Risk Assessment for Swimming Galas

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Club:	Sussex Schools	Location:	The Triangle, Burgess Hill		
Activity:	Swimming Competitions	Assessor's Name & role:	Phil Williams; Promoter	Date assessed:	Oct 2026

What are the hazards; 1. Who might be harmed 2. How might they be harmed?	What are you already doing?	L: Likelihood (1-5) S: Severity (1-5) R: Risk (LxS 1-25)	What else needs to be done?	by whom?	by when?
General Entry & Exit **1. Who** • Swimmers unfamiliar with building/area **2. How** • Getting lost • Entering wrong area	1. Chance of anyone getting lost; Information pack provided to all participating schools: includes venue layout/directions. 2. School staff remain responsible for their swimmers at all times. 3. Volunteers and School Staff to support swimmers and make sure they know where to go and how to get to the pool 4. Facility Staff and lifeguards available to provide support	L:1 S:1 R:1	Continued Vigilance	• School Staff • Volunteers • Facility Operator	@event
Entrance & reception area **1. Who** • School staff, swimmers, volunteers, general public **2. How** • Slips, Trips & Falls • Emergency exits may be obstructed	1. Check floor is clear; report spillages/ obstacles to reception/facility staff. 2. Lighting Checked by Leisure management Team regularly 3. School staff to supervise their team at all times and ensure no bags to be left in the entrance foyer. 4. All school and facility staff to make sure all emergency exits are clear of any obstruction.	L:1 S:2 R:2	Continued Vigilance	• School Staff • Volunteers • Facility Operator	@event
Early Visitor Entry & Exit **1. Who** • School staff, swimmers, volunteers, general public **2. How** • Slips, Trips & Falls. • Entry into pool water	1. Organisers plan arrival well before schools are advised they can arrive. Schools instructed not to arrive early in the event info pack, 2. Facility staff always on site (typically will be poolside for gala rigging before gala).	L:1 S:2 R:2	Continued Vigilance	• School Staff • Volunteers • Facility Operator	@event
Poolside spectator area **1. Who** • People in spectator area & Volunteers using spectator area. **2. How** • Spectator area surfaces (especially steps down to poolside) may become slippery. • Slips/falls onto hard surface.	1. Gala entry and format restricted to avoid excessive numbers in each session (adequate space poolside for those competing in each half session) 2. Schools advised in information pack of danger and restriction on access to wet swimmers [should not enter spectators' area unless dry and with shoes on] 3. Announcement at start and during gala to remind all present. 4. Transgressors and their school staff reminded of risk. 5. School staff to enforce discipline. **6.** Transit from poolside to spectator area only possible via entrance stairwell [swimmers must be dry and clothed with suitable footwear]	L:2 S:3 R:6	• Continued Vigilance and enforcement of measures. • Schools provided with copy of risk assessment	• School Staff • Volunteers • Facility Operator	@event & pre-event info.

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Swimmers Entry & Exit **1. Who** • Swimmers **2. How** • Young swimmers at risk when alone. • Threat of abduction • Safeguarding issues from strangers in the changing rooms or poolside	1. School staff to supervise their swimmers at all times. [Schools should provide sufficient staff and have protocols in place for changing, toilet breaks, transition to/from dry areas-Poolside]. 2. Volunteers and facility staff to be vigilant for suspicious persons/ unaccompanied swimmers. 3. Access to poolside limited to swimmers, school staff and registered volunteers.	L:2 S:3 R:6	Continued Vigilance	• School Staff • Volunteers • Facility Operator	@event
Changing Rooms. **1. Who** • People in using changing area. **2. How** • changing area surfaces may become slippery. • Slips/falls onto hard surface. • Safeguarding issues for people using changing facilities.	1. Facilities Operator to inspect regularly to ensure floors are clean and dry and cubicles and seating are not damaged. 2. School staff to ensure swimmers put all items not required poolside in lockers & check no items are left in changing area. 3. School staff and Volunteers report damage, spills, contamination or unattended items in changing area to Facilities Operator 4. School staff to supervise their swimmers in changing rooms, which are open to the public. 5. Inappropriate behaviour in the changing rooms should be challenged. **6. Info pack for all schools clearly state that the use of camera/video facilities on any device is strictly forbidden at all times in the changing rooms.**	L:2 S:2 R:4	• Continued Vigilance and enforcement of measures. • Schools provided with copy of info pack and risk assessment	• School Staff • Volunteers • Facility Operator	@event

