"SCHOOL AGE" SWIMMING TIPS FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

Giving your child the opportunity to learn to swim ensures your child has an asset for life !
Apart from the obvious benefits of swimming, lessons also enhance social, emotional and the physical well being of your child. School age lessons are aimed at improving confidence in the water, teaching swimming skills, building stamina and teaching very important water safety messages.

Here are some tips to help your child transition to lessons happily and confidently....

- **Introducing your child to lessons…..**
  If these are the very first lessons that your child has attended, visit the pool before the lessons begin to enable the child to get "acquainted" to the environment. Find out the instructor's name before you begin lessons. Try out goggles in the bath/shower so they are used to them on their first day.

- **Toileting Your Child……..**
  Please ensure you toilet your child before lessons. Going to the toilet during the lesson may disrupt the class and their learning.

- **Caps and Goggles….**
  To ensure you receive your full 25 minute lesson and to avoid disruption please ensure your children have their caps and goggles on before they enter the pool. REMEMBER caps are compulsory for all children (over 3 years) and a quality pair of goggles is a vital tool of trade too.

- **Food and Drink…..**
  Please do not feed your children immediately before the class. Allow 30 minutes prior to exercise for food to digest. Children who are learning to hold their breath or submerge may swallow air which can "repeat" newly digested food….! On the flip side of this…children will be hungry after lessons, so ensure they have something to eat and drink fairly soon after lessons. Swimming can be very hard work !

- **Encouragement…….**
  There will be times when your child feels frustrated with progress. This is natural and it's important at these times to offer lots of encouragement. Just like learning to walk and ride a bike, with lots of practice and time in the water your child will soon be swimming like a fish and having lots' of fun in the pool ! A smile or positive comment from a parent is the most powerful reinforcement you can offer !

- **Learning Plateau……**
  A "learning plateau" is a period of time where we can't see any progress. Your child might have been making wonderful progress and be moving up a level each term, then all of a sudden doesn't appear to make any progress at all. Sometimes this is short lived, at other times it might last for many months. However long the "learning plateau" lasts for your child, it is a normal part of learning. Any period of rapid learning is followed by a period of time when the skills are reinforced. During this time your child's brain is going to be making sense of all that we have been taught. Your child needs to assess all the new information, decide how to use it, where in the brain to store it and how to retrieve or recall this information on demand. Your child needs to build strong neural pathways between the brain and other parts of the body so that the skills become automated. Please be patient while your child goes through this "plateau" as removing them from lessons during a learning plateau will deny them the opportunity to reinforce the skills they have been working on.

- **Getting the most out of swimming lessons…**
  Swimming, like any other physical activity, is based on "building blocks". Each "block" needs to be practised and reinforced continually. Once skills can be repeated on demand and with ease we know the skills have become committed to memory. .Please consider swimming year round to optimise the development of skills.

- **Feedback……..**
  Teachers have a 5 minute break between classes, which is an opportunity for them to keep you informed of your child's progress and for you to ask them any questions you may have. Communication between yourself/your child, the teachers and our office staff is vital to your child's swimming success and enjoyment. We welcome your feedback, both in terms of your child's swimming and our performance as a swim school.

Swimming lessons do not mean that your child will be 100% safe in and around water. Our swimming lessons teach water awareness and safety skills, however we cannot guarantee that children will remember or perform the right thing if an incident occurs. Please observe your child at all times in the water, and reinforce safety measures.

Swim For Life®
Can your child swim...
...would your child survive?