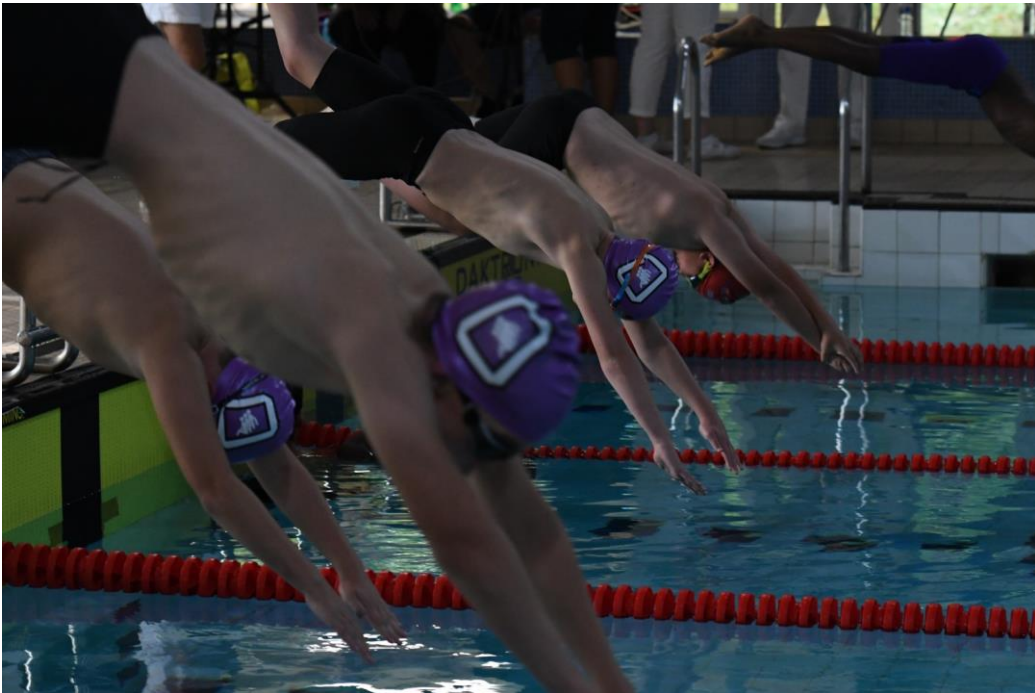


Orpington Ojays Swimming Club



Guide to being in a competitive squad

Welcome to Orpington Ojays Swimming Club!



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What it means to be in a competitive squad

Being in a competitive squad means that you are no longer learning to swim you are learning to RACE! Your coach will teach you new skills and hone your technique to help you achieve this through a series of drills, and training exercises such as sprint work and distance training.

Expectations of being in a competitive squad

Being in a competitive squad requires a high level of commitment, dedication, and hard work.

Here are some of the expectations the coaches will have during your time at Orpington Ojays:

1. **Attendance:** Competitive swimming requires consistent practice and attendance. You will be expected to attend all training sessions and competitions. Missing practices can significantly impact your performance and progress.
2. **Punctuality:** Arriving on time is crucial, as it allows you to get prepared and warm-up before the session. Latecomers can disrupt the flow of training and may even miss crucial instructions.
3. **Discipline:** Competitive swimming requires a great deal of self-discipline. You will be expected to follow the rules and guidelines set by the coach, including proper technique and form, as well as adhering to the squad's training plan.
4. **Physical fitness:** Competitive swimming is a demanding sport that requires high levels of physical fitness. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is an important too.
5. **Mental toughness:** Competitive swimming can be mentally challenging, and you will be expected to develop resilience and the ability to push through tough training sessions and competitions.
6. **Teamwork:** Although swimming is an individual sport, being part of a squad requires teamwork. You will be expected to support and encourage your teammates, work together to achieve squad goals, and be a positive influence on the squad's overall morale. If you are selected to be part of a team representing the club at a league the expectation is that you should make yourself available.
7. **Competitive spirit:** Finally, being part of a competitive swimming squad means having a desire to compete and perform at your best. You will be expected to demonstrate a competitive spirit, both in training and at competitions, and strive to improve your times and achieve personal goals and meet squad criteria.

Think of being in a squad like being on a football team, footballers train as part of a football team to play a match. Swimmers train as part of a squad to compete at galas.

Benefits on education of being a competitive swimmer

Swimming competitively has many benefits on your education.

Time management: Competitive swimming requires a significant time commitment; swimmers must attend regular training sessions and competitions. This can help swimmers develop strong time management skills, which can translate into better academic performance.

Discipline: Swimming requires discipline and dedication to training, which can also help swimmers develop a strong work ethic and self-discipline. This can help them stay focused and motivated in their studies and other aspects of their lives.

Physical health: Competitive swimming is a great form of exercise and can help swimmers maintain good physical health. Regular exercise has been proven to improve cognitive function and academic performance.

