



## Learn to Compete - Beginner

06/07/2025 | Information Bundle

## Overview

Learn to Compete – Beginner is designed for swimmers **Age 7** (by the 31<sup>st</sup> of December) or older, who have begun to get used to swimming multiple lengths in their swimming lessons and are ready to start learning the basics of squad swimming, lane etiquette, and introductory racing skills.

**Entry Requirement:** Swimmers must be at least **50% through SafelySwim Stage 4**. Those joining from outside SafelySwim's Learn to Swim pathway will need a **water test** to confirm they meet the required Stage 4 standard.

**Important:** Swimmers in Learn to Compete Beginner **must also continue attending a SafelySwim Stage 4 or 5 class** alongside their LtC training to ensure consistent skill progression.

This squad serves as a friendly, supportive environment where swimmers gain confidence and foundational skills necessary for progressing into LtC Advanced.

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## Weekly Training Schedule

### Monday

1800–1900 (Swim)

- All swim sessions are held at the Duke of York's pool.
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## Equipment Requirements

### Swim Equipment

- Mesh kit bag (to keep all equipment organised)
- Pull buoy
- Kickboard
- Water bottle (minimum 750ml)

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

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## Attendance and Punctuality Expectations

Swimmers should arrive 5–10 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.

Regular attendance is important to build confidence and skills.

Repeated lateness or unexplained absences may lead to a review of squad placement.

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

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## Squad Progression and Goals

Learn to Compete – Beginner is aimed at developing early technique, improving stroke efficiency, introducing lane swimming rules, and teaching basic race skills (starts, turns, finishes).

Goals include preparing swimmers to progress into **Learn to Compete Advanced**, and participating confidently in introductory-level club events.

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

## Competition Expectations

Swimmers in Learn to Compete Beginner are encouraged to participate in club events appropriate to their level to gain early race experience.

Goals include:

- Participation in Club Championships (encouraged)
- Attendance at introductory or internal fun meets and galas

Swimmers should discuss events with the coach to ensure suitability.

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## Membership Requirements

All swimmers in Learn to Compete Beginner must hold a valid Training Membership.

For membership details and forms, please email:

[WhiteCliffsSCMemberships@gmail.com](mailto:WhiteCliffsSCMemberships@gmail.com)

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

Swimmers should 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](mailto: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

## Competitions

Main competitions targeted over the year:

1. Club Championships – July–August

2. Goldfish Galas – Few across the year  
Other suitable introductory events will be recommended during the year.

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### Cost

Swimmers attending all scheduled hours are charged **£10.50 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 6 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 ensures predictable, even payments throughout the year, avoiding variation due to planned closures or occasional missed sessions.

- For questions about payments or to discuss your swimmer's fees, please contact the Admin team at:  
[competitive@safelyswim.co.uk](mailto:competitive@safelyswim.co.uk)
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### 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 little (or not so!) one, please see our 11 top tips to 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](mailto: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](mailto:lee@safelyswim.co.uk)

**Welfare Officer** – Michaela Sonnen

- [WhiteCliffsSCWelfare@gmail.co.uk](mailto:WhiteCliffsSCWelfare@gmail.co.uk)

**Admin** (subscriptions) – Danika Donnelly

- [competitive@safelyswim.co.uk](mailto:competitive@safelyswim.co.uk)

**Secretary** – Gillian Shepherd

- [WhiteCliffsSCSecretary@gmail.com](mailto:WhiteCliffsSCSecretary@gmail.com)

**Treasurer** – Diane Crepin

- [WhiteCliffsSCTreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:WhiteCliffsSCTreasurer@gmail.com)

**Chairman** – Ian Walsh

- [WhiteCliffsSCChairman@gmail.com](mailto:WhiteCliffsSCChairman@gmail.com)

**Volunteer Coordinator** – Alexa Clements

- [WhiteCliffsSCCoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:WhiteCliffsSCCoordinator@gmail.com)

**Memberships** – Sharon Stoakes

- [WhiteCliffsSCMemberships@gmail.com](mailto:WhiteCliffsSCMemberships@gmail.com)

**Kit** – Tina Williams

- [WhiteCliffsSCKit@gmail.com](mailto:WhiteCliffsSCKit@gmail.com)

**Club Coach** – Charlie Hill

- [Charlie@safelyswim.co.uk](mailto:Charlie@safelyswim.co.uk)

#### Website

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

#### Facebook

[https://www.facebook.com/p/White-Cliffs-Swimming-Club-100094744923848/?locale=en\\_GB](https://www.facebook.com/p/White-Cliffs-Swimming-Club-100094744923848/?locale=en_GB)

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### **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/>