

What is included in the primary school National Curriculum for swimming?

In the latest version of the [Primary PE National Curriculum](#) it states that all schools must provide swimming instruction in either key stage 1 or key stage 2. In particular, pupils should be taught to:

- swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25 metres
- use a range of strokes effectively [for example, front crawl, backstroke and breaststroke]
- perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations

What swimming information is required for our Primary PE and Sport Premium report?

Schools now, in their report, have to include the percentage of their year 6 pupils who can fulfil each of the three primary PE National Curriculum minimum swimming expectations (as outlined above).

What is expected of pupils in order to be successful in each of these requirements can be found on pages 6 and 7 of the Swim England and The Swim Group's [‘A Guide for Primary Schools’](#) document.

How much swimming should primary schools offer pupils?

Pupils should have enough opportunities through school swimming and water safety to achieve, as a minimum, the full requirements of the [National Curriculum](#) (described above).

What are the swimming ratios?

Pupil to teacher swimming ratios should never exceed 20:1 and will almost always be considerably less for primary school swimming. Schools should adjust ratios according to their individual circumstances and should consider pool size/depth, teacher ability and individual needs of pupils. As a guide, [Swim England recommends](#):

| | Recommended Ratio |
|--|-------------------|
| Non-swimmers and beginners: Learners with or without floatation aids that cannot swim 10m comfortably. | 12:1 |
| Improving swimmer: Learners who have mastered stroke technique and have the ability to swim 10m comfortably and safely. | 20:1 |
| Mixed ability groups (not including beginners): All should be able to swim 25m minimum. Mixed ability groups are often a necessity in managing school groups. | 20:1 |
| Competent swimmers: Those who can swim at least 25 metres competently and unaided and can tread water for 2 minutes. | 20:1 |
| Swimmers with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND): Each situation must be considered independently | 1:1 upwards |

Can the PE and School Sport (PESS) Premium be used for swimming provision?

The PESS Premium cannot be used to deliver the requirements of the National Curriculum. It can however be used to enhance or extend the provision that already exists. This could include:

- buying resources to enhance lesson content and effectiveness,
- paying for and attending swimming training for school staff,
- hiring qualified swimming teachers or coaches to work with school teachers,
- utilising more teachers in swimming lessons – reducing ratio and improving quality,
- increasing the amount or duration of lessons,
- offering additional ‘top-up’ lessons for targeted pupils.

Do I need to have a minimum qualification to teach swimming?

Local Authorities and school governing bodies may establish their own policies and set certain minimum qualifications before staff are allowed to teach some aspects of physical education, particularly those that involve a potentially greater risk as with aquatic activities.

It is advised that those teaching swimming should hold a current and recognised qualification such as the [Swim England National Curriculum Teaching Programme](#). Alternative qualifications, in-house training and past experience could however also be considered.

Who can provide further information around primary school swimming?

- Swim England (NGB):
 - [The National Curriculum Training Programme \(NCTP\)](#)
 - [The School Swimming Charter](#)
 - [The Big School Swim](#)
 - [Use of the PESS Premium for Swimming Guide](#)
- Swim England and The Swim Group:
 - [A Guide for Primary Schools](#)
 - [Primary School Support Materials](#)
 - [Water Safety Resource](#)
- [Swim Safe](#) – free outdoor swimming and water safety sessions for children
- [AfPE Safe Practice in PE and Sport](#)