Mental health: Swimming can also have positive effects on mental health, as it can help reduce stress and improve mood. This can help swimmers feel more relaxed and focused on their studies.

Goal setting: Competitive swimming involves setting and achieving goals, which can help swimmers develop important goal-setting skills that can be applied in their academic and personal lives.

Progression

Here at Orpington Ojays we have a number of squads to work through as you grow as a swimmer. Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum and Top.

Progress through these squads is dependent on each swimmer's individual ability to meet the criteria of the squad they are in and the next squad up. Attendance levels are also taken into account when coaches look to progress swimmers. Swimming at the front of a lane within a squad is not the measure of whether a swimmer should be moving up a squad, it is far more complex. Squad moves are decided by the coaches but communicated by our membership secretary.

Squad etiquette

Swimmers need to adhere to a strict etiquette. Swimmers should be respectful of one another, after all we are all there for the same reason, to train and get better and faster. If a swimmer touches your feet, it is good lane etiquette to pull over and let that swimmer pass. It is not good lane etiquette to swim over the top of each other. Remember training is training, it is not a competition with your fellow squad members. There will be times in training where swimmers are required to race each other, but during drills and distance sets is not the time to compete. Swimmers must leave at least 5 seconds before setting off at the start of each swimming set, this allows all swimmers to be able to train effectively without swimming on top of each other. Coaches will also arrange swimmers into speed order for different strokes

Kit

Below is a list of what your swimmer will need for training sessions and competitions.

For training:

- Club Hat (compulsory)
- Goggles
- Pull buoy
- Kick board
- Fins
- Hand paddles
- Swimming snorkel
- Skipping rope
- Water in a plastic or metal bottle (no glass on poolside)
- Mesh bag for storing kit
- Rucksack for storing your clothes



Gold squad and above will need an exercise mat and resistance band for land-based strength and conditioning.

For competitions:

- Club hat (and a spare) Some swimmers wear 2 hats while racing to stop hats falling off. A spare is recommended as hats can rip.
- Racing Goggles (plus a spare set) The big ones often used during training are not suitable to race in as their large profile makes them prone to falling off when racing. Goggles should also be **worn under the hat** when racing to try and eliminate movement.
- Plenty of water in a plastic or metal bottle (no glass on poolside) Remember it is very hot poolside and swimmers will lose a lot of fluid just standing around.
- Club kit – purple club top and black shorts – plus warm clothes for between/after races
- Towels x 2
- Resistance band
- Skipping rope (to keep warm between races)
- Snacks for race energy and food for longer galas

Club Kit - Where to buy

When a swimmer reaches Bronze-squad, and they start to enter Gala's or get selected to represent Ojays at League events they will need Club kit. Please ensure your swimmer has a club kit top at the minimum, although there is a large selection of kit available via our supplier Zeon:

<http://www.zeonshop.co.uk/oosc>



Different types of swimming competitions



As a swimmer progresses, they will aim for and attend higher-level events. Some events are open meets, which means the swimmer can choose whether to take part and which event to swim in. Others are league galas. For those competitions there will be a team chosen by the coaches and the coaches will decide who is swimming in which race. These are very much a team event and are a lot of fun.

Other events follow a swimmer's development path, and the information below shows how they progress.

All of these competitions are inclusive for swimmers with a current national or international classification for functional, visually impaired or intellectual disability S1-S14

Open Galas

These competitions are usually divided into a morning and afternoon sessions (and occasionally an evening session) with a start time for their warmup commencing.

There will be coaches and team managers poolside, but we ask parents to stay and cheer on Team Ojays. Once your swimmer has competed in all the events they have entered, they can leave the venue. Making sure that they inform the Team managers that they are going.

As a club we will attend a number of open galas each year, not all of these will be suitable for every swimmer, but the general rule would be is if you can go, go. If you are unsure if you can enter, please speak to or email your coach.

All galas have conditions of entry regarding qualifying times. Open meets generally fall into three categories.

Upper qualifying times: Swimmers **cannot be faster** than a certain time for each stroke in their age group.

Lower qualifying times: Swimmers **cannot be slower** than a certain time for each event in their age group

No qualifying times: Swimmers do not need a time for this event to enter.

League events

These galas are run as team events. Your swimmer will be selected for the competition, and you should respond on Team Unify as soon as possible. If your swimmer is selected and accepts their place, it's important they turn up to the event, we do not take replacement swimmers. If they fall ill, please make sure you contact the club as early as possible, do not leave it to see how they are, we need to be able to take another swimmer and need enough time to do this.

When your swimmer arrives at the venue, they should make themselves known to the team manager who will let them know which races they'll be swimming. Parents, please stay and cheer on the team.

All swimmers should stay to the end of league event as they are team competitions and there are always other Ojays to support and/or learn from. We always finish with a raucous Ojays cheer to celebrate the swimmers' performance.

