

## *Winter Newsletter 2018*

After a glorious summer we are having a wonderful Autumn, trees looking simply splendid with their changing colours and the warmer weather has been most welcome as we head into darker days and longer nights and hopefully no recurrence of the Beast from the East for a while! Returning to school or starting school has seen the usual crop of illnesses occur, if your child is unwell please do keep them at home as swimming will tire them even more and cause them to take longer to recover back to full health. There has also been a verruca infection, if your child has a verruca it is important for them to wear a shoe, croc or sandal to the pool side as verrucas spread on land but not in the water. Covering them with a product like Bazuka the Verruca is also a good idea as it provides a seal over the verruca.

We spent the beginning of the term building breath control, to help your child with this it is advised to practice blowing bubbles as often as possible. To start just blowing bubbles with the mouth in the water and gradually building up to whole face in. Exhaling in the water allows for better breathing and the greater the breath control the more time it allows for good stroke development.

Pupils have been focusing on front crawl, from the very basics of the pull to the more advance high elbow drills, kicking with extended legs kept close together and feet always at the surface. Long arms and heads flat on the water when breathing with eyes looking back to encourage neck flexibility. Butterfly kicking and arms were also a focus with the middle and upper levels, whilst others continued to develop water safety skills with floating, submerging and moving into the float position with the chin down to surface quickly as well as treading water and then moving into the float position and from there into the swimming position. These skills are vital as if ever out of their depth we are trying to teach pupils to stretch forward into a float which will allow them to come to the surface quickly and be able to breathe, doing these skills repeatedly to become part of their muscle memory helps to prevent panic. When taking your child swimming do encourage them to show you these skills as well as letting them play in the water within their depth to build confidence in their skills.

We are now working on backstroke, sculling for the younger ones, floating and rotations. Middles and seniors are also focusing on the more advanced catch and pull of the stroke. Kicking for all is with extended legs with feet kept close together and the use of the bands with the middles and seniors is proving hugely beneficial as it develops an even kick, otherwise the dominant leg constantly works leaving the body unbalanced.

Backstroke helps develop balance. To swim efficiently it is vital to master balance first. Becoming proficient in backstroke helps alleviate drag as hips and legs no longer sink beneath the surface, this sinking causes endurance to be sapped as arms and legs are so preoccupied in fighting sinking that they are seriously limited in their ability to aid in streamlining or propulsion. In backstroke the aim is to stretch the body as straight as possible, keeping the chin up to aid buoyancy and the legs kicking in a long extension, feet pointing and moving rapidly and close together at the surface. Arms start with the lift before the pull, as in front crawl but using opposite muscles so overall strength and flexibility is improved. Many little ones do take a few sessions to get used to the water entering their ears and this is where the latex caps do help.



Chin is up to aid buoyancy and to allow good shoulder movement.

All pupils are learning to rotate from back to front, using their heads to start the movement and trying to keep their bodies straight, rather than using hips and legs to lead the turn. Rotations are part of the approach for tumble turns but more importantly play a vital part in water safety. Being able to rotate onto the back means being able to breath and rest whilst sculling to keep moving and then rotating back into a frontal swimming position to keep swimming. This enables a swimmer to conserve energy and keep calm in the event of being out of depth or falling into a body of water.

Breaststroke arms and leg kick is also a focus area, many struggle to keep their feet flexed throughout the kick leading to uneven and limited forward movement. Here the on the wall drills help provide a physical cue of how the feet flex. Seniors are developing the breathing by using a wider pull to lift the body higher and are trying to keep eye line on the water to enhance streamlining.



Eyes looking at the water, breathing in the pull which lifts the body high in the water.

Dates for the diary –

Half term 21/10 – 28/10

Renewal fees £82.50 for the term starting week 14/1 are due by 17/11. Bacs details are – sort 089250, acc 68306351

Coaching and Adult lessons end 15/11 and resume week 14/1

This term ends Saturday 1/12/18

Lovely to see all new pupils have settled in well, drills will be new to many and progress is already noticeable as bodies have become more streamlined. We look forward to everyone's continued hard work and progress.