

Hydrotherapy pool policy

Riverbank academy is a broad spectrum special school for secondary age students within the Sidney Stringer Academy Group, welcoming students' from across Coventry. We are a fully inclusive environment and aim to ensure everyone feels safe and happy irrespective of gender, disability, ethnicity and social, cultural or religious background. We aim to provide a safe place where curiosity is nurtured, learning is celebrated and expectations are high, enabling our students to become active members of their wider community beyond the school day. Through our policies and practice we aim to help all Riverbank students uphold the schools core values of being *Motivated, Creative and Caring*.

This policy outlines how we will use our hydrotherapy pool, who will use it and how we will maintain it. It identifies the training required for staff and clearly highlights the health and safety implications the pool poses for anyone using our site.

The hydrotherapy pool is an incredible resource for our students, supporting early water confidence, therapy and movement needs and interactive curriculum experiences and rewards. It is important that whatever activity is taking place, it is safe and appropriate for the participants. Our pool has all the statutory health and safety documentation required by Coventry & Warwickshire council in place.

Statutory documentation

We have risk assessments in place for physical aspects of the pool and operational aspects. The *standard operating procedure* has been completed to Coventry Health and Safety department standards, including the *Normal Operating procedures* and *Emergency Action Plan*. We have appropriate records in place for the safety checks and session registers.

Regular checks and maintenance

The hydrotherapy pool manager has completed a 2 day pool plant course and will ensure the maintenance team are able to support the maintenance of the facility.

The following checks must be carried out 4 times daily by the hydrotherapy pool manager or a competent member of the maintenance team at approximately 8:15am, 10:45am, 12:15pm & 15:15pm every day the pool is in use.

- Temperature (34-38 degrees)
- PH (7.2-7.6)
- Chlorine (0.5-3)

The following checks are carried out weekly:

- Cyanuric acid
- Total Dissolved Solids (TDS)
- Alkalinity (80-120)
- calcium hardness (75-500)
- Water balance

The results must be recorded and available for anyone to check before they swim. If the results of any checks are outside of the given parameters the pool must be closed and an 'out of use' sign put on the door until it is rectified. Where possible classes will be notified in advance of their session if the pool has to be closed.

The following laboratory checks must be carried out regularly by a registered contractor who will provide us with a certificate showing the results of every visit. If the results fall outside of the given parameters the pool must be closed and an 'out of use' sign put on the door until it is rectified.

Check	Frequency
Microbiological contamination	Fortnightly
Total Coliforms	Fortnightly
E. coli	Fortnightly
Pseudomonas aeruginosa	Fortnightly

The pool will be serviced monthly by Buckingham Pools. The microbiological water testing will be carried out by Kingfisher Environmental Services.

Keeping the pool area secure

Between sessions, when the pool area is not in use **it will be locked**. The poolside door has a digital lock with a key code. The code will be changed periodically or anytime a student is suspected of obtaining the code. The poolside door cannot be opened by the classroom keys so there is no risk of a student taking the key from staff to gain access to the water.

During all swimming sessions the doors into the changing area should be locked from the inside using the thumb turn, which allows for a quick exit in an emergency. The changing room locks are opened by the classroom keys meaning all staff can gain access should assistance be required.

The changing room doors and emergency exit will never be propped open. Chemical cleaning will only take place when no students are on the Riverbank site.

Under no circumstances will the key code ever be given to a student, volunteer or work experience student.

Failure to follow these procedures is a very serious issue and may result in additional action being taken.

Use of the pool

The hydrotherapy pool will have 3 functions.

1. The main function of the pool is to provide physical experiences and hydrotherapy to students with severe physical, medical or sensory needs. These students will be identified through their EHCP. They will receive session at least weekly. A physiotherapist may also request students receive hydrotherapy on a long or short term basis by contacting the class teacher/ SLT.
2. Developing pre-swimming skills for students who do not have water confidence. The size and temperature of the pool make it unpractical as a teaching pool, however there are many skills which can be taught such as breath control, tolerating water, floating, and body shapes for swimming. As there is limited space for movement the heat of the pool is a benefit during these activities. These skills can then be transferred to use in a swimming pool to start developing effective movement.
3. Curriculum enrichment activities and rewards. All students could benefit from occasional use of the pool and sensory equipment as part of a planned curriculum activity (e.g. under the sea story, rainforest experience). Splash sessions will form part of the rewards scheme. Students can choose to have the lights and music on and use the pool for approximately 30 minutes.

Reporting issues/ concerns

Any issues or concerns regarding the maintenance or cleanliness of the hydrotherapy pool or changing areas must be reported to the hydrotherapy pool manager as soon as possible. If the daily checks record has not been completed the session leader must contact the manager to ensure the checks were carried out and within the appropriate ranges.

