted from our Junior Squad into our 'A' Squad the Time Trial standard for promotion is 46 seconds for 50 metres frontcrawl at age 8, and 43 seconds for 9 years and over.

## 100 metre Time Trial

The Club will hold two 100 metre Time Trials for Development Squad swimmers aged 10 years and over. Gold, Silver and Bronze awards will be presented to swimmers achieving the standard time for their ages (see below). Any swimmer who achieves the Gold standard will be promoted into the 'A' Squad.

Age	Gold		Silver		Bronze
10 years	1:34		1:44		1:54
11 years	1:30		1:40		1:50
12 years	1:26		1:36		1:46
13 years	1:22		1:32		1:42
14 years	1:20		1:30		1:40
15 years	1:18		1:28		1:38
16 years	1:14		1:24		1:34



## Gala Procedures

### Gear

- Warm up togs and racing togs.
- Tracksuit, T-shirt, shorts, flip-flops or runners.
- 2 pairs of goggles, to be on your person at all times, in case one pair snaps.
- Two towels.
- Athlone Swimming Club swimming cap MUST be worn during warm-up and races.

### Warming Up

- Climb into the pool at the start of the warm up.
- Make sure to swim continuously and not get in the way of other swimmers.
- Become familiar with your surroundings, e.g. practise turns, especially back crawl.

- Try to complete at least 1,000 metres at a medium pace.
- Always leave a gap between you and the swimmer in front. When doing a sprint, raise your hand to get the attention of the coach, and remember the coach can only get one split at a time. Report back to the coach after each sprint, for feedback.
- After the warm up, get changed quickly and report back to poolside.

## **Food/Drink**

- Eat a normal breakfast in the morning, i.e. cereal, toast, tea etc.
- Bring some wholemeal sandwiches, and do not eat directly before a race.
- Avoid sweets and fizzy drinks.
- Make sure to drink plenty of water or sports drink throughout the day.

## **Race Rules**

- Listen to announcements and line up immediately when assembly for your race is called.
- The starter will blow three short whistles to get the timekeepers attention, and then one long whistle to signal the swimmers to climb onto the blocks and prepare to start.
- If, after starting, the referee blows the whistle continuously, this signals a false start and swimmers must stop and return to the blocks to restart the race.
- On a Backcrawl start swimmers may put their toes over the surface of the water.
- On Butterfly and Breaststroke turns, swimmers must touch with 2 hands, and the same applies at the finish. A one hand touch will lead to disqualification

## **General**

- Stay in the Pool Complex at all times.
- Obey the Pool rules.
- Report to the coach after each race, for splits and corrections.
- Do not leave money, or valuables such as mobile phones, unattended in the dressing rooms – they can be given to Team Manager for safekeeping.

# Glossary of Swimming Terms

A Gala	For swimmers who have achieved a time faster than the B Grade cut off
CRSI	Connacht Region Swim Ireland
DNF	Did not finish
DNS	Did not start
NS	No show
DQ	Disqualified. A swimmer should be notified by the gala referee with a reason - No time is given
FTR	Freestyle Team Relay (4 swimmers swim Freestyle)
Graded Gala	for swimmers who have not achieved a time faster than the B Grade cut off
HDW	Heat Declared Winners (No finals will be held in this event. The fastest times in heats are winners)
IAG	Irish Age Groups
IM	Individual Medley - swimmer does a set length of each stroke (Order fly, back, breast free)
LC	Long Course (each length of the pool = 50 metres)
MTR	Medley Team Relay (Order backcrawl, breaststroke, fly, freestyle)
PB	Personal best
QT	Qualifying Time
NQT	No Qualifying Time required
SC	Short Course (each length of the pool = 25 metres)

SI	Swim Ireland
Straight Finals	No heats will be held in this event - normally less entrants than lanes in the pool
Swim Up	To swim in the age group above swimmers actual age group
TBD	To be decided
Age Group	Division of swimmers according to age
FINA	The international governing body for the sport of swimming
LEN	Ligue Européenne de Natation (European Swimming League)
Scratch	To withdraw a swimmer from an event before the start of the competition
Heat Sheet	A printed order of events by session with swimmers listed by heat and lane (with team and entry time)
Swim Off	A race after the scheduled event to break a tie. The only circumstance that warrants a Swim-off is to determine which swimmer makes finals.
Starter	The official in charge of signalling the beginning of a race and insuring that all swimmers have a fair take-off
Split	A swimmer's intermediate time in a race. Splits are registered every 50 metres (or 25 metres depending on the pool and the equipment on hand)
Referee	The head official at a swim meet

