



ENGLISH SCHOOLS' SWIMMING ASSOCIATION

Patron: H.R.H. The Prince of Wales

Primary Schools' Team Championships

1) Regulations (Effective from January 2026)

The Primary Schools' Team Championships shall take place under Swim England Judicial Regulations and Technical Rules of Swimming as amended by the ESSA Technical Rules of Swimming for these championships (see website for details).

Conditions for Para events are included in Attachment A.

2) Eligibility

- Entry is open to all Schools in England.
- Competitors must be 'on the roll' of the school entering the Championship and in full-time attendance there on the closing date for Divisional entries.

3) Transfers

- Pupils that transfer from one school to another between qualification stages and the Championship finals are only eligible to swim for the school for which they were first entered.

4) Age

- Competitors must be aged 9 or 10 years as at midnight August 31st/September 1st at the commencement of the academic year of the Championships.

5) Control

- The sole control and management of the Championship Finals will be in the hands of the ESSA events team on behalf of the ESSA Council.
- Arrangements for all qualification stages of the Championships up to and including Divisional Rounds will be in the hands of the ESSA Divisions.
- The organiser of each qualification gala may impose additional conditions to ensure the safety and smooth running of the gala, and support for fair selection of Divisional entries to the Championship Finals.
- In the qualification stages, schools will have at least two weeks' notice of the date, time and venue.

6) School Size Categories

- For the purpose of these Championships there will be three entry categories:
 - Small Schools** are defined as those which have no more than a combined total of 65 eligible to compete in curriculum years 5 and 6.
 - Large Schools** are defined as those which have a combined total of 66 or more eligible to compete in curriculum years 5 and 6.
 - Open Schools** are defined as being those from any size school.
- Schools may enter only one category and cannot change category in the year of competition after their first qualifying stage.
- School size is determined at the point of entry for the first qualifying stage.

7) Entries

- Entries shall be made through the ESSA Division in which the school is located.
- Divisions may select up to three teams to compete in each of the championship events.
- Entries shall close on a date set by the Division and must be made on the official entry form, obtained from and returned to the representative of the Division. It is the responsibility of the school organiser to ensure that the Head Teacher is aware of the swimmers' participation.
- Events:** (Note: all events are team events and are 4x25m)
 - Small Schools** may enter:
 - one Freestyle team of 4 boys, or 4 girls, or any combination of both;
 - one Mixed Stroke team of 4 boys, or 4 girls, or any combination of both;
(stroke order: Backstroke, Breaststroke, **Any Stroke**, and Front Crawl).
 - Large Schools** may enter:
 - one Freestyle team of 4 swimmers comprising 2 boys and 2 girls, or 3 of one gender and 1 of the other gender;
 - one Mixed Stroke team of 4 swimmers comprising 2 boys and 2 girls, or 3 of one gender and 1 of the other gender;
(stroke order: Backstroke, Breaststroke, **Butterfly or Breaststroke** and Freestyle*).

- iii) **Open Schools** may enter:
 - (1) one Freestyle team of 4 boys;
 - (2) one Freestyle team of 4 girls;
 - (3) one Mixed Stroke team of 4 boys;
 - (stroke order:** Backstroke, Breaststroke, **Butterfly or Breaststroke** and Freestyle*);
 - (4) one Mixed Stroke team of 4 girls;
 - (stroke order:** Backstroke, Breaststroke, **Butterfly or Breaststroke** and Freestyle*).
- * Freestyle in Mixed Stroke events is defined as any stroke other than Backstroke, Breaststroke or Butterfly.
- e) Multiple entries in the same event may be made by a school in the qualification stage, subject to any constraints set by the gala organiser.
 - i) The school must nominate an 'A Team' at entry, this team is the only team in this event that will be considered for selection to the National Finals.
 - ii) No other team that has been entered by the school in that event will be considered if the nominated 'A Team' is disqualified or otherwise does not qualify for the finals.
 - iii) The school must submit the nominated 'A Team' list prior to the start of each competition.
- f) Each competing team in the national final will be charged a fee per team swim to compete in the national finals in addition to the fee that was collected during the qualification round.

8) **Team Lists**

- a) At each gala a signed team nomination form shall be handed to the Organiser by a representative of the School. The form shall include:
 - i) the names and dates of birth of all swimmers representing the school, and
 - ii) a statement certifying conformity with these conditions.
- b) Substitution of reserves is permitted between each gala, and between heats and finals. The names and dates of birth must be included in the relevant signed form in 7)d)iii)a) above.
- c) Changes of swimmers in a team is permitted between the Qualification round and the Championship finals.
- d) Competitors may swim in both the freestyle and medley relays.
- e) Competitors may swim in any order, provided the strokes of the medley relay are swum in the correct order.

9) **Conduct of the Championships**

- a) **Notification**
 - i) Divisional representatives shall submit full details of divisional results to the Hon. Primary Team Championships Organiser (National Organiser) by the date set by the national organiser, typically the end of the first weekend in May.
 - ii) Times submitted should be recorded to one hundredth of a second on the official form for each school.
 - iii) Where Divisions organise heats and finals for their rounds, only the heat times are to be submitted.
 - iv) The School details including contact details (e.g. address, telephone number(s) and email address(es) must accompany divisional entries.
- b) **Pool Length**
 - i) 25m pools will be used at all stages of the Championship.
 - ii) Each swimmer will swim one length.
- c) **National Finalists**
 - i) The National Organiser will select only on entries submitted by the divisional representatives on the official form, nominally the 3 fastest teams in each event in each division to swim in the National Finals.
 - ii) The number of teams invited to swim in the National Finals may be limited to ensure the safety and efficiency of the championship competition.
 - iii) Additional teams can be selected to fill vacant lanes at the discretion of the National Organiser.
 - iv) The Divisional Representatives will notify all finalists direct. All other schools may obtain results from their Divisional Representative or the ESSA website.
 - v) A requirement of qualifying to compete in the National Finals is the return of the acceptance form not later than the date specified on the form. After this date reserve teams may be invited.
 - vi) Where Reserves are called up, these shall be from those listed on each Division's official entry form and will be contacted directly by the National Organiser.
 - vii) Where further reserves are required beyond those stated on the official entry form, the National Organiser may use their discretion to contact further schools to fill available spaces in each event. This should be based on times achieved in each division's full results where practical.

viii) Code of Conduct

ix) All participants (swimmers, parents, school/team staff, officials, organisers) are expected to abide by the relevