



## Introduction and Overview

Thames Swimming Club currently trains with 5 groups at Thame, Princes Risborough and Aquavale ( Aylesbury).

**FUNDAMENTALS** – 1 hour per week

Group 1: **DEVELOPER & TRAINING** - 2 hours per week

Group 2: **COMPETITOR** – 2.5 hours per week

Group 2+ **COMPETITOR PLUS** – 4.25 hours per week

Group 3: **PERFORMANCE** – 7 hours per week

Group 4: **COUNTY & DISTRICT** – 10 hours per week

This document details the process by which swimmers gain entry to the club and are subsequently moved from one training group to another.

The Club's mission is to be a friendly competitive swim club and seeks to support progressive development of its swimmers through a proactive Group Movement Process that is led by the Head Coach. The club aims to create a culture that provides a safe and happy environment in which children can learn to swim and develop to a level appropriate for their ability.

It is important that the process is open and transparent and based on clear entry and exit criteria for each group.

Due regard must be given to safety, and to the availability of pool time, each of which places a cap on the maximum possible number of swimmers in each Group. From time to time the Head Coach may therefore need to change the exit and entry criteria, in order to keep each of the training groups balanced and within the maximum capacity. Such changes will be reflected in this document and notified to Club members.

## Trialling for a place in the club - overview

All swimmers, of whatever age, who would like to join should contact the club to book a trial session, (see **How To Join** on [www.thameswimmingclub.co.uk](http://www.thameswimmingclub.co.uk)). The Head Coach, or a member of the coaching team, will assess their swimming and suitability to join, and this will be discussed with the swimmer's parents. Once they have been assessed they may be added to a waiting list depending on the available space in the club at the time.

## Trialling for a place in the club

Before trialling for Thames Swimming Club, the child will ideally have taken part in the Swim England Learn to Swim lesson system, as operated at Thame or Princes Risborough Leisure Centres. As a club, we expect that swimmers have reached Swim England Silver Stage, or the equivalent, and are happy to swim in deep water.



Younger swimmers (aged 7-9) will typically join our Full membership group. In exceptional cases a younger swimmer may also be admitted directly to Group 2 if they meet the Group 1 entrance criteria (see below).

In addition, spaces will only be made available in the appropriate Group if there are no existing Club members who are eligible for promotion and awaiting a space (in other words priority will be given to existing Club members). As much as we would like to welcome new entrants at all ages it would be unfair to disadvantage swimmers who are making progress through the Groups by admitting new entrants directly into higher groups, at their expense. Exceptions will only be made at the Head Coach's discretion.

### **Movement Between Groups - overview**

Movement through the training groups is based strictly on progress in swimming rather than on the age of the swimmer.

Coaches may discuss verbally with the swimmer the possibility of a potential move. However formal notifications of moves between groups, whether on a trial basis or otherwise, must be confirmed via email from the Membership Secretary.

***Unless formally notified by the Membership Secretary via email, a movement between groups has not been ratified by the Club and may be reversed.***

Changes in fees resulting from a swim training group change are applied from the first full month that the swimmer is in the new group, with the revised fees due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of that month.

### **Movement Between Groups – assessing the swimmers**

Coaches will assess swimmers according to the following criteria:

- **Attendance** – This is noted by the training group coach taking a register and can be viewed in the swimmer's member record in Swim Manager. Attendance below 70% of a Group's available pool time will be considered by the coaching team to be low, unless there are clear extenuating circumstances (see below).
- **Effort and behaviour** – is their conduct and attitude appropriate?
- **Competitiveness** – Are they attending competitions and performing well? Group 3 and 4 swimmers would be expected to attend at least one in three of the galas available to them.

Coaches will use progressive improvement in PB times as objective evidence of swimming progress. Times will be refreshed through competitions, hence encouraging swimmers to enter and compete in galas.

**Please note that allowance for all criteria will be made for illness or school exams. Whilst attendance is a matter of record, assessment of Effort and Competitiveness is at the discretion of the coaches.**



**Movement Between Groups - timing and changes in fees**

Swimmers will be assessed against the relevant Group entry criteria and entry fees, and the coaches will reach agreement on which swimmers should move groups.

