

Swim4 Advice on Use of Goggles for Swimming Lessons

As a swimming lesson provider, we have no issue with the use of goggles by our learners. However, we wish to advise our pupils, parents/carers of the advantages and disadvantages of using goggles for swimming lessons, so that you can make an informed decision about their use.

The following guidance is based on the STA's advice for use of goggles for lessons, available at: <https://www.sta.co.uk/policies/use-of-swimming-goggles-guidelines-for-parents-and-carers/>.

Advantages

Wearing swimming goggles during prolonged swimming activity to reduce or prevent eye irritation, to improve vision through the water and for medical reasons, are well recognised and supported by STA, Swim England and members of the Swimming Forum. However, if the pool water is maintained in good condition, it should not be necessary to wear goggles if bathers are likely to be in the water for only short periods such as a swimming lesson for beginners.

(STA, 2012)

Disadvantages

There is much in the literature on the teaching of swimming, that goggles should not be worn when children are being taught to swim. It is considered that part of the learning to swim experience is for a child to be able to deal with splashing in the face and the ability to open his/her eyes whilst the face is immersed and swim under water with confidence. Certainly these attributes would improve the child's ability to cope in a water related incident in a canal, pond or river.

(STA, 2012)

Additionally, goggles themselves can be a hazard. Eye accidents can occur through use of poorly made goggles, and during their putting on/removal.

Finally, goggles are often put on incorrectly by the learners, which can cause concern, and take valuable practice time away for goggle fitting/adjustment.

Advice

The STA (2012) provide the following advice:

- There are good reasons why swimming goggles should not be worn during swimming lessons; children and their parents/carers should be informed of these and children encouraged to take part in lessons without the use of goggles.
- It is recognised that for some children, however, medical or associated reasons necessitate the wearing of swimming goggles in order to participate and in these cases carers and/or parents should:
 - Only purchase goggles that meet British Standards
 - Ensure that the goggles fit the child correctly
 - Ensure the child has received adequate instruction, prior to participation, as to the fitting and adjustment of goggles
 - Be aware that teachers will not be responsible for the fitting of goggles to the children.

Reference

STA (2012) Use of Swimming Goggles – Guidelines for Parents and Carers.

Available at: <https://www.sta.co.uk/policies/use-of-swimming-goggles-guidelines-for-parents-and-carers/>. Accessed: 13 August 2018.