



Isleham School Pool Association

SUMMER
2014

Swimming 2014

As the swimming season is now well underway, we have felt the need to send out a newsletter to keep parents in touch with the latest news from your school pool and the school pool association. Please do read on, as we are very keen that parents know the benefits of having our lovely pool, how we can make the most of it and why, on occasion, we are forced to cancel swimming. To do this, we have some answers to questions that have been raised.

If you want to know anything about our pool please contact any of the committee, we'll be happy to answer your questions.

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Summer Newsletter

Why we love our pool!
 Focus on health & safety
 Your questions answered
 A note about resus
 Event news

Most children can swim or have lessons outside of school, so why do we need a school pool?

Even children that can swim enjoy going to the school pool, it is a fun form of exercise and we are very pleased to have it available for PE in the summer. For those children that can't swim, or don't have water confidence, particularly in KS1, it is an ideal place for them to build that confidence. It isn't deep, they swim with their friends and with a teacher they know well, in small groups. We have seen a child go from wearing armbands, clinging to the side to, the following year, proudly showing that they can do roly-polys in the water, and this just from building confidence in that small pool.



The benefits of having the pool onsite are enormous. Time out of the classroom is limited to more-or-less the actual lesson time.

Shipping them to and from local public pools has been suggested but it is costly and time-consuming. The best proof of why we need to keep our pool however, comes from the excitement of the children on swimming days!

Many local schools have lost their pools, through cost and lack of support and some are now desperately trying to fund-raise to build them again. We are lucky that ours was rebuilt several years ago and is still in super condition. Some schools charge parents to use their pool for children's swimming lessons. We are lucky to have our swimming pool association helping out with pool costs through fundraising and membership and have not needed to do this, therefore providing a great opportunity to have swimming lessons available for all.



Why was the pool late to open this year?

The swimming season usually runs from May until October, weather depending. During winter, the pool is emptied, then volunteers from ISPA spend a morning on a weekend at the end of April cleaning it out, pressure washing the pool area, clearing out debris, cleaning the toilets and changing rooms and generally making it ready to be filled. The school caretaker then puts a lot of effort in to finishing the cleaning, filling and heating the pool and adjusting all the chemicals so it is safe to use.

This year you will have noticed that we have bought a new polytunnel, making the pool area bright, clean and free from algae. The building of this encountered a few problems and delayed the cleaning session. Mr Patterson has worked so very hard and in addition gave up his time to help ISPA at the weekend with cleaning the pool. Les Wightman also very kindly spent a lot of time on repair work, clearing out the pool surround and replacing rotten wood that has been a problem in recent years.

Unfortunately, the time taken to fill and balance the pool chemicals and temperature took a little longer than we had expected and after a late start meant that the swimming was delayed a little at the start of this half term, but next year we can start earlier and won't have the delay of the building work. It was disappointing for the children and we apologise, but we do need to keep the pool safe. ISPA would like to thank Mr Patterson and Mr Wightman for all their dedication, time and effort.

Why has swimming sometimes been cancelled?

The school pool, as any public pool, has to be maintained within strict levels for chlorine, pH and temperature. There are several factors that affect these levels and an uneven balance could lead to eye and skin irritation or the possibility of infection. Our pool carers – school staff during the week and volunteers from ISPA at the weekends - carefully monitor these levels at least three times a day. Most of the time, the levels are fine, but very occasionally, if the pool has had a high load, or external temperature been very variable, they can slip out of the acceptable range. If this is the case then it is not safe for your children to swim and we are sure you appreciate that it is better to have the temporary disappointment of a cancelled session than any risk of illness or injury. Please also remember that our volunteer pool carers have given up their own time to attend a course with an assessment to make sure they are suitably trained to manage the pool chemistry. They also give up their time at weekends to make sure it stays safe for Monday swimming and for association member swimming. We ask you to please respect this and not criticise them for making a decision based on safety.

With safety in mind as well, this seems an appropriate time to remind you of the "two week rule" of no swimming following a stomach upset and that hair longer than shoulder length must be contained in a swimming hat. These guidelines apply to all pools.

Resus Training

We have had several people ask to join ISPA without attending the resus course, as there are only two dates and they are not always convenient. We do appreciate that this is the case and also that many people already have existing first aid qualifications but I'm sure you understand that we have to ensure that parents/carers of children using the pool have received suitable instruction, for insurance purposes as well as safety reasons and this is the reason our own resus course must be completed. If you didn't make the resus training but do want to swim, we can often arrange for guest passes with friends who have joined so it is always worth asking, it may also be possible for you to attend the course at another school.

Event News

BBQ FUN DAY

Thank you to everyone who helped and supported the fun day on Saturday 10th May. We had a lovely afternoon and have raised around £700 for the pool. Special thanks go to Mrs Dalton-Cole and all the pupils who took part in the Maypole dancing; all the children who took part in performances with KD Theatre and all the children who helped out on stalls. A big thank you also to Mrs Bramley, Mr Patterson and the school cook for letting us use the school and for all their help in setting and clearing up.

GALA

Unfortunately, we have decided not to enter a float this year as the committee are all involved elsewhere but please do support the school on the PTA float.

BAG 2 SCHOOL

Don't forget the next collection date:
 JULY 11th 2014
 Bags of old clothes, bags, soft toys etc
 can be left in the school car park before 9.30am .