As a club we compete in the following leagues

Kent Junior League (KJL)

KJL is a league for clubs that come under Kent Swimming and is for swimmers aged 9-13. This is a team event, with the team being chosen by the head coach before the event. There are 4 rounds, each held in different pools across the county. This is a licensed event with times submitted to the rankings database.

Tudor League

The Tudor League is league run for local clubs; we compete against Erith & District, Bexley, Greenwich Royals, Sevenoaks, Dartford District, Tonbridge, and Eltham Stingrays. The events are held at the Crook Log leisure centre in Bexleyheath where clubs take turns to 'host' the events.

National Arena League

The Arena League is a national competition that takes place in October, November and December each year. Our club competes in the Division 1 in the South Region, the level of competition is very high. The top clubs from the leagues are then invited to compete for the League Trophy, this is usually in March of the following year. This is a licensed league where times are submitted to the rankings database.



Club Championships

As a club we organise a series of internal galas which offer valuable racing opportunities throughout the club from Bronze to Masters.

Spread throughout the year Club Champs is made up of 11 licensed competitive galas, which cover all the swimming distances. They form our club championship programme which culminates with our sprint's gala held in December.

Erith & District Swimming Club and Orpington Ojays Spring Meet

Every year at the beginning of March we hold a joint open gala with Erith SC at Crook Log Leisure Centre Bexleyheath. This event should be attended by every swimmer across all squads in club (unless their PB's are outside the qualifying times). This is a fun event with a fabulous team atmosphere, with all 50m, 100m and 200m strokes offered. At present this is the only open gala that the club holds, and it brings valuable funds to the club.

Different types of licensed meets

All licensed meets are subject to Swim England regulations <https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/swim-england-handbook/> and the Swim England technical rules of racing.

They are graded in four levels:

Level 4 meets are entry-level events in pools 25m long. This type of event is usually Club Championships. To compete at this level, you need only be a Club Train Swim England member

Level 3 meets are long (50m) and short course (25m) events, these are intended to enable swimmers to achieve qualifying times for regional and county championships and other level 1 or 2 events. Kent Junior league, and lots of open galas fall here. To compete at this level upwards, you must be a Club Compete Swim England member.

Level 2 meets are short course only (in a 25m pool) and include national, regional and county championships

Level 1 meets are always long course (in a 50m pool) and include national, regional and county championships.

Useful information for galas

The world of swimming competitions can be bewildering if you're a newcomer. If you've got any questions, please have a chat with the committee or any parents or older swimmer – we've all been there and we're always willing to talk you through the galas. Here are some things you need to know:



Racing Suits

When swimmers start their swimming journey there isn't a real need to spend a fortune on a racing kneeskin (girls) or racing jammers (boys). As they progress, you may want to consider buying a racing suit. All the main swimwear companies make suits specifically designed for children, prices can start at around £30 and go up to many hundreds of pounds.

The benefits and why swimmers wear racing suits are that they are designed to improve the swimmer's speed, reduce drag, and enhance buoyancy. They are made using advanced materials and construction techniques that offer a compressive fit, reduced water resistance, and improved hydrodynamics, which helps the swimmer move through the water faster.

These suits are typically made of a combination of synthetic fabrics such as nylon, polyester, and elastane, which provide a snug and streamlined fit. The suits are engineered to compress the muscles, which helps to reduce vibration and improve muscle efficiency. Additionally, they are designed to be low-friction, meaning they create less resistance when moving through the water, resulting in increased speed.

Children's racing suits are designed to fit the unique body proportions of young swimmers. The suits are also designed to provide flexibility and ease of movement while still offering the necessary compression and hydrodynamics.

It is worth noting that racing suits are designed to be worn during competitions only, and not during training. Additionally, as these suits can be quite expensive, it is essential to take proper care of them to ensure their longevity.

There are lots of online suppliers of racing suits. Some of the following are used by members of the club.

Pro Swimwear, Allens Swimwear, SwimPath, eBay is also a great place to look for decent second-hand costumes.

Age groups

Swimmers' age groups in competitions are determined in **two** ways.

The competition will ask for their 'age on day' – how old they are when the competition is taking place.

Or

It will be 'age on 31 Dec' – how old they will be at the end of the year.

So, a swimmer whose 12th birthday is in June, would swim in the 12 years age group in an 'age on 31 Dec' competitions, for the whole of the calendar year

What should I enter at a gala

Galas are a massive part of life as a competitive squad swimmer. They can be rewarding and fun, but children are sometimes nervous about competitions, and parents can find them confusing.

As a new competitive swimmer, it is not a good idea to stick to one or two events only. 50m freestyle is the most popular event at any gala and is probably the hardest event to qualify for at a county level. Try and be as broad in your approach to competition as you can. As a Bronze swimmer you should be setting times in **all** 50m strokes, 100m freestyle, 100m individual Medley and another 100m stroke if you are good at a particular stroke.

As you develop and move through the squads you should be aiming to swim **all events and distances**. The expectations for each squad regarding what they should be entering at galas can be found on Team Unify in the squad criteria.

Don't be afraid to fail, getting disqualified (DQ) is all part of the learning experience and helps you grow as a swimmer. Every single swimmer, even the greatest Olympic athlete, gets disqualified or has been disqualified.

The number of events entered at a competition is generally advised at 2 events per session. Think about the spacing between events and how hard they are to swim. A 200m event is much harder than a 50m event. A balance needs to be met between swimming too much and not swimming enough. We do not recommend swimming just one event at a gala either, you can go to just 1 session but enter a couple of events, unless you are swimming a long-distance event like the 1500m. If there isn't another event in the session that you like speak to your coach and seek their advice. What you think you can do and what the coach thinks you can do will differ. Swimmers should be aiming to cover all the strokes within their squad criteria multiple times over to see their progression.

Personal bests

Swimmers compete against each other, but their real competition is with themselves. They are always aiming to beat their fastest time in an event and improve their personal best (PB). Swimmers' times are available on Team Unify and are also published on the ASA rankings database

Rankings Database

Once you have achieved times at a licensed event your times will appear on the rankings database. This can be accessed here <https://www.swimmingresults.org/>

This is a very useful tool to keep track of your own progress or to see how you rank against other swimmers in all strokes and distances.

To access the data for yourself you can either search by your swim England number or by your surname.

Filters can be applied so that you can search each stroke and distance. You can also search by age, gender, County, Region, GB or Home Nation and club.

Time Conversion

In swimming we have two pool lengths 50m and 25m. As it is harder to swim in a 50m pool, the sport has come up with a formula to convert times for each event and distance which then converts times to the different pool lengths.

For example, a swimmer has a 50m freestyle in a 25m pool of 30.94 seconds. If we are attending a long course (50m) competition the event organisers want to know how that swimmer would perform in the longer pool, so the time is converted this time is now 31.60 seconds.

This also works the other way, if a swimmers PB was set in a long course pool, and we are entering a short course gala the time will need to be converted to a 25m pool time.

You can convert your swimmers' times using Team Unify or the OnDeck app. In the section marked Cool Tools there is a time converter. Enter the time and event and distance and then SCM is 25m pool and LCM is a 50m pool.

Luckily when we are entering galas the system does all this for us but is a useful tool to use if you want to see how they've done relative to their PB set in a different pool length.

FINA points

On the rankings database you will notice that next to your times is a column called FINA points.

FINA points are a scoring system used in all aquatic sports. The system was created by the World Aquatics (FINA) and is used to rank swimmers and determine their relative performance across different events and distances.



FINA points are calculated based on a swimmer's performance in a specific race, taking into account the time they swam, the world record time for that event, and the difficulty of the event itself. The formula used to calculate FINA points varies slightly depending on the event, but generally involves a combination of the swimmer's time, the world record time, and a coefficient that accounts for the event's difficulty.

The basic idea behind FINA points is to provide a way to compare performances across different events and distances, allowing swimmers to see how they stack up against others in their sport. The higher the FINA point score, the better the swimmer's performance is considered to be relative to other swimmers in the same event.

Behaviour at galas

Swimmers are encouraged not to use their mobile phone or other technical devices while at events and they are prohibited in all changing facilities. Instead we ask them to cheer on and support their fellow swimmers from all squads. Please refer to the swimmer code of conduct for more guidance.

Parents' behaviour at galas

Parental support is really important at competitions, but we urge everyone to watch this video to remind us all about how to behave.

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/videos/my-magic-sports-kit/>

Please refer to the parent code of conduct for more guidance.

As swimmers progress, they will start to aim higher than competing at open galas. The following explains the higher levels of competition that the club attends and which our swimmers are expected to aim for.

Kent County Championships (AKA the Kent's)

County championships take place across the country at the beginning of the year. Our county Kent's are usually held at the London Aquatic Centre in Stratford in January and February. They are a level 1 competition and usually held as a long course event.

To be eligible to compete in the Kent County championship a swimmer will only be considered for entry after achieving a qualifying time. The qualifying times are published well in advance of each year's competition, so swimmers know what they're aiming for. Qualification times are split into **two** Consideration times and Automatic times.

Consideration times mean a swimmer will be considered for entry to an event if they have achieved a time within this section. Having a consideration time does not mean you will be accepted.

Automatic times mean a swimmer will be accepted for entry into a particular event

Age groups in the county champs are: 10/11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17+ and age is end of year of the competition,

As a rule the following table shows how many swimmers are selected for entry per age group.

	10/11	12	13	14	15	16	17+
50m events	24	24	24	24	24	19	29
100m events	20	20	20	20	20	16	24
200m events	16	16	16	16	16	14	18
400m events	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
800m events	N/A	10	10	10	10	10	10
1500m events	N/A	5	5	5	5	5	5

Orpington Ojays aims to send a strong team to the Kent's every year, we have a history of performing well at this competition, winning medals across age groups and putting swimmers into lots of finals. With some swimmers winning individual trophies for the best overall swimmer within a specific event.

All swimmers who make it to Kent's can attend our annual Kent parade, where swimmers are announced for the events, they competed in and if they are lucky enough to win a medal, they wear those too. This is usually held a couple of weeks after the competition is over.

Swim England London Summer Championships (AKA Regionals)

Regionals take place during April and May each year and are generally at the London Aquatic Centre Stratford and are a level 1 long course event.

Age groups in Regionals are: 11/12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17+

To compete at regionals swimmers are once again considered for events after achieving a qualifying time. These times are harder than Kent times as this is one step further up the competition ladder. Again, qualifying times are published well ahead of the competition, so swimmers know what they are aiming for. Age is age at end of year.

As a club we aim to send swimmers to this competition every year and have a history of finalists and medal winners.

National Summer Meet (AKA Nationals)

The National Summer Meets form part of the swimming competition structure in Great Britain whereby the top 20 ranked swimmers in each event, age group and gender are invited to compete at the British Swimming Summer Championships.

The next highest ranked swimmers are invited to compete at the Home Nations Summer Championship e.g., English Nationals.

Entry is by invitation only and is taken from the interim rankings. The interim rankings are based on a swimmers' performance at level 1 meets during a qualification window, typically between March and May of the same calendar year. These can be viewed on the rankings database once the qualification window opens.

For British championships age groups are:

Male 14/15 years, 16 years, 17 years, 18 years, 19 years and over

Female*13/14 years, 15 years, 16 years, 17 years, 18 years and over

For the Home Nation Summer Championships age groups are:

Male - 13/14 years, 15 years, 16 years, 17 years and 18+;

Female- 12/13 years, 14 years, 15 years, 16 years, 17 years, 18+

This is the highest level of competition that swimmers in the club aspire to. Every year we aim to send swimmers from our top squads to either the British or a Home Nation Summer National. In 2022 the club had two swimmers compete at British Nationals and two swimmers compete at English Nationals. With swimmers making finals and two medals were won.

London Winter Championships (AKA Winter Regionals)

Winter regionals are a short course competition held in a 25m pool in November each year. It is a tough event to qualify for as there are only 2 age groups 16 & under and 17+. There are qualifying times for this event, and swimmers must achieve these to be considered. Every year Ojays send a team of swimmers to Winter Regionals.

British Championships

This is the very highest level of competition that swimmers can qualify for. It is usually held in April of each year and swimmers are considered after meeting a qualification time. Swimmers that gain entry to this event can swim alongside British Olympic athletes.

Swim England Winter Nationals

This is a short course 25m event held in December each year. It differs from summer National as swimmers are required to swim a consideration time. It is another tough event to gain entry to as again there are only 2 age groups 16& under and 17+

Pathways

There are several pathways open to swimmers as they move through their swimming careers.

Kent Development Camp

To be eligible for this one-day training camp held by the county, swimmers must have competed at the Kent Development Gala usually held in October half term.

This camp is aimed at swimmers aged 10-14 who are looking to qualify for the County championships and offers coached swimming sessions, nutritional advice and strength and conditioning training. There are also workshops for parents which are put on at the same time.

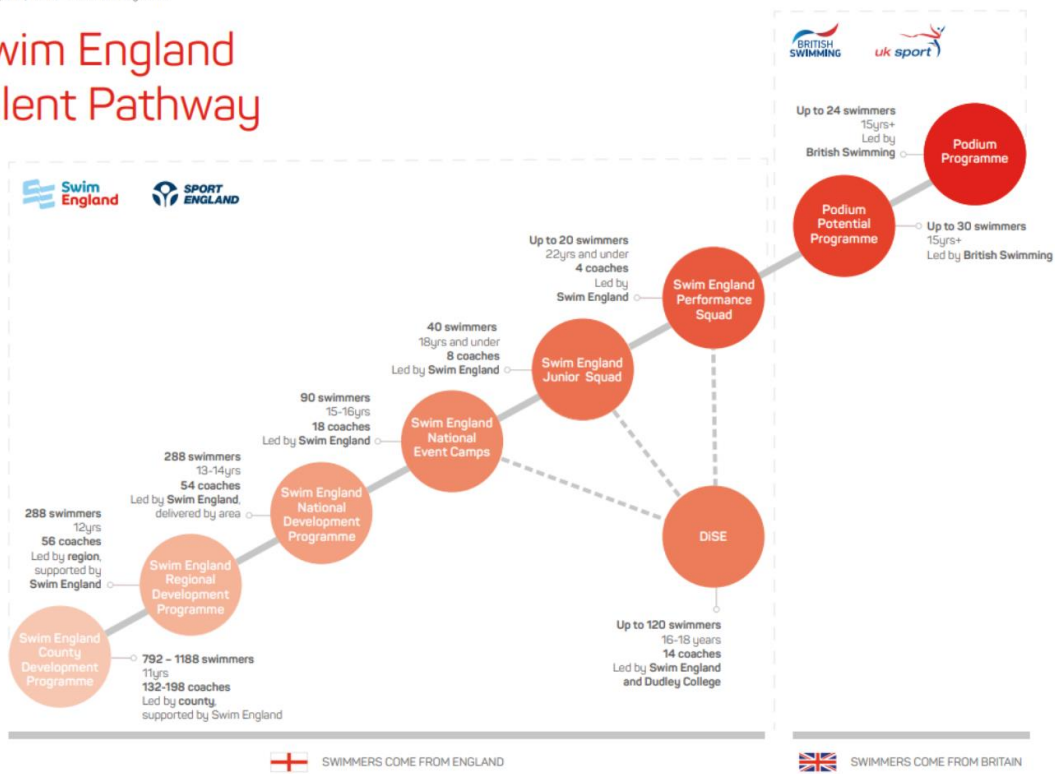
Selection is based on the following criteria:

Each individual swim will attract FINA points. These will be totalled by collecting the best 4 “counting swims” from a maximum entry of 6 events. The 4 “counting swims” must include a minimum of one 50m swim but no more than a maximum of two 50m swims for each swimmer (to encourage swimmers to enter more of the 100m events and the 200IM event as well). Swimmers will be invited to a Development Camp (usually in March of the following year) based on their points scores. Swimmers will be notified and invited as soon as is practicable after the event has concluded. Swimmers who swam in the 2022 County Championships in any event/distance shall not be eligible.

The Club recommends all eligible swimmers attend this gala as it is a great introduction to county competition and provides a fantastic opportunity for possible selection onto the camp. As a club we have a lot of swimmers who have attended this camp and who have gone on to Kent, Regional and National level.

Swim England have an extensive pathway programme open to swimmers from Age 11 upwards. The following details the criteria for selection and the pathways aims

Swim England Talent Pathway



Swim England County Development Programme (CDP)

This is the first step on the National pathway and developed along with the county for swimmers aged 11 at the end of the year of selection

The Programme aims to support swimmers and to:

- Develop fundamental movement skills and core aquatic skills to advance physical literacy
- Develop technical skills across all four competitive strokes
- Develop the characteristics in-line with the age and 'Development' stage of the Optimal Athlete
- Create awareness of Swim England's culture and its associated talent programmes.
- Develop the characteristics in-line with the age and 'Development' stage of the Optimal Athlete Development Framework (OADF)
- Increase opportunities for the workforce delivering at this stage of the pathway, to experience and facilitate an integrated and inclusive training environment.

Selection is based on the following criteria:

Up to 48 swimmers (24 males and 24 females) from each county

If counties do not have the minimum number of swimmers for each gender they can reduce as required, or increase swimmers of one particular gender

The highest long or short course ranked 11-year-old male and female, in **200m Individual Medley** (*It should be noted that long course times recorded during this period will be given priority when selections are being made*)

Times used for selection to the CDP must be taken from the Swim England national rankings, and be achieved between 1st January 2022 and the conclusion of the British Summer Championships 2022 and the Swim England National Summer Meet 2022

Further selections can be made from second, third ranked positions until maximum numbers are achieved. Where swimmers have an equal ranking, selections will be prioritised based upon the highest FINA point score

Any exceptional short course performances can be considered at the discretion of the CDP Head Coach

Swimmers will be selected for their CDP based on the county their club is affiliated to
Swimmers will be expected to commit fully to all aspects of the programme

Swimmers will have worked with their home coach to achieve the standard of **levels 1 & 2** of the **Swim England Club Awards**. Confirmation of these standards being achieved will be signed off by the club head coach

Para-swimmers will be selected nationally by the Swim England Talent Officers/Coaches and selections will be communicated to the respective county

Up to 6 para-swimmers per county (**nationally selected from 2 IPC events** and included within the total of 48 swimmers)

Swim England Regional Development Programme (RDP)

This is the second step on the Swim England Talent Pathway and is developed in partnership with all of the Swim England Regions for swimmers aged 12 years at the end of year of selection.

