

We hope that you are all looking forward to the gala on Saturday 10th May.

This is just a short note for a few reminders. **Please read ALL of it carefully.**

Schools, Swimmers, Team Managers and Parents are expected to abide by the ESSA **code of conduct. This gala is run by volunteers. If you have any issues please contact the Referee or Promoter in a respectful manner consistent with the code of conduct.**

Please check the website for the latest updates and any last-minute details.

(<https://southeastsschoolswimming.org.uk/diary.html?opt=detail&id=233>)

Event Details

- **Venue:** Guildford Spectrum Parkway, Guildford, Surrey. GU1 1UP
<https://www.guildfordspectrum.co.uk/the-venue/>
- **Timing:**
 - Doors Open: 17:00
 - Registration 17:00-18:00
 - Warm-up: 17:15
 - Start: 18:25
 - Finish (estimated): 20:00

Before the event:

- Please check the website at in the lead up to the gala, and on the morning of the gala before setting off – all relevant information and latest news will be posted here: <https://southeastsschoolswimming.org.uk/diary.html?opt=detail&id=233>
- **Payment:** Due to increasing costs and lack of revenue streams to fund pool hire and other costs of running this gala, we have had to introduce a charge of £10 per team per event. This needs to be paid in advance:
 - Bank: Lloyds Bank,
 - Account Name: S. E. Schools Swimming Division,
 - Sort Code: 30-80-33
 - Account No: 25202868

An invoice can be provided on request.

- **Officials:** The gala can only run with the support of volunteers. If you have any parents/contacts who are qualified officials, please contact Carole Chaplin at caroleachaplin@gmail.com
- **Withdrawals:** Please advise me if you know you are going to withdraw a team – if known in advance this may save some valuable time on the day.
- **Covid:** Please ensure that swimmers, staff or volunteers that are exhibiting symptoms, or that have been in close contact with others that are suffering do not attend the gala.
- **Travel:** A3 Southwest quadrant slip road closures full weekend closure 9-12 May:
 - Northbound A3 exit slip road, and the clockwise (westbound) M25 entry slip road closure from 9pm on Friday 9 May to 6am Monday 12 May 2025.
 - During this time, you won't be able to leave the northbound A3 or enter the clockwise (westbound) M25 entry at junction 10.
 - The A3 and M25 will remain open, as will all other slip roads, and the possible movements through the gyratory will be:
- **Diversion routes**
 - Northbound A3 to M25 (either direction): Traffic will be diverted up to the Painshill exit to return on the southbound A3 where they can exit at junc-10.

- Entry to the clockwise (westbound) M25: Traffic will be diverted onto the anticlockwise (eastbound) M25 to travel to junction 9 to then return on the clockwise (westbound) M25.
- (see <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/south-east/m25-junction-10/>)
- **Travel2:** For anyone planning to stay overnight and travelling from the northern end of the division, please be aware that the Bracknell half marathon is taking place on the Sunday 11th May and road closures are expected. See <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-transport/highways-public-notice/road-closures>

Arrival:

- **Parking:** At weekends the car park has no zoned restrictions and is FREE. There are 1000 spaces and coach parking is available.
- **Entry to the building:** If you arrive early, please respect the other users of the centre and avoid blocking the facilities/walkways and keep noise to a minimum. There is a reasonable amount of room in the reception area of the pool, however this will fill rapidly with the number of schools we have participating. We should be allowed into the changing area from 17:00.
- **Changing:** Please be aware that we do not have exclusive use of the changing facilities. We recommend that school staff supervise use of the changing facilities by their pupils. Use of Mobile Phones in the changing rooms is totally prohibited. Please inform venue staff/gala organiser IMMEDIATELY of any such use.

Anyone caught, or suspected of, taking photos in the changing area will be reported to the police and excluded from participation in any ESSA events.

Sadly this is an increasing trend and we urge schools to take appropriate precautions.