If the water becomes cloudy so you can no longer see the whole of the pool floor the session must be stopped and the issue reported to maintenance. If on entering the pool area the water is too cold for your group it is your responsibility to report this.

The decision whether or not to swim is the responsibility of the session leader.

If there is a soiling incident (faeces, blood or vomit) in the water, even if it appears to have been contained it must be reported and the 'out of use' sign put on the door until it has been checked by the manager and any required action has been taken. If the soiling incident is on poolside or

in the changing areas **DO NOT WASH IT DOWN THE DRAINS**. Soak up as much as possible with paper towels and dispose of as per usual bodily waste disposal. Then disinfect the area and mop it up, before rinsing the area.

Concerns regarding procedures, policy, training, dress, behaviour or swimming skills should be referred to the hydrotherapy pool manager, who can also advise on training requirements or swimming skills.

Issues relating to safe entering/ leaving the water or emergency evacuation can be referred to the moving and handling coordinator.

Group leader responsibilities

Complete risk assessments for your group, including any revisions required for last minute changes in staff or students. Complete an emergency evacuation plan, in conjunction with the M&H co-ordinator if appropriate. Ensure risk assessment has been read, signed & dated by all staff. Visual check of pool area for obvious issues or faults and reporting. Fill in the pool register. Ensure sufficient staff. Check all students are able to participate and make alternative arrangements for any who can't. Planning the activities to take place during the lesson and completing assessment. Ensuring the door is locked during the session and locked behind you when you leave.

Lifeguard qualifications, roles and responsibilities

Staff acting as lifeguard must hold a minimum qualification of the NRASTC or equivalent. They must update this every 2 years and present their certificate to the school office. All staff who hold this qualification will take part in six monthly revision sessions with the hydrotherapy pool manager. This qualification includes life-saving training and CPR for drowning.

Ideally the lifeguard will remain poolside during the session and fulfil the pool watch responsibilities. It is however acceptable in exceptional circumstances for the lifeguard on duty to be in the water during the session, provided there is a separate designated pool watch on duty on the poolside who has completed the swim test and be willing to enter the water in an emergency. The lifeguard must still remain vigilant throughout the session. The lifeguard cannot also act as session leader, as they would not be able to ensure the safety of the whole group at the same time as supporting a casualty.

Their responsibility is to ensure the safety of everybody during the session. If needed to follow correct emergency procedures and direct other adults. Call for assistance if required.

Pool watch responsibilities (normally combined with lifeguard role)

Pool watch will have the whistle and walkie-talkie. They remain pool side throughout session.

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And maintain constant vigilance and scanning of pool and users. They may need to check air temp and/ or water temp if advised by lifeguard or leader. Alert the lifeguard and other users by use of the whistle any issues/ individuals in difficulty or distress. Alert the office/ on-call staff if assistance is required.

They must not;

Sit down

Talk to users whilst session is in progress, unless to highlight an issue

Eat

Read

Use mobile phone or any other handheld device

Put down their whistle or walkie-talkie

Turn their back to the water

Statutory swim test

Coventry do not have a statutory swim test. For staff who will swim in our pool, or support from the side it is expected they can pick up a dummy from the deepest part of the pool and swim 2 lengths (2x11m), one on their front and one on their back wearing a t-shirt and shorts/ leggings. They will have to demonstrate appropriate action for Epilepsy for all bathers and how to deal with situation effectively and safely. All staff will be signed of as competent in all aspects of the swim test by someone who holds the NRASTAC qualification before they are able to assist in the water. This will be repeated annually. Volunteers, work experience students and supply staff will be expected to demonstrate these skills before supporting the students. This could be done at the start of a session, but it must be considered that a session may have to be cancelled if the staff cannot complete this test.

Appropriate behaviour and attire

No one shall enter the poolside area without appropriate clothing. Outdoor shoes must be removed before entering the changing areas, indoor flip flops or diving shoes may be worn in the changing rooms and on poolside. For the maintenance team and staff working around the pool outside of lessons plastic overshoes are provided. Everyone in the pool area during a session must be dressed to enter the water if required i.e. pool watch will wear their swimsuit with shorts and t-shirt suitable for swimming. The lifeguard will wear a yellow t-shirt provided for them. Other staff will not wear yellow.

Students will wear appropriate swim wear for active sessions; 2 piece swimsuits are to be

discouraged. T-shirts and shorts/ leggings may be worn, but these cannot be yellow as that could be confused with designated roles. Ambulant students may wish to bring a dressing gown and inside shoes for walking to and from the pool area. For students who requires a swim sling the school will provide this.

Students who have continence needs or have occasional toilet accidents will also need protective continence wear in the pool, which parents will need to provide.

Everyone, including staff will shower before entering the water, the only exception being that staff who are remaining poolside will not be expected to shower before reacting to an emergency however they may wish to shower prior to the session to help them remain cool.