Programme aims to support swimmers to:

- To further develop fundamental movement skills and core aquatic skills to advance physical literacy
- To further develop technical and skills across all four competitive strokes and turns
- Understand the culture. Of Swim England and its associated talent programmes
- Develop the characteristics in-line with the age and 'Development' stage of the Optimal Athlete Development Framework (OADF)
- Increase opportunities for the workforce delivering at this stage of the pathway, to experience and facilitate an integrated and inclusive training environment

Selection is based on the following criteria:

Up to 48 swimmers (24 male and 24 female) per region

If Regions do not have the minimum number of swimmers for each gender they can reduce as required, or increase swimmers of one particular gender

The highest long course ranked 12-year-old male and female, in **200m Individual Medley**

Times used for selection to the RDP must be taken from the Swim England national rankings, and be achieved between 1st January 2022 and the conclusion of the British Summer Championships 2022 and the Swim England National Summer Meet 2022

Further selections can be made from second, third ranked positions until maximum numbers are achieved. Where swimmers have an equal ranking, selections will be prioritised based upon the highest FINA point score

Any exceptional short course performances can be considered at the discretion of the RDP Head Coach

Swimmers will be selected for their RDP based on the region their club is affiliated to

Swimmers will be expected to commit fully to all aspects of the programme

Swimmers will have worked with their home coach to achieve the standard of **levels 3 & 4** of the **Swim England Club Awards**. Confirmation of these standards being achieved will be signed off by the head coach

Para-swimmers will be selected nationally by the Swim England Talent Officers/Coaches and selections will be communicated to the respective region **see general conditions for more information*

Up to 6 para-swimmers per region (**nationally selected from 2 IPC events** included within the total of 48 swimmers)

Swim England National Age Group Development Programme (NAGDP)

This is the third step on the Swim England Talent Pathway and is managed and delivered by the England Talent Team.

Programme aims to support athletes to:

- Develop technical efficiency and effectiveness across all four competitive strokes
- Develop tactical awareness through development of race process goals
- Develop self-awareness and self-reflection
- Understand how the Swim England inclusion and culture policies encourage access to a supportive and innovative learning environment to all
- Develop the characteristics in-line with 'Future Performance Potential (FPP)' stage of the Optimal Athlete Development Framework (OADF)
- Increase opportunities for the workforce delivering at the FPP stages of the pathway, to experience and facilitate an integrated and inclusive training environment.

Selection is based on the following criteria:

13–14 years of age by 31st December in the year of selection

Up to 288 swimmers selected across six zones

Up to 48 swimmers per zone

Times used for selection to the NAGDP will be taken from the Swim England long course national rankings, and be achieved between 1st January 2022 and the conclusion of the British Summer Championships 2022 and the Swim England National Summer Meet 2022 across Olympic/Paralympic event

Further selections can be made from second, third etc. ranked positions until maximum numbers are achieved. Where swimmers have an equal ranking, selections will be prioritised based upon the highest FINA point score

To be eligible for selection to the NAGDP swimmers will have worked with their home coach to achieve the standard of **levels 5 & 6** of the **Swim England Club Awards**. Confirmation of these standards being achieved will be signed off by the club head coach

Up to 6 para-swimmers per zone (included within the total of 48 swimmers) **see general conditions for more information*

Swimmers will be expected to commit fully to all aspects of the programme

It should be noted that any exceptional performances may be included at the England National Talent Officers/Coaches absolute discretion

As a minimum, standard times will only be considered where they are in excess of the below FINA/BPS points. **Achieving these points does not guarantee selection to a talent programme.**

At the club we have swimmers who have attended multiple levels of the pathway. The Pathways continue on from these three levels, as you can see in the first diagram, but these are the most common ones our swimmers aim for.

Land based strength and conditioning training

Once swimmers leave Bronze-squad and move to Silver and above, strength and conditioning training will be added to their weekly training schedule.

Strength and conditioning training offers many benefits to young swimmers, including:

- Improved strength: Strength training helps young swimmers develop the necessary strength to perform at higher level. This can result in faster times and increased endurance.
- Injury prevention: Strength and conditioning helps swimmers avoid injuries by developing muscular balance and stability, as well as improving joint mobility and range of motion.
- Increased power: Power is essential for swimmers, and strength training can help develop this attribute by building explosive power and speed.
- Enhanced technique: Strength and conditioning training helps swimmers refine their technique and form, leading to improved efficiency in the water.

The club employs a qualified coach to take these sessions.

Nutrition

Nutrition is an important part of your training programme. Eating the right types and amounts of food, as well as drinking enough fluid before, during and after each training session will help you perform better and recover faster between training sessions. It will also help to keep you healthy and reduce your chances of getting colds and other upper respiratory tract illnesses.

Anita Bean March 2018

There is some excellent information about what the swimmers should be eating here:

<https://anitabean.co.uk/nutrition-young-swimmers/>

There is also a great cook book written by **Kate Perry** a nutritionist and parent to swimmers which is full of tips and recipes for your hungry swimmer called ***Go Faster Food for your Active Family***

Snacks for galas

Competitions can last all day, and swimmers will need to keep their energy levels up. Here are some ideas for good snacks to pack to keep your swimmer on top form. While nuts are a good source of energy for swimmers, in case of allergies we ask that no one brings nuts or nut-based products to galas or training.