- **Bags/personal items:** Please ensure swimmers use the lockers to store their bags as there will be limited space poolside. The lockers accept £1 coins. Bags on poolside should be small drawstring or equivalent – schools with excessive bags poolside will be asked to remove them to the lockers to leave space for swimmers.
- **Team Sheet:** Complete and bring with you the Team sheet (Swimmer nomination form available for download from the above link) with swimmers' names and date of birth.
- **Registration:** The team manager should register at the poolside desk (start end of the pool). Please ensure that you bring a completed and signed copy of the team list and have this available to hand-in when you sign-in. A participation certificate is available for all swimmers and should be handed out at registration -please advise the desk how many swimmers are in your squad.
- **Volunteers/Officials:** Please report poolside at the desk near the start end.
- **Teams:** Swimmers should find a space poolside. Schools should be aware that the diving pit and training pool are not supervised areas. Should they locate in the surrounding areas they will need to closely supervise their swimmers and prevent them entering those pools or climbing on any equipment (e.g. diving boards)

Spectators:

- There is a reasonable amount of space for spectators. Parents are not permitted poolside. Entry is by Programme, available for £5. Please have the exact cash available or pay by card.
- As this gala costs quite a lot to run, the only funding we receive is from these programmes and any donations (all gratefully received 😊)

Warm-up:

- Warm-up will be run in accordance with the schedule that will be uploaded to the website before the gala. **All warm-up sessions are under the control of the school's team manager.**
- There is little spare capacity so if you arrive late and miss your slot, please talk to the warm-up marshal.
- Please make sure you are ready at the start of your session and vacate the lane promptly when your session finishes. Unfortunately, we are unable to swap sessions around so please make every effort to make your slot.
- There is to be **no diving during warmups unless announced by the warm-up marshal.**
- Lanes have mixed schools – please plan accordingly to ensure safety and fairness.
- During warm-up, swimmers should avoid blocking the ends of the lanes and swim according to the following convention for safety:
 - Odd numbered lanes : Clockwise (swim on the left side of the lane in direction of travel)
 - Even numbered lanes : Anti-Clockwise (swim on the right side of the lane in direction of travel)
- Please ensure swimmers leave the pool to the sides and DO NOT climb over the pads. These can become loose and cause a hazard or can be damaged at considerable expense to repair.

During the Gala:

- Marshalling: To avoid groups of swimmers hanging around in the marshalling area, there will be no central marshalling this year.
 - Teams are to make sure they are available to swim at the end of their lane in time for their event. Please listen to announcements and anticipate the natural sequence of events. **This is a team manager's responsibility.**
 - Swimmers in leg 1 & 3 of the relay should report to the starting end of the pool, swimmers in leg 2 & 4 should be at the end of their lane at the shallow end of the pool.
 - Due to limited space they should not go too early, and if they are late they may miss their event. There should be space for them to take their position immediately after the start of the preceding race.
- There will be no diving permitted in the shallow end at **any time** during the gala.
 - Swimmers 2 & 4 **MUST** start in the water.
 - Swimmers 1 & 3 may start in the water if they are not confident to start from the blocks.
 - Clarification of the rules for in-the-water takeovers are included in the events conditions (and repeated at the end of this note for convenience)
- No flash photography is to be used at the start of any Heat.
- Swimmers must be quiet and still at the start of each Heat.
- We may be using 'over-the-top' starts for Freestyle events. When the last swimmer in a relay team has completed their swim, they should remain in their lane and hold on to the lane rope and await the start of the next event, or instruction from the referee. The pool will be cleared before the start of a Mixed Stroke event.
- Disqualifications will be announced as soon as practical; clarifications/protests should await the end of the gala to ensure that we can get through the entire programme in the time available.

Programme of Events

- The running order for this gala is:
 1. Small Schools Freestyle Relay Heats
 2. Open Girls Schools Mixed Stroke Relay Heats
 3. Medium Schools Freestyle Relay Heats
 4. Open Boys Schools Mixed Stroke Relay Heats
 5. Small Schools Freestyle Relay **Final**
 6. Open Girls Schools Mixed Stroke Relay **Final**
 7. Medium Schools Freestyle Relay **Final**
 8. Open Boys Schools Mixed Stroke Relay **Final**
 9. Small Schools Mixed Stroke Relay Heats
 10. Open Girls Schools Freestyle Relay Heats
 11. Medium Schools Mixed Stroke Relay Heats
 12. Open Boys Schools Freestyle Relay Heats
 13. Small Schools Mixed Stroke Relay **Final**
 14. Open Girls Schools Freestyle Relay **Final**
 15. Medium Schools Mixed Stroke Relay **Final**
 16. Open Boys Schools Freestyle Relay **Final**
- If there are fewer than 9 teams entered into an event, the heats for that event will not run and the teams will automatically be entered into the final.

