GARRAS COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL



Swim Offer



Why water confidence matters

Water confidence is an important life skill that can help keep children safe. At Garras School, we are committed to building every child's development in this crucial area and want every child to feel confident around water. Our swimming offer supports the National Curriculum aim for children to swim 25 metres and develop lifesaving skills by Year 6.

Living in Cornwall, our children have many opportunities to enjoy beaches, pools and other waterside activities. Our offer includes both swimming pools (closed water) and the sea, lakes and rivers (open water), helping children stay curious about these environments while learning to explore them with care.

Children progress at a pace that suits their skills and confidence. They build pool skills before moving on to open-water swimming when they are ready, which takes the children beyond physical swimming into becoming more aware and capable in managing and risk assessing these dynamic environments. Confidence in the pool does not necessarily transfer to confidence in the sea and as such, it is important that children are not exposed to these dynamic environments until they are sufficiently robust and confident enough to manage them. Specialist partners help children understand risks and develop the skills to enjoy these changing environments safely.

Approach

Closed water (pool) swimming lessons

Children who need support with pool confidence or swimming 25 metres will be offered lessons with a qualified coach at Helston Leisure Centre. As an STA partner, we offer progression through the STA stages. Lessons run in 10-week programmes, with one hour of swimming each week. We prioritise children who may need extra support to become confident, competent swimmers by Year 6. Children who are already confident will move to the next suitable stage rather than repeat skills. We also hold water taster sessions at Helston pool for the younger children to build positive early experiences.

Open-water (sea, river, quarry) swimming and surf lifesaving

We are a member of The Schools Co-operative Society Healthy School Youth Sport Trust Silver Quality Mark 2016/19 School Games Silver

Open-water swimming is for children over 8 who are confident in the water and ready for the challenges of weather, wind and tides. Sessions are matched to children's abilities and help them prepare for real-life situations. Surf lifesaving training usually takes place over two days each year throughout Eagle Owls, until children leave school. It combines learning about risks on shore with practising skills in the water. Partners include the RNLI, Surf Lifesaving Clubs, Global Boarders and Elemental.

Sailing and other water sports
We also offer sailing and other water sports with partners such as Children's Sailing Trust (CST, formerly Helford River Children's Sailing Trust) and Kernow Coasteering.
All children over 8 will have the opportunity to join an after-school sailing club and take part in a water-based activity at school camp, either annually or every other year. Returning sailors with CST can progress through the RYA sailing stages.
These activities can also include KS2 children who are still building pool confidence, thanks to the additional safety support provided by our partners, including safety boats and buoyancy aids.

How parents can help
Thank you for your patience as we assess children's needs and organise activities. Our aim is to help every child build water confidence and go beyond the National Curriculum requirements. Groups are based on skills and readiness, rather than year group, while keeping to the age requirements for each activity.
We are grateful to the parents who give their time and support to make these activities possible. The school contributes towards costs wherever possible, but we will ask for voluntary contributions. **These currently stand at £3 per session for pool swimming lessons and £5.40 per session for the after-school sailing club.**
If you can, please support your child with swimming lessons outside school. We understand this is not possible for every family. Positive early experiences in water can help children build confidence.

What happens next
We will write to you with details of activities for your child. Please let us know if your child has swimming lessons and has earned their 25-metre badge, as this will help with our ongoing assessments.
Open-water swimming and surf lifesaving sessions will take place in the summer months for children who are ready for this stage.
Pool lessons will run on a rolling programme from the summer term, starting with children who need support in upper KS2, then working down through the school. As children progress to open-water activities, places will become available for others.

Please get in touch with any questions, feedback or updates about this swimming offer. We look forward to working with you to help your child grow in water confidence and feel courageous when trying new skills at their own pace.

We are a member of
The Schools Co-operative Society
Healthy School
Youth Sport Trust
Silver Quality Mark 2016/17
SCHOOL GAMES SILVER