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Pool Side **1. Who** • People who enter poolside (swimmers, volunteers, School Staff, Facilities Operator Staff) **2. How** • Pool deck surfaces may become slippery. • Slips/falls onto hard surface. • Inadvertent entry to pool • Obstruction to emergency evacuation	1. Facilities Operator to inspect regularly to ensure floors are clean and dry and pool deck and poolside equipment is not damaged. 2. School staff to ensure swimmers put all items not required poolside in lockers & check no items are left in open deck areas obstructing movement. 3. School staff and Volunteers report damage, spills, contamination or unattended items to Facilities Operator 4. School staff to supervise their swimmers poolside. 5. Inappropriate behaviour poolside should be challenged. 6. Lifeguards to be in attendance at all times people are poolside. 7. No running and use of appropriate footwear 8. NO equipment to be placed on pool edge. 9. School staff, Volunteers and Facility operator staff (including lifeguards to enforce NO obstructions to emergency EXITS.	L:2 S:3 R:6	• Continued Vigilance and enforcement of measures. • Schools provided with copy of info pack and risk assessment	• School Staff • Volunteers • Facility Operator • Lifeguards	@event
Equipment **1. Who** • People who enter poolside (swimmers, volunteers, School Staff, Facilities Operator Staff) **2. How** • Exposed damaged lane ropes causing cuts/abrasion • Loose lane rope causing unexpected impact. • Trips over cables • Electrical shock. • Loose equipment causing falls • Backstroke swimmers collision with wall	1. Only essential equipment to be used on pool deck/pool area. Unused equipment to be moved out of area and stored securely by facilities operator 2. Facilities operator to ensure equipment maintenance (Including fixings, timing pads, starting blocks, pool exit steps, lane ropes) • Pool steps and starting blocks are secure and useable. • Line ropes are fixed securely and tight enough. • Fixings that protrude are covered by suitable protective guard (e.g. high-viz safety cone) • Backstroke turn flags to be in position at 5m point (both ends) 3. Facilities operator ensures regular cleaning of all items 4. No mains powered electrical devices to be located within splash zone of pool. 5. Facilities operator to ensure all electrical equipment (AOE, PA etc) is suitable and correctly installed. 6. Referee/volunteers check that electrical cables routed away from transit areas or covered by safety matting. 7. Swimmers to exit the pool only to side; **NOT** over the timing pads	L:2 S:2 R:4	• Continued Vigilance and enforcement of measures.	• Volunteers • Facility Operator • Lifeguards • School Staff	@event