# Improve Your Technique...

## Frontcrawl Turns

- \* Approach fast, holding your breath for last three strokes into the wall
- \* Throw the head down to bring the legs over faster and stay in a tucked position for the fastest roll
- \* One arm stays by the hip while the opposite arm pulls the body over
- \* Both feet hit the wall with the feet facing slightly sideways, with the swimmer on his back but ever so slightly angled to the side
- \* The legs should be flexed at 90° to allow for a maximum drive off the wall
- \* The push off from the wall should see the body about 1.5 feet deep making sure you push forward, not down or up
- \* The arms should be squeezed against the ears, one hand on top of the other, fully extended, and the eyes should be looking straight down (NB: Don't tuck the chin in)
- \* Begin the kick slightly after the push away from the wall using 3 to 4 powerful Butterfly kicks and ascend to the surface with a flutter kick.
- \* Begin the stroke after the body has reached the surface and not before
- \* On a longer distance race it is recommended to breathe immediately after each turn but sprinters should keep the head down for one stroke after the turn

## *Common Mistakes*

- (1) Throwing the legs straight over
- (2) Breathing into the approach
- (3) Gliding into the turn
- (4) Poor streamlining off the wall
- (5) Turning the body around at the wall and onto the front

## **Backcrawl Turns**

- \* From the flags learn to know exactly how many strokes to the wall before you turn
- \* On the last stroke bring the arm over whilst turning over onto the front
- \* At this point you basically complete a Frontcrawl turn but end up on your back
- \* It is a slightly deeper underwater push off the wall with the body approximately 2 foot under the surface
- \* The rules allow you to kick 15 metres underwater on the start & turn. Having a strong Butterfly kick is a huge advantage, but most swimmers will not kick this far. The danger is that fatigue may set in at the final part of the race
- \* Again, make sure the body reaches the surface before you begin your first pull

### ***Common Mistakes***

- (1) Turning too early
- (2) Turning onto the front which will lead to disqualification
- (3) Poor streamlining off the wall
- (4) Beginning the first armstroke when too deep under the surface.

## **Butterfly Turns**

- \* Approach the wall at speed and keep the head down on the last stroke
- \* Both hands must touch the wall simultaneously, but keep the shoulders in line with the surface until the touch is made
- \* Use a powerful kick on the last stroke, trying to touch the wall with the arms fully extended
- \* On touching the wall, drop the head back, turning the body slightly to the side. The legs are brought up under the body together and placed on the wall (pull the knees into the gut)

- \* Flex the arms on the touch but avoid pulling the body into the wall, release one arm as quickly as possible and tuck into the side
- \* The opposite arm releases from the wall in a high elbow manner close to the head, entering the water with as little splash as possible
- \* Before the push the feet are facing sideways approximately 50 cm under the water
- \* Bring the arms and hands together and push off slightly down if doing a lot of fly kicks under and horizontally if doing fewer kicks off the wall (approx 1.5 feet under the surface)

### ***Common Mistakes***

- (1) Pulling the body too high out of the water
- (2) Turning the body onto the front before pushing off
- (3) Pushing off too near the surface of the water
- (4) Taking two breaths on the turn

## **Breaststroke Turns**

- \* The Breaststroke turn has the exact same approach and turn off the wall as in Butterfly
- \* Push slightly down to a depth of approximately 2 feet
- \* Drive off the wall, hold for a moment in a streamlined position, and begin the pull out
- \* Keep the pull out narrow and drive the hands back to the legs and at this point execute a dolphin kick
- \* Recover the arms in under the body and use a strong narrow kick and rise to the surface
- \* The head must break the surface for a breath before the end of the outswEEP of the first stroke

## **Common Mistakes**

- (1) Pulling the body too high out of the water
- (2) Turning the body onto the front before pushing off
- (3) Pushing off too near the surface of the water
- (4) Taking two breaths on the turn
- (5) Using more than one Breaststroke kick during the pullout
- (6) Kicking Frontcrawl legs whilst pushing off

## **Individual Medley Turns**

### **Butterfly to Backcrawl**

- \* This is the same as a regular Butterfly turn but on the push off you go from the side onto the back and use your Butterfly kick as normal

### **Breaststroke to Freestyle**

- \* Again this is the same as a Butterfly turn to a Backcrawl turn except on the push, where the body is on the front and use your normal freestyle kick

### **Backcrawl to Breaststroke**

- (1) Normal touch turn
- (2) Somersault turn
- (3) Modified Naber turn

\*These turns will be covered by the Coach to avoid any confusion