



Blue Squad

06/07/2025 | Information Bundle

Overview

The Blue Squad is a development-focused squad designed for swimmers **aged 9** (by the 31st of December) or older, who are looking to improve technique, endurance, and race skills.

This squad is ideal for those moving on from Learn to Compete Advanced or younger competitive swimmers working towards joining the White Squad or racing at entry-level competitions.

Swimmers in Blue Squad are expected to show good technique foundations, willingness to learn, and a positive approach to training.

Entry Requirement:

Swimmers must have passed **SafelySwim's Stage 5** or be consistently working at **SafelySwim's Stage 6** standard to ensure they have the necessary technique and lane discipline for squad training.

For swimmers joining from outside the SafelySwim Learn to Swim pathway, a water test will be required. This short assessment ensures swimmers are placed in the most suitable squad for their current level, maintaining safety and effective coaching for all.

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Weekly Training Schedule

Tuesday

0600–0730 (Swim)

1800–1900 (Land Training)

Thursday

0600–0730 (Swim)

Friday

1830–1930 (Swim)

- All swim sessions are held at the Duke of York's pool. Tuesday evening land training is held in the Sports Hall.
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Equipment Requirements

Swim Equipment

- Mesh kit bag (to keep all equipment organised)
- Fins (short blade recommended)
- Pull buoy
- Kickboard
- Finger paddles
- Water bottle (minimum 750ml)

Please ensure all equipment is clearly named and brought to every session

Land Training Equipment

- Personal exercise/yoga mat ([Example](#))
- Water bottle
- Suitable training shoes and clothing

Swimmers are expected to take responsibility for their own equipment and ensure it is brought to all relevant sessions.

Attendance and Punctuality Expectations

Swimmers are expected to arrive 10–15 minutes before the scheduled session start time to ensure they are ready to begin promptly. Late arrivals may be turned away at the coach's discretion to avoid disrupting the session.

Consistent attendance is essential to maintain squad standards and support steady progress.

Repeated lateness or unexplained absences may lead to a review of squad placement, including possible movement to a different squad.

Please notify the coach of any illness, injury, or absence as soon as possible.

Squad Progression and Goals

Blue Squad is focused on **skill development, endurance building, and race preparation.**

Swimmers will continue to build technique across all strokes, develop pacing, turns, racing skills, and build fitness to support longer races and more challenging training sets.

Goals include preparing swimmers for progression into White Squad, participating in club competitions, and taking part in development-level meets.

Squad progression is reviewed regularly. Swimmers must maintain expected standards in skill, fitness, attendance, and attitude to remain in Blue Squad.

Competition Expectations

Swimmers in Blue Squad are encouraged to begin competing regularly at suitable meets.

Goals include participation in:

- Club Championships (all relevant events – strongly encouraged)
- Local open meets for experience
- Attendance at Kent Junior League, Arena League or other team events
- Development meets targeting East Invicta Championships consideration times over time

Swimmers should enter a range of events unless specifically advised by the coach.

Meet entries should be discussed with the squad coach to align with training and development goals.

Membership Requirements

All Blue Squad swimmers must hold a valid **Competing Membership.**

For membership details and forms, please email:

WhiteCliffsSCMemberships@gmail.com

- Membership includes insurance, Swim England registration, and eligibility for competitions.
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Club Kit

Swimmers must wear club kit at competitions and any training sessions away from Duke of York's or the home venue.

For ordering or enquiries about club kit, please email:

WhiteCliffsSCKit@gmail.com

- Club kit helps us present a professional, united team image at competitions.
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Expected Dates

Planned Closures

All squads will have some breaks across the year during the following periods:

- Christmas – 2 Weeks
- Easter – 2 Weeks
- Summer – 1 Week

Training Camps

We usually host a training camp each year, usually around the following periods:

- Christmas – 2 days (Duke of York's / Short Course)

Competitions

The main competitions targeted over the year are:

1. Icebreaker - January
2. Club Championships – July–August
3. East Invicta Championships – October–November

There will be other competitions throughout the year for qualifying, tracking progress, and practising race skills.