It is important for students to understand expected behaviour and the risks of poor behaviour in the pool area. For students who cannot understand the risk assessment the staff ratio should reflect this. Students will be taught pool safety before their first session and posters and signs around the pool area will indicate expected behaviour. The school behaviour policy and individual behaviour plans/ positive handling plans will be applied in the pool area. The main sanction for unactable behaviour in the pool area will be immediate removal from the session. If the behaviour is repeated then exclusion from swimming for set number of weeks will be discussed with staff and enforced to the student, upon returning to swimming behaviour will be monitored going forwards.

Changing arrangements

Ambulant students will get changed in the male or female dry changing areas off the PE hall and cross the corridor to get to the pool area. They will take their towels with them and dry off before going back to the changing area after the session. Staff will be required to be extra vigilant when children are walking back to changing areas after swimming regarding wet floors. Mops and wet floor signs will be in place to minimise the issue immediately. They will shower in the designated area. Parents may also wish to provide a dressing gown and indoor shoes for moving between the areas. If there is an individual circumstance where the male or female changing rooms are not appropriate then the student will be permitted to change in one of the non-ambulant bays with the screen pulled across.

Non-ambulant students will use the accessible changing area, which has 2 changing bays separated by movable screens suitable for male or female use. The bays both have their own shower and they are both hoist accessible for students to be hoisted into the water. The changing trolleys are designed to drain away excess water, but it is the responsibility of the session leader to ensure they are dry for the next user. All continence wear and PPE must be disposed of in the appropriate bin and nothing will be left on the floor. Remember that if you find a student is soiled after their swimming session it must be reported to the hydro pool manager.

Adults will change in the designated adult change area. There is only room for one person at a

time, and the shower is also in this area so staff may change in the staff toilet if they prefer but they must not change in the student areas while students are on site, even if that area is not required the session. They may use the student showers provided they remain clothed. Students are not permitted to use the staff changing area. Staff will ensure all students are supported and there is sufficient supervision before showering or changing themselves before and after the session. The group leader is responsible for checking this.

Safety around the pool area

The lifeguard is responsible for checking all safety equipment is present and in good repair, and signs are in place and clearly visible prior to every session. The lifeguard (or pool watch if lifeguard is in the water) will have a whistle and a walkie-talkie.

On the poolside there will be:

- 2 grab poles, one located at either end of the length of the pool.
- 2 grab bags, one located at either end of the length of the pool.
- 1 slide sheet

Signs will indicate the depth of the pool at either end as well as highlighting important information for pool safety.

The control room for the sensory equipment will be closed during sessions. All floats and equipment will be cleared into the storage crates and nothing will be left on the floor around the pool. The pool watch will notify other staff if there are any obstacles or debris and wait for someone to clear it before the session continues. If the floor becomes particularly wet then another member of staff must dry it with the mop and post 'wet floor' signs.

The pool alarm will be checked daily at or around 8am. Checks are recorded on a daily opening check sheet. It will be the decision of the pool manager (Or their line manager) if the pool can be used should the alarm be not working. The walkie-talkie and door bell system can be used as an alternative but that requires being checked prior to every session. Random and arranged pool alarm drills will be carried out at least half termly and recorded.

Risk assessments

For every group a risk assessment must be carried out. The minimum risk management procedures will be those outlined in the Hydrotherapy pool risk assessment and NOP; it is the responsibility of the group leader to ensure any measure beyond the minimum requirements are highlighted in the group RA and acted upon. This includes any additional measures for individual behaviours, physical needs or sensory needs of the group. Changes of students or staff in the group can impact upon the needs of the group and the overall safety of the session so the RA must be updated when there are any changes in order to reflect this.

Length of sessions

Due to the heat and humidity of the pool and poolside area there are limits to how long the pool

should be used by different groups and how long staff should be on duty in each role. It is important to take this into account when planning your session, for example if you are taking in 2 groups for 45 sessions in immediate succession you would need to ensure you have 2 adults qualified to act as Lifeguard as there will not be sufficient break in between for the same person to fulfil the role twice.

Role of participant	Length of time in pool/ poolside	Break required before re-entering area
Non-ambulant student	45 minutes	N/A
Ambulant students	30 minutes	N/A
Staff in water supporting non-ambulant students	45 minutes	10 minute break before re-entering
Staff in water supporting ambulant students	30 minutes	10 minute break before re-entering
Pool watch/ lifeguard	45 minutes	At least a 30 minute break before acting as lifeguard or pool watch again. 10 minute break before re-entering in another role
Session leader	45 minutes	10 minute break before re-entering. Must have 30 minutes before acting as lifeguard or pool watch

Staff ratios

The maximum number of people in the pool is 12 which includes adults. This must be taken into account when planning your ratio.

