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# GUILDFORD CITY SWIMMING CLUB

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# Academy Members Handbook

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides introductory information about Guildford City Swimming Club ("the Club") for *Academy* Members who swim in our teaching groups at Guildford Spectrum and the following satellite schools: Cranmore, Guildford High, Notre Dame and City of London Freeman's.

The primary source of information is on the Club's website: [guildfordcitysc.com](http://guildfordcitysc.com). The information on the website includes alterations to training sessions, forthcoming events, results, news and contact details. It is updated regularly and parents are advised to check it before each session. Parents and swimmers are also advised to check the Club notice board by the viewing balcony at Guildford spectrum. Parents are also referred to

# Academy Members Handbook

the Documentation section on the website for further relevant information. All parents are deemed to have read and agreed the Club's Constitution upon becoming members of the Club and will be asked to sign a membership form to confirm this.

The Club employs professional coaches and teachers. All Committee Members, technical officials and helpers work voluntarily. Contact details for all coaches, teachers and committee members can be found on the Club's website.

The Club has approximately 300+ *Academy* members and 400+ members in the main competitive squads.

## 2. AIM

The *Academy* is aimed at swimmers of varying ability, aged 4 to 12 years old, who want to improve & develop into competitive swimmers. The main objective of the *Academy* is to provide youngsters with expert technique work to help them become proficient and legal in all four strokes. Emphasis is placed on coordination, breathing pattern & timing, streamlining and underwater skills. Pupils also learn racing starts from blocks, tumble turns on Freestyle & Backstroke and touch turns on Breaststroke & Butterfly.

## 3. MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the *Academy* is by invitation only and is renewed at the Club's discretion each term. All applicants are assessed, and those that are accepted are allocated to a suitable class in the *Academy*.

## 4. TEACHING AND COACHING

*Academy* teaching sessions are held at the Guildford Spectrum, in the small teaching pool and the competition pool, and at the satellite school pools. The Club also uses other pools for the main competitive squads. The *Academy* adopts a nurturing approach, enabling individuals to become competitive swimmers. The acquisition of basic aquatic skills is spread over a suitable period and therefore accomplished with minimal pressure.

The *Academy* sessions are aimed at improving the quality and technique of strokes. The objectives are:

- to break down each stroke into its component parts and provide a technical grounding;
- to refine each stroke, breathing patterns, head position and turns;

# Academy Members Handbook

- to introduce diving from the side and blocks;
- to prepare swimmers for the transition from teaching to coaching and develop the stamina required for competition in the 25 metre competition pool.

Lessons run from late August until July. Please check your welcome letter and/or Academy Newsletter for holiday dates and the website for altered sessions.

The teachers and coaches are always willing to talk to parents about any concerns. To avoid disruption to classes, please approach coaches either before or at the end of classes. Alternatively they can be contacted by telephone or email. All contact details are on the Club's website ([guildfordcitysc.com](http://guildfordcitysc.com)).

## 5. PROGRESSION

Progression through the *Academy* and ultimately to the main competitive squads is based upon the coaches' professional evaluation of a swimmer. **Swimmers can expect to make an increasing commitment as their ability improves and they progress into competitive swimming.** It is essential that swimmers acquire good stroke technique in all strokes before progressing to stamina and speed work in the main pool.

Swimmers will normally be expected to progress to either our High Performance (HPS) or Competitive Development (CDS) Squads. However those swimmers who wish to continue swimming but do not want to join a competitive squad or are unable to commit to the HPS or CDS squads may join one of our fitness squads.

Further advancement to the competitive squads (County and above) require certain qualifying times to be met. For details of the squad structure, qualifying times and training hours, please refer to the website ([guildfordcitysc.com](http://guildfordcitysc.com))

The following table is a guide of the age range and hours of training offered for each squad:

Squad	Age range in squads	Hours of swimming training per week	Land Training Hours per week
Academy	4 - 12	½ hr to 4 hrs - Levels 1 to 4	N/A
Sharks	7 - 10	6	N/A
County Squad	7 - 10	9	N/A
Regional Squad	11 - 12	14	2
National Age Group Squad	12 - 15	16	3
National Youth Squad	14+	20	4

# Academy Members Handbook

The teachers and coaches take into account a swimmer's learning abilities and different skill acquisition when considering his or her advancement either through the ***Academy or to the Competitive Squads***. The Assistant/Head of the Academy will discuss promotion with the swimmer's parents and if agreed a letter will be sent which sets out the training hours and what is required of the swimmer.

## **6. COMPETITIVE SWIMMING**

The ***Academy gala*** is an internal competition, held twice a year, in which all swimmers receive an award for participation. The Galas gives the swimmer their first experience of swimming in a Competitive Gala, swimming under the Amateur Swimming Association's (ASA) rules and with qualified officials, but in a caring and nurturing atmosphere. The galas also give the swimmers their first official racing times. All swimmers in Levels 1 to 4 are invited to the galas. Dolphins in our satellite pools are invited to the November gala, and Sharks are invited to the gala held in June/July.

The ***Academy galas*** are run on the following basis:

- All races are 25 metres.
- All events are "Heat Declared" events. This means that the results are based on the times swum in the heats. There are no Finals.
- The fastest 3 swimmers in each age group, unless disqualified, win a reward. This is usually a medal.
- The age groups for the gala are determined by the child's age on the 31<sup>st</sup> December of the year of the gala. (This is not the case for all competitions. The qualifying age groups for competitions vary when swimmers move to the competitive squads).
- The galas are run in accordance with the ASA rules and with qualified officials.

A swimmer who is 9 years old or older can also compete in ***Open Meets***. These are run by various swimming clubs to allow their swimmers to compete against others of a similar standard. The teachers and coaches will inform you of any ***Open Meets*** that the club is attending and for which your child is eligible. These are held at weekends and are divided into sessions according to events. You will be required to register your child at the ***Open Meet*** and ensure that he or she is there for the warm up. The age groups for an ***Open Meet*** are according to age as at date of competition.

# Academy Members Handbook

Swimmers are expected to represent the Club when invited to do so.

Disqualifications at these events are an inevitable part of the learning process, especially for the younger swimmers and in the more technical strokes. Do not be discouraged by a disqualification; it will help to improve a swimmer's stroke for future events.

Further information about competing can be found in the Parents' Guide for Swimming Events on the Club's website.

## 7. EQUIPMENT

Your child will need the following - available from our official online suppliers Alleycatz: (<http://www.alleycatz.co.uk>) :-

**Swimming costume or trunks (competitive style only) NO SHORTS, BIKINIS, BERMUDAS OR BEACH SHORTS.**  
**Swimming hat**  
**Goggles**

A **Guildford City T shirt** can also be purchased from Alleycatz for use on poolside during competitions.

Satellite Penguins  
**Small Float**

Spectrum Level 2 and Above & Satellite Dolphins

**Kickboard**  
**Fins**

A **net bag** is also useful to contain the kit.

Swimmers should also take a **plastic drinks bottle** with them to keep on poolside and use during sessions filled with either water or weak squad (please remove any loose plastic caps from bottles - glass bottles are not allowed on poolside,).

**All swimming equipment and kit must be clearly named.** The club cannot be held responsible for lost items but will return any that are found. Guildford Spectrum has a

# Academy Members Handbook

lost property box, please enquire at reception. Please check the lost property areas at the satellite pools.

The ASA has a set of competitive award standards and badges for swimmers to achieve regardless of age.

The ASA award criteria are on the club website - [http://www.guildfordcitysc.com/page.php?page=ASA Awards](http://www.guildfordcitysc.com/page.php?page=ASA%20Awards)

If a swimmer achieves the required time, recorded officially at a gala, the appropriate badge can be purchased from Mrs. Elaine Bloxham - [ebloxham@mac.com](mailto:ebloxham@mac.com).

## **8. WELFARE, SAFETY AND MEDICAL MATTERS**

Parents are responsible for their children before they reach the poolside and immediately after their swimming sessions. They must ensure that, if they do not remain on the premises, they appoint a responsible adult who can contact them if necessary. It is particularly important that children are supervised in the changing areas. These areas are open to the general public and parents are requested to be vigilant at all times.

No swimmer is allowed to leave the poolside once they have started a training session or gala without the permission of the teacher or coach. It is important that all swimmers are aware of this rule. When they are released from poolside during a training session it is on the clear understanding that they will be under parent (or carer) supervision, otherwise such release will not be permitted. Please do not let your swimmer attend a session if they are unwell or injured. Children who are perceived to be unwell during a session should be collected by parents, if parents are unavailable the child will be seated on poolside in their towel.

**When an application is made for membership, the applicant is asked to give details of any medical condition or injury. It is the responsibility of the swimmer or parent to tell the teacher or coach of any change and email the Administration and Membership Team.** Accidents must be reported to the Club and will be recorded. If your child is involved or witnesses an accident please notify a coach or the Club Secretary ([jsgcsc.membership@gmail.com](mailto:jsgcsc.membership@gmail.com)).

# Academy Members Handbook

If you have any concerns about the welfare of your child please contact the Club's Welfare Officer, Caroline Wood ([mwood890@aol.com](mailto:mwood890@aol.com))

## 9. FINANCE AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

The swimming terms for the Academy roughly follow the school terms, except for the Spectrum Academy which only has a short break at Easter. Always check the website for training times. All terms dates are published in the Termly Newsletter and the Welcome Letters at the beginning of term.

At the beginning of each swimming term, or when a new member joins the Club, each family will receive an invoice. (A family may be just one swimmer or comprise of a parent and several swimmers). The invoice will be emailed. It is essential that the Administration and Membership Team should be informed of the parents/carer's email address and any changes.

The invoice includes several elements:-

- **The Squad Fee**

A termly fee payable by all swimmers in the Club.

- **The ASA Fee**

All members of the Club must be a member of the ASA - Amateur Swimming Association. This is for insurance purposes and, in the case of the older swimmers, to enable them to enter competitions.

The Club collects these annual fees for the ASA with the January invoice. The fees are sent to the ASA with an annual return in April. Any new membership cards will then be issued. There are 3 categories of ASA fees:

Non-Competitive ASA Fee (Category One) - This is payable by all swimmers under the age of 9 years, and all satellite academy swimmers.

# Academy Members Handbook

Competitive ASA Fee (Category Two) - This is payable by all swimmers over the age of 9 including Competitive Masters, but not satellite academy swimmers.

'Family' ASA Fee (Category Three) - This is payable by a parent of all swimmers under 18.

The termly invoices are dispatched prior to the start of each term. Prompt payment is essential. Full fees are payable regardless of the number of training sessions attended. See invoice for details.

Where parents or carers have difficulty in making payment, they should contact the Membership Secretaries, Liz Simmons ([qcsc.membership@gmail.com](mailto:qcsc.membership@gmail.com)) or Janette Smith ([jsgcsc.membership@gmail.com](mailto:jsgcsc.membership@gmail.com)).

**Please note - The Admin and Membership Team must be informed of any change of home address, e mail address or telephone number.**

## 10. AND FINALLY

There are many opportunities for parents and senior swimmers to be trained in time keeping, judging and teaching and to get involved in the various activities run by the Club. Any help is always much appreciated and indeed essential for the smooth running of Club events such as the Academy Gala, Club Championships and Open Meets.

Timekeeping and Judging:-

- contact Christina Victor [christina.victor@brunel.ac.uk](mailto:christina.victor@brunel.ac.uk)

If you are interested in teaching/helping poolside:-

- contact Sue Barney [guildfordacademy@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:guildfordacademy@hotmail.co.uk)

Help At The Academy Gala

- contact Elaine Bloxham [ebloxham@mac.com](mailto:ebloxham@mac.com)

To become more generally involved in the Club please contact the Club Secretary, Janette Smith, at [jsgcsc.membership@gmail.com](mailto:jsgcsc.membership@gmail.com).

# Academy Members Handbook

Helpers are required to complete a Criminal Records Bureau form before they are able to work with children and these are available from Sonia Desai ([soniadesai@btinternet.com](mailto:soniadesai@btinternet.com)).

The Club always welcomes suggestions for fund raising. Please discuss your ideas with any of the Club's committee members. Their contact details are on the Club's website: [guildfordcitysc.com](http://guildfordcitysc.com)

If you have any further questions please email the Head of Academy Sue Barney [guildfordacademy@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:guildfordacademy@hotmail.co.uk).

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