Cost

Swimmers attending all scheduled hours are charged **£4.75 per hour**.

To keep things simple and consistent for everyone, we no longer calculate fees month by month based on individual attendance. Instead, payments are averaged across the full year.

This annual calculation removes **5 weeks** to account for breaks and possible cancellations:

- 2 weeks for Christmas
- 1 week at Easter
- 1 week in summer
- 1 additional week for unforeseen cancellations or pool closures

The resulting annual total is then divided into **equal monthly payments**. This approach ensures predictable, even payments throughout the year and avoids variation due to planned closures or occasional missed sessions.

- For any questions about payments or to discuss your swimmer's fees, please contact the Admin team at:
competitive@safelyswim.co.uk

Expectations for Parents

While the swimmers are at the centre, parents play a crucial role in making their journey successful and enjoyable.

To best support your swimmer, please see our **11 top tips** for being the best 'swim parent' you can be:

1. **Supporting your swimmer's punctuality and attendance**, consistency is the key to progress!
2. **Encourage, and display positive behaviour** in training and at galas
3. **Support anything your swimmer has done**, whether at training or at competition, good or bad. Leave the coaching and feedback to the coaches! Celebrate effort and improvement over just results.
4. If you can, there are many **volunteer roles at the club**, from officiating to managing the team. It's a great way to support the club, and get an insight into your child's passion
 - For more info, please email WhiteCliffsSCCoordinator@gmail.com
5. **Respect Coach's/ Team Manager's decisions**, 99% of the time there is a reason for decisions made, and 99% of these are for the benefit of your swimmer! If you have concerns, raise them respectfully and privately at appropriate times.
6. **Spectating Etiquette** Follow club guidelines for poolside behaviour. Support your child from designated areas without distracting swimmers or coaches.
7. **Communicate Changes Promptly** Inform coaches about absences, illness, injuries, or any special needs as early as possible. This helps with session planning and swimmer welfare.

8. **Manage Expectations** Understand that progression and results take time. Encourage your child to enjoy the process and focus on personal bests and development.
 9. **Promote Healthy Lifestyle Habits** Support your swimmer in maintaining a balanced lifestyle including nutrition, rest, and recovery, which are vital for training and performance.
 10. **Encourage Self-Responsibility** Help your swimmer take responsibility for their equipment, kit, and personal organisation.
 11. **Stay Informed** Read all communications from the club and respond to requests promptly to avoid missing important information.
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Club Contacts

Emails:

Head Coach – Lee Shepherd

- lee@safelyswim.co.uk

Welfare Officer – Michaela Sonnen

- WhiteCliffsSCWelfare@gmail.co.uk

Admin (subscriptions) – Danika Donnelly

- competitive@safelyswim.co.uk

Secretary – Gillian Shepherd

- WhiteCliffsSCSecretary@gmail.com

Treasurer – Diane Crepin

- WhiteCliffsSCTreasurer@gmail.com

Chairman – Ian Walsh

- WhiteCliffsSCChairman@gmail.com

Volunteer Coordinator – Alexa Clements

- WhiteCliffsSCCoordinator@gmail.com

Memberships – Sharon Stoakes

- WhiteCliffsSCMemberships@gmail.com

Kit – Tina Williams

- WhiteCliffsSCKit@gmail.com

Club Coach – Charlie Hill

- Charlie@safelyswim.co.uk

Website

<https://whitecliffsswimmingclub.safelyswim.co.uk/>

Facebook

https://www.facebook.com/p/White-Cliffs-Swimming-Club-100094744923848/?locale=en_GB

Additional Notes

Code of Conduct: Agreed as part of the membership form. Covers behaviour expectations in training, competition, and club events.

Club Policies: Agreed as part of the membership form. Includes safeguarding, anti-bullying, and other key guidelines.

Swimmers and parents are expected to be familiar with all rules and policies for both White Cliffs Swimming Club and SafelySwim.

<https://bookings.safelyswim.co.uk/policy/>