**Movement Between Groups - Entry & Exit Criteria**

This table summarises the criteria for progression of swimmers through the different swim groups, and more detailed descriptions of the criteria can be found below the table.

It should also be noted that a younger swimmer will be advanced ahead of an older swimmer, if all other things are equal, on the basis that the younger swimmer is relatively more progressed and showing greater potential.

	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>	<b>Group 3</b>	<b>Group 4</b>
Entry criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can Swim all four strokes for at least 25m</li> <li>• Can perform a shallow racing dive in line with ASA guidelines</li> <li>• Can perform the appropriate turn for each of the four strokes</li> <li>• Has good stroke technique on Breaststroke and Backstroke</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance and effort in Group 1</li> <li>• Has improved stroke technique across all strokes</li> <li>• Stamina</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance and effort in Group 2</li> <li>• Stamina</li> <li>• Gala attendance: willing to compete</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance and effort in Group 3</li> <li>• Stamina</li> <li>• County Considered times</li> <li>• Gala attendance: eager to compete</li> </ul>
	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>	<b>Group 3</b>	<b>Group 4</b>
Exit criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No exit criteria</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No exit criteria</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training attendance and effort</li> <li>• 70% attendance is expected</li> <li>• Gala attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training attendance and effort</li> <li>• 70% attendance is expected</li> <li>• Gala attendance</li> </ul>

**Group 1: DEVELOPER & TRAINING ENTRY CRITERIA:**

Entry to Group 1: Developer & Training will require as a minimum that the swimmer should have passed Swim England Learn to Swim Stage Silver or equivalent. As a benchmark,



swimmers should be able to swim 50M Freestyle and high Breaststroke and Backstroke. The ability to swim Butterfly, which will be assessed against their dolphin kick and arm strength, though the club accepts that younger swimmers will not have sufficient muscle development to swim butterfly well.

Swimmers must be capable of performing a shallow racing dive in line with ASA requirements. This is a pre-requisite for attendance at competitive galas.

The training emphasis at this level is on technique but this is where the development of stamina and speed commences. Swimmers will be placed in an appropriate lane in the pool by the Group 1 coach and as their times, stamina and stroke technique improves, they will move up through the lanes until they reach the top lane for the group, at that point they are in the "Promotion" spot and may be considered for promotion to Group 2: COMPETITOR

Once the swimmer achieves the entry criteria for Group 2: COMPETITOR and there is space available in that group, the swimmer will be considered for a group move at the next opportunity.

#### **Group 2: COMPETITOR ENTRY CRITERIA:**

Entry to Group 2: COMPETITOR will be based on the swimmers' stroke technique, stamina, PB's, and training commitment (attendance and effort) and will be assessed by the Group 1 Coach.

The training emphasis at this level is on technique, stamina and speed. Swimmers will be more competitive and be attending more competitions.

Swimmers will be placed in an appropriate lane in the pool by the Group 2 coach and as their times, stamina and stroke technique improves, they will move up through the lanes until they reach the top lane for the group, at that point they are in the "Promotion" spot and may be considered for promotion to Group 3: PERFORMANCE.

Some of the Group 2 swimmers showing promise for moving to Group 3 in terms of speed, stamina, technique and commitment will be invited to join Group 2+ as a transition to Group 3. As noted above it is expected that swimmers in Group 2+ attend all of the extra sessions made available to them, **in addition to the normal sessions**, to demonstrate appetite for the next move up. Once the swimmer achieves the entry criteria for Group 3: PERFORMANCE and there is space available in that group, the swimmer will be considered for a group move at the next opportunity.

The club considers it unlikely that a swimmer would be relegated from Group 2: Competitor back to Group 1 Developer & Training. Swimmers who attain Group 2 Competitor but do not want to move on to Group 3: Performance or do not attain the entry criteria for this group may be able to continue to train for fitness in Group 2: Competitor **subject to the discretion of the Head Coach and subject to there being capacity within the Group.**

#### **Group 3: PERFORMANCE ENTRY CRITERIA:**



Entry to Group 3: Performance will be based on the swimmer's PB's and training commitment (attendance and effort) and crucially for a move into the top competition squad, their willingness to compete and attend galas. If they do not wish to compete, they are unlikely to move into Group 3: Performance.

The training emphasis at this level is on training for competition, building stamina and speed, but also ensuring that their stroke technique is still improving. Swimmers will be more competitive and be regularly attending competitions.

Swimmers will be placed in a lane in the pool by the Group 3 coach according to their assessment against the relevant criteria. As their stamina, speed and stroke technique improves, they will move up through the lanes.

However, for entry to Group 4: County & District the swimmer should have ONB County Considered Times or be selected by the Head Coach. ONB County Considered times are defined by the Oxfordshire & North Buckinghamshire County Executive and are reviewed annually. They can be obtained at: [www.onbcountriesasa.org.uk/](http://www.onbcountriesasa.org.uk/)

Once the swimmer achieves the entry criteria for Group 4: COUNTY & DISTRICT and there is space available in that group, the swimmer will be considered for a group move at the next opportunity.

**Group 3: PERFORMANCE EXIT CRITERIA:**

In order to make space for improving swimmers in Group 2, there may be occasions when swimmers will have to be relegated from Group 3: Performance to Group 2: Competitor, based on the coaches' assessment against the criteria described earlier.

However, if their performance attendance (minimum of 70%) and effort is below the expectation for Group 3, the coach will speak to the swimmer and their parent(s) and explain the situation and what they need to do to regain the level for Group 3: Generally a period of 6 weeks will be given for the swimmer to improve. Once this discussion has been had with the swimmer and parent, it will be logged at the coaches meeting. These swimmers are effectively in the relegation zone for the squad. At the end of the 6 week period, if the swimmer has not improved, the coach will have a further discussion with the swimmer and parent to ascertain whether there are any extenuating circumstances (e.g. illness, GCSE Coursework and exam load etc.). If there are no extenuating circumstances, the coach will let the swimmer and parent know that they are likely to be relegated to the lower group, subject to a final discussion at the coaches meeting. The coach will raise this at the coaches meeting and agree with the Head Coach as to whether more time should be allowed to improve due to extenuating circumstances or whether the swimmer should be relegated.

**Group 4: COUNTY & DISTRICT ENTRY CRITERIA:**

Entry to Group 4: County & District will be based on the swimmer's stroke technique, stamina, PB's and training commitment (attendance of minimum of 70% and effort) and crucially for a move into the top competition squad, an eagerness to compete and attend galas. If they do not wish to compete, they will not be able to move into Group 4: County &



District. This will be assessed by the Group 3 Coach, will pass on the attainment of ONB County Considered Times: [www.onbcou...](http://www.onbcou...)

The training emphasis at this level is on training for competition, building stamina and speed, but also ensuring that their stroke technique is still improving. Their target at this level is to gain, retain and improve their county times and train towards the county championships and Swim England South East Region (SER) times and championships. Swimmers will be very competitive and be attending several competitions as suggested by the coach. Swimmers will be placed in a lane in the pool by the Group 4 coach.

**Group 4: COUNTY & DISTRICT EXIT CRITERIA:**

The club considers there may be occasions when swimmers will have to be relegated from Group 4: COUNTY & DISTRICT to Group 3: PERFORMANCE. However, if their performance, attendance and effort is below the expectation for Group 4: COUNTY & DISTRICT the coach will speak to the swimmer and their parent(s) and explain the situation and what they need to do to regain the performance level for Group 4: COUNTY & DISTRICT. Generally a period of 6 weeks will be given for the swimmer to improve. Once this discussion has been had with the swimmer and parent it will be logged at the coaches meeting. These swimmers are effectively in the relegation zone for the squad. At the end of the 6 weeks period, if the swimmer has not improved, the coach will have a further discussion with the swimmer and parent to ascertain whether there are any extenuating circumstances (e.g. illness, GCSE Coursework and exam load etc.). If there are not, the coach will let the swimmer and parent know that they will likely be relegated to the lower group subject to a discussion at the coaches meeting. The coach will raise this at the coaches meeting and agree with the Head Coach as to whether more time should be allowed to improve due to extenuating circumstances or whether the swimmer should be relegated.