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During Warm-up **1. Who** • Swimmers **2. How** • Collision between swimmers while swimming • Swimmers entry on top of swimmers in the water • Swimmers crossing lanes • Interference between lanes	1. Promoter provides warm-up lane allocation to avoid overcrowding 2. School staff to supervise their allocated lane • No diving during warm-up until announced, then only under school staff supervision • Warm-up lanes swim alternately (anti)clockwise to minimise relative speed of swimmers in adjacent lanes • Sprint lanes 1 direction only • Practice takeovers only under supervision • Care taken of swimmers crossing lanes before dive authorised by lane supervisor • Swimmers to exit the pool only to side; **NOT** over the timing pads 3. Safety announcements before warm up 4. Lifeguards present during all warm-up sessions	L:2 S:2 R:4	• Continued Vigilance and enforcement of measures. • School staff informed of allocation in advance	• Volunteers • School Staff • Lifeguards	@event
Diving **1. Who** • Swimmers **2. How** • Collision with pool bottom • Swimmers slip/fall from starting blocks	1. Facilities operator to ensure adequate signage indicating shallow and deep-water depths and that movable floor at start end is set to suitable depth. 2. Diving only permitted from the deep end 3. Swimmers permitted to start/take-over from pool-end or in-the-water if not competent/confident on blocks (school staff to advise swimmers). 4. Facilities operator to ensure starting blocks are fitted correctly and are maintained with non-slip surface. 5. Referee/starter to ensure swimmers are positioned correctly for race starts 6. Safety announcements before warm-up	L:2 S:2 R:4	• Continued Vigilance and enforcement of measures.	• Volunteers esp. ref/starter • School Staff • Lifeguards	@event

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In the Pool **1.Who** • Swimmers **2. How** • Chemicals in the pool. • Excess Chlorine in Pool (Breathing problems). • Irritation of the eye. • Injury through inappropriate behaviour. • Injury Through Accident or Collision	1. Lifeguards in permanent attendance. 2. Facility operator conducts inspections regularly. 3. Lifeguards, volunteers and school staff to monitor swimmers (e.g. red eyes, breathing, vomiting, vigilance for struggling swimmers) 4. Pool cleared if water is contaminated (gala abandoned if cannot be cleaned immediately) 5. Schools/swimmers to abide by the code of conduct and Guidelines	L:2 S:2-4 R:4-8	• Continued Vigilance and enforcement of measures.	• Volunteers • School Staff • Lifeguards	@event
Dehydration **1.Who** • Swimmers, volunteers, school staff, spectators, facility operator staff. **2. How** • Lack of hydration can cause medical problems • Risk from glass bottle breakage • Risk from hot drink spillage	1. Swimmers advised to drink regularly whilst swimming. 2. Volunteers to bring own drinking container (water bottles provided for those who forget) 3. Lifeguards, volunteers and school staff to be vigilant for signs of affected health 4. Glass bottles not permitted on the poolside. 5. Hot drinks not to be carried in open containers 6. Scolds to be treated immediately by first aid. • Plentiful supply of water available for removing hot fluid and immediate cooling	L:3 S:2 R:6	• Continued Vigilance and enforcement of measures.	• Volunteers • School Staff • Lifeguards	@event
First aid Provision **1. Who** • Swimmers, volunteers, school staff, spectators, facility operator staff. **2. How** • Availability of adequate First Aid to deal with incidents/accidents	1. Facility operator provides fully qualified Lifeguards who are regularly checked and retrained. 2. A fully stocked first aid kit and treatment room is easily accessible. 3. Adequate levels of trained first aiders on site. 4. Communication network in place between facility operator staff and emergency services to be called where appropriate 5. Operated under ESSA safeguarding policy	L:2 S:1 R:2	• Continued Vigilance and enforcement of measures.	• Facility operator • Volunteers • School Staff • Lifeguards	@event

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Major Incidents **1. Who** • Swimmers, volunteers, school staff, spectators, facility operator staff. **2. How** • Fire • Chemical spill • Major incidents e.g. ▪ bomb threat, ▪ lighting failure	1. Facilities operator EOP evacuation plan 2. Poolside safety announcement before warm-up include instruction for poolside and spectator area emergency response. 3. Exits to be kept clear of bags and equipment 4. Pool alarms regularly tested by facility operator 5. Officials briefing by Referee includes location of fire exits and emergency response.	L:2 S:2-4 R:4-8	• Continued Vigilance and enforcement of measures.	• Facility operator • Volunteers • School Staff • Lifeguards	@event

(Score Likelihood & Severity from 1 to 5: Likelihood – 1 = Improbable, 5 = Frequent; Severity – 1 = Negligible, 5 = Catastrophic)