



# National Plan for Teaching Swimming e-newsletter



**Edition 1**

**November 2008**

## **Welcome**

Welcome to the first National Plan for Teaching Swimming (NPTS) e-newsletter. This newsletter will be produced quarterly and we will share good news stories, examples of good practice and NPTS updates with you.

This e-newsletter is specifically for the benefit of swimming providers delivering learn to swim programmes but will be of interest to anyone wanting to know about the NPTS. It will keep you up to speed with current developments and provide help and advice to improve swimming programmes.

Still not sure what the new NPTS is all about, why it has been updated and how to access it? [Please click here.](#)

## **Subscribe**

In order to continue receiving these updates and to find out about other newsletters the asa produce please sign up by [clicking here](#). If there are others who you think may benefit from receiving this newsletter, please ask them to visit the British Swimming website at [www.britishswimming.org](http://www.britishswimming.org) and follow the link on the right-hand side of the homepage for 'latest newsletters and e-flyers'.

## **NEWS UPDATES**

**One Year Since The Launch of the new NPTS. How Are We Doing?**

- More than 1,000 centres have bought the new NPTS.
- 4,000 people have attended new NPTS training.
- 89 swimming pools have achieved the asa's Aquamark Accreditation
- 663 sites are rolling out the New National Plan in Aug/Sept 08.
- 196 business partners of the asa covering 963 pools.

### **What makes the NPTS different from other schemes?**

- The Plan provides a nationally recognised standard of performance for each swimmer, which provides a degree of consistency throughout the country.
- The Plan is supported by a programme of specific continuing professional development seminars, which provide all the support your swimming teachers need to effectively implement the plan as well as personal development opportunities. [Click here for more information.](#)
- The Plan provides a clear, easy to follow pathway for your swimmers to progress through the different aquatic disciplines. This starts at the basic FUNdamental movement skills and is followed by FUNdamental sports specific skills for each aquatic discipline ( diving, synchro, water polo, competitive swimming). The Plan also includes a link for your swimmers to go on to a Rookie Lifesaving course through the asa's partnership with the Royal Lifesaving Society.

### **Extra guidance on safe supervision for a quality teaching and coaching swimming programme**

The asa (the national governing body for swimming) has reiterated risk assessment should be at the heart of all decision-making on safety in a swimming environment - and this especially applies to swimming lessons and coaching sessions.

With regards to safety, pupil to teacher ratios have been agreed by the industry's lead agencies as a guide for safe supervision during lessons and coaching sessions - but the asa is also keen to stress it is important that a full risk assessment is undertaken in each case to determine actual pupil to teacher ratios.

The asa gives this guidance because there are many factors that would influence safety, not just the pupil to teacher ratio. These factors could include the:

- Lifeguard provision – is the supervising teacher carrying out a dual role of teacher and lifeguard?

- Design of the pool where the teaching is taking place, e.g. shape and blind spots, water depth
- Ability of pupils being taught
- Number of assistants and what level these assistants are qualified to

“**Safe Supervision for Teaching and Coaching Swimming**” published by the Institute of Sport and Recreation and endorsed by the asa, The Royal Life Saving Society UK and the Institute of Swimming offers advice on the essentials of risk management and pupil to teacher ratios amongst other things.

**The Guidance Booklet for the Management and Delivery of Teaching and Coaching of Swimming** also offers advice on a number of learn to swim areas, including advice on safety issues.

## CASE STUDIES

### Kim Chapman Swimming School



This swimming school was already using the 1997 version of the Plan and decided to update to the 2007 edition, which will be fully implemented by September 2008. In the meantime the school has already started using the skills section as part of their alternative activity throughout their programme.

Members of the swim school team have attended several of the specially developed continuing professional development seminars provided by the Institute of Swimming, which were recommended by the local asa Education officer Jenny Norvill. These include the NPTS Overview, FUNdamentals, Mini-Polo! and Flip n Fun.

Kim Chapman outlines how she implemented the new plan: 'My managers and I thoroughly read through the new Plan and compared it to the 1997 version. We discussed how it would fit into our current system and have now scheduled meetings to introduce the new plan to staff, ahead of them teaching it.

'I would recommend those considering implementing NPTS to take it slowly, read it thoroughly and explain it completely to all staff. Furthermore, I would suggest a trial term, with either the lower or upper levels.'

The swim school is also currently using all the asa awards including Swim a Song and distance badges, and will be introducing stroke distance badges in September.

[www.kimchampmanswimmingschool.co.uk](http://www.kimchampmanswimmingschool.co.uk)

#### **Cardiff Council**



Cardiff Council were another swimming provider who were already using the 1997 edition when they were introduced to the new NPTS via a tutors conference last year and afterwards agreed to become one of the pilot centres. The new plan has since been implemented within each of their seven sites.

Shirley Bourge, the Council's Swim Development Officer comments on the process of transferring to the updated version of the plan: 'The main skill gap areas for the swimmers were at levels 5 and 6, which take longer to achieve in the new version of the plan. In order to overcome this, we made a sheet for teachers to show the difference between the levels, because we wanted to keep the children on their existing level, rather than put them down a stage.'

The council reports that they experienced no difficulties in the changeover and found the CD which accompanies the plan helped to clear up any initial misunderstandings.

Ms Bourge offers this advice to centres new to the NPTS: 'A suggestion to help with implementing the new programme is to create your own teachers tool packs, including homework sheets and ideas for water safety, etc. We also used catch-up sheets to help the teachers go over the elements the children may have missed by changing to the new stages.'

Based on our experience I would recommend that centres who are already using the 1997 version do not put children down a stage, but let them stay longer on the new stages.'

Email: [SwimmingDevelopment@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:SwimmingDevelopment@cardiff.gov.uk)

## RESOURCES AND TOOLS

Whilst a lot of time is being spent at the moment supporting centres to implement the new NPTS we are constantly trying to review our existing resources and improve our products for our customers. If you have any suggestions for our NPTS review group on how we can improve our products and resources please e-mail them to [npts@swimming.org](mailto:npts@swimming.org).

### **Sharing Good Ideas**

We are keen to use this newsletter as a method of sharing good practice so we will be liaising directly with the Regional Business Managers (RBMs) for examples of good practice. Here are a few good ideas that you may wish to consider...

- Preston City Council have worked closely with the Preston Swimming Club to help implement the new NPTS. The council covers Stages 1-7 and the Swimming Club deliver stages 7-10. Staff from both attended NPTS training run by RBM Ann Burgess. Ann later explained this is a good example of a 'true partnership' between the local authority and club.
- Tees Valley Leisure providers have been working together to look at NPTS implementation. Swimming Coordinators from all five authorities meet

once a month with their RBM Di Wilson to discuss implementation and share good practice.

## NEED MORE HELP?

Need help implementing the NPTS? Have you contacted your Regional Business Manager?

The Business Team is made up of seven RBMs who are each allocated a specific Region and work with Learn to Swim Providers. Their main aim is to assist Learn to Swim providers with the implementation of the National Plan and ensure partners have access to the right support and resources to help their swim programme run smoothly.

They have details of training courses, other people in your area who are implementing the plan and can tell you how to become a Business Partner of the ASA

Meet the team:

Mandy Mason- Business Team Manager and East Midlands, Wales & London region [mandy.mason@swimming.org](mailto:mandy.mason@swimming.org)

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Your RBM can also provide you with your NPTS suggested Action Plan which should help you implement your programme.

## OTHER INITIATIVES FROM the asa

The asa produces a number of other newsletters and updates to let you know about new programmes, initiatives and good practice. These include:

### **Everyday Swim Newsletter**

A monthly round-up of all the latest Everyday Swim News from across the country - including lessons learned, event previews, dates for your diary and a host of other useful swimming information.

### **School Swimming News**

A termly newsletter to share examples of good practice and updates on School Swimming and Top Up Swimming.

Please [click here](#) to sign up to these e-newsletters.

### **Workforce Development Update**

A monthly newsletter detailing the work of the asa's Workforce Development Team. Please email [Claire.freeman@swimming.org](mailto:Claire.freeman@swimming.org) to receive a copy.

### **Aquamark**

Aquamark is the asa swimming programmes quality scheme and has been developed to assist providers of swimming programmes to meet these challenges. [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more. The programme is currently being updated to bring in line with other developments but the centres working towards gaining accreditation are still being actively encouraged to do this. Please contact your RBM for further information.