- Fresh fruit or snack packs of fruit in natural juice
- Vegetable crisps, crackers and bread sticks
- Breakfast cereals (lower sugar varieties such as bran flakes and cornflakes) or premixed cereal drinks
- Yoghurt, custard, rice pudding
- Fruit and grain bars
- Small bars of dark chocolate 80% + cocoa solids
- pretzels or baked crisps
- Fruit bun, tea cakes, hot cross buns
- Rice crackers, rice cakes
- Scones, pancakes
- Milk based smoothie with fruit
- Milkshakes
- Popcorn (homemade is best with no salt or butter)
- Seeds and dried fruit mix

Presentation evening

Every new year we hold a celebration evening, usually in February. This the evening where we celebrate **all** swimmers and their successes throughout the year. Everyone matters at Ojays, from the youngest swimmer to the older more experienced National swimmer. All swimmers' journeys start somewhere, and we celebrate them **all**.

Trophies are presented by the Head Coach to every swimmer who took part in Club Champs and to those who became Club Champions. But there are also *special* trophies too, which are awarded to swimmers for specific achievements. Below is a list of the trophies and what they are awarded for.

- Martin Fowler Trophy – Awarded to a younger swimmer who always gives his/her best in training and galas.
- Powis Trophy – Awarded to a younger swimmer who has improved and shown great promise over the year.
- Wendy Westpfel Trophy - Awarded to a master's swimmer.
- Jill Ivory Memorial Trophy – Awarded for the swimmer with most promising potential.
- Jo Mullins Trophy – Awarded to the Top Swimmer U14.
- John Daniels Trophy – Awarded for all-round excellence.
- Crofton & Guides – Girls Performance during year.
- Crofton & Guides – Boys Performance during year.
- The Head Coach Trophy – Girls, awarded by the Head coach.
- The Head Coach Trophy – Boys, awarded by the Head coach.
- The Commitment Trophy – Awarded for ongoing commitment to swimming and training.

The presentation evening is a **ticket-only** evening that will be held in a hall around the start of the year after the Championship was held.

Team Unify

Team Unify is our swim-club management software and enables us to organise and manage all aspects of running our swim club. It allows the club to securely administer membership details across all squads from Learn to Swim through to Masters, perform gala and event management including online entry and sign up and to look after some financial aspects of the club such as squad and competition entry fees.

On the coaching side we use Team Unify tools to log training attendance and even the actual sets swum in each session, which are recorded against individual swimmers' data. Coaches can then run reports and monitor the progress of swimmers, their gala results and personal bests and check on time improvements.

As a parent you have access to your online account over the internet or by using a mobile app called OnDeck. Which you can download from your App store. You can access and

manage all your important information such as contact details, ASA number, and other details such as important medical information for your swimmer.

You can check up on financial details such as club and gala fees and payments you have made to the club, access all your swimmer's historic results for the last five years, check your swimmer's current personal bests with automatic time conversions, and have access to their coach swimmer review forms.

Volunteering

The club is totally run by volunteers, from the committee to the people you see in white at galas, to the team managers who help swimmers' poolside at competitions. Every single person gives up their time to facilitate the smooth running of the club and the competitions we attend.

Once your swimmer is settled within their squad, please think about the ways in which you can get involved. Without the parents of younger swimmers getting involved the club will eventually run out of volunteers. As swimmers grow up and move on so do the parents. Do not think you don't need to do anything you do!

There are several roles that are very easy to get involved with:

Team Manager: These are the people who supervise swimmers' poolside and get them to their races on time. To become a TM there are a couple of online courses that you would need to attend and then the club undertakes a DBS check. Then you are good to go.

Officials: The people in white beside the pool. There are various levels of official, the first is Judge Level 1 (J1) To become a J1 there is an online course to attend and then you are mentored poolside by qualified J1 officials, completing a series of competencies. Once these are complete, you're given your license and away you go.

Helping at galas like Tudor league or Club Champs

There are all sorts of jobs that need doing when the club enters or runs a gala. They don't need any special skills or knowledge – just enthusiasm and some common sense, that's all. You can find more information about each role on the website but the jobs include supervising the swimmers signing in, taking the entry fee on the door, handing out medals, giving drinks to the officials, or making sure swimmers are ready for their races at the right times. They're easy jobs, but so important, and it's always good fun to be a part of the meet.

Ojays online

We can be found on social media:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/orpingtonojays>



<https://twitter.com/OrpingtonOjays>



<https://www.instagram.com/orpingtonojayssc/>



Social media is a great place to find like-minded swim parents who can provide a wealth of information and advice.

Apart from following our own club social media accounts you may find some of the following useful.

Swim England

British Swimming These can be found on both twitter and Facebook

Kent Swimming This can be found on Twitter

Useful groups on to join on Facebook are:

Swimming equipment buy and sell a great place to find kit

Swim Family UK a great place to meet like-minded parents and ask questions

Swim Parent as above