After the Gala:

- Please tidy up the area around where your team have been based.
- We try hard to run this event efficiently and fairly, but there are always lessons to be learned. If you have any comments (positive or negative) please pass them back to Phil Williams by email. Please keep them constructive.
- We rely heavily on volunteers to make this event run, many of these have no direct association with a school and give up their own time to help. Please take a little time to let them know you appreciate it.
- Medals will be awarded to the top 3 teams in each final.
 - They are awarded for the 4 swimmers in the team that competed in the final;
 - no additional medals are available e.g. for reserves/swimmers in the heats.
 - They will be available for collection at the end of the gala:
 - they will not be posted on if not collected on the day;
 - please check before you depart.
- Qualifiers for the National Finals round will be advised at the end of each final.
- The National Finals will be held on **14th June** at the Ponds Forge Pool, Sheffield.

Contact details:

- Should you need to contact the organisers on the day, please text **Phil Williams: 07740 102806**; I am likely to be travelling or busy with the event so unable to take your call immediately.

Best wishes and good luck

Clarification of Take-over rules

The rule and guidance used by SE Division for in the water takeovers is set by the ESSA Technical Rules of Swimming, based on guidance from British Swimming:

Interpretation of rules for in the water starts or takeovers:

- 1: In the following text, the ***extended starting platform*** is any of the starting block, the pool wall at the end of the lane, or a pad attached to the pool wall at the end of the lane; Where two hands are in contact, they can be with any combination of the block, wall or pad
- 2: For swimmers starting the race in the water (i.e. 1st leg) at least one hand of the swimmer starting in the water must remain in contact with the *extended starting platform* until the start signal is issued.
- 3: For relay races for swimmers starting their leg (other than 1st leg) in the water, at least one hand of the swimmer starting in the water must remain in contact with the *extended starting platform* until the incoming swimmer has completed their length and touched the end of the lane.
- 4: No physical restraint of the outgoing swimmers intended to prevent that swimmer leaving their starting position before the incoming swimmer has touched the wall is permitted. Any such occurrence may result in the team being disqualified for pace-making (SW 10.16). This includes, but is not limited to, holding any part of the body.

i.e. The team of the swimmer who is starting their relay leg in the water and has neither hand in contact with the extended starting platform before the preceding swimmer touches the end of the lane (before the start signal is given for 1st swimmer if starting in the water) may be disqualified.

Examples: When the incoming swimmer touches, if the outgoing swimmer is:

- Holding with one hand = good takeover – No DQ
- Holding with two hands = good takeover – No DQ
- Not holding with either hand = illegal takeover – DQ

Note: The position of the feet is immaterial to the decision for a swimmer starting their leg in the water.

Final Notes to Schools

The top 3 teams in each event will be awarded medals and invited to represent the southeast at the National round in Sheffield on Sat 14th June.

There is a very short deadline for the SE division to advise the organisers of the National Championships of the nominated teams, so please come prepared to accept/decline your place at that gala if successful. A letter will be handed to each qualifying team – **please ensure that you collect your medals and National Finals letter before departing!**

The gala is being run for the benefit of the swimmers, but must adhere to ESSA Technical Rules of swimming, which are based on Swim England and World Aquatics swimming rules, in the interest of fairness.

- Occasionally infringements lead to disqualifications and it is understood that this can lead to some disappointment.
- Please ensure that all swimmers are familiar with the particular conditions for takeovers at this event (available on the website).
- No diving is allowed at any time at the shallow end of the pool. All takeovers at that end will be in the water.
- Protests can be accepted in accordance with ESSA rules, but these must be made with due respect for the officials.
- Protests will only be accepted if made by the Team Manager. These will be handled by the Referee. The decision of the referee must be respected without harassment. No other officials may be approached by the team manager or parents.
- Appeals in writing may be considered by the promoter. Appeals must be submitted on the day, stating any material facts and legitimate grounds for appeal.
- It should be noted that the rules do not permit the consideration of video or photographic evidence from team managers/parents.