Every session must have a **designated leader**, a **qualified lifeguard** and a **designated pool watch**. The roles of pool watch and lifeguard will usually be combined, but the **pool watch and lifeguard cannot also lead the session**. There must be sufficient staff on the side of the pool to meet evacuation requirements of the group as described in the group evacuation plan. The group risk assessment must indicate which category describes the participants' needs/ abilities to ensure the correct staff ratio is provided. All adults present must have completed the statutory swim test and be confident to swim across all depths of the pool.

Description of swimmers needs/abilities	Minimum ratio of students to adults in the water	Minimum adults poolside
a. Epilepsy, regardless of swimming ability*	1-1 at all times	1 Pool watch (lifeguard must be present)
b. PMLD	1-1 at all times + 1 to support physio & evacuation	1 Pool watch + number specified in evacuation plan (lifeguard must be present)
c. No breath control	1-1 at all times	1 Pool watch (lifeguard must be present)
d. Out of depth and cannot swim the width of the pool effectively	1-1 at all times + 1 to support physio & evacuation	1 Pool watch + number specified in evacuation plan (lifeguard must be present)
e. Unsafe in the water- no danger awareness	1-1 at all times	1 Pool watch + number specified in evacuation plan (lifeguard must be present)
f. Scared or no water confidence/ Can stand up across the pool or swim effectively and remain safe in the water, but cannot respond to verbal instruction	1-2 supervision	1 Pool watch (lifeguard must be present)
g. Out of depth, but can swim the width of the pool effectively.	1-3 supervision	1 Pool watch (lifeguard must be present)
h. Out of depth, but can swim the width of the pool effectively and respond reliably to verbal instructions	1-5 supervision	1 Pool watch (lifeguard must be present)
i. Can stand up across the pool, but cannot swim the width of the pool effectively	1-3 supervision	1 Pool watch (lifeguard must be present)
j. Can stand up across the pool, and can swim the width of the pool effectively	1-8 supervision	1 Pool watch (lifeguard must be present)
k. Independent, confident swimmer	No adults required in the water	1 Pool watch + session leader if no adults in the water (lifeguard must be present)

*Legal requirement

Emergency evacuation

The lifeguard (or pool watch if lifeguard is in the water) will have a whistle and a walkie-talkie. In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation of the pool they will blow 3 short, sharp blasts

on the whistle to indicate that the water must be cleared and to gain the attention of the lifeguard if they are in the water. **They will activate the emergency alarm which sounds in main reception and student reception, then radio to the office or on-call staff that assistance is required in the pool area, before entering the water if required. All available staff should attend to the pool area.**

The group leader will take responsibility for the rest of the group, evacuating if possible or else bring the remaining students to the wall in the shallow end and securing them in a safe position while waiting for assistance. During an evacuation of the building the group must wait next to the emergency exit with the walkie-talkie and listen to be told if they need to leave the building or not. A grab bag will be kept by the door including foil blankets.

It is the responsibility of the group leader to ensure an evacuation plan has been completed for the group they are taking swimming. It must include procedures for getting out of the pool during a fire or other building evacuation, and procedures for evacuating if they or someone else get into difficulties in the water, taking into account how staff would be allocated in this eventuality. This must be linked to their individual moving and handling risk assessment if applicable. The plan must be updated with any changes as they occur, including changes in students or staff.

These procedures will be tested twice a year and the results documented, including any action required for improvement.

Timetabling & curriculum

For students with severe physical disabilities hydrotherapy will form a regular part of their weekly PE curriculum, enabling the school to meet their statutory requirements for providing exercise which raises the heart rate in a safe and controlled way. They will follow a programme of activities to meet their physical needs written by the teacher and/ or physiotherapist. Hydrotherapy may also be prescribed as a short term or long term intervention for other students with physical or medical needs from Riverbank or Earnsford Grange academy. Earnsford Grange would need to provide staff for this who have completed the school swim test.

Students who are non-swimmers and need to develop water confidence will have a block of sessions timetabled up to 3 times during the year. They will use the 'National Plan for Teaching Swimming stage 1' as a framework for planning their activities.

Use of the pool for rewards or curriculum enrichment will be on an ad hoc basis. It may be necessary to negotiate a change in times with regular users, which will need to be discussed with the teacher affected a week or more in advance. It is the responsibility of the group leader to ensure they have the correct staff ratio and that staff have the appropriate qualifications prior to the session.

Use by external groups

At present the pool is available out of term time for lettings.

The NOP/EAP and pool policy is written in the context of internal teaching and when hired to external companies can be deviated away from with the appropriate risk assessments in place. This will be done at the external companies own risk and will become their responsibility to implement and manage.

I have read, understand and agree to the above documentation and will adhere to the information as it is written.

Signed: Hirer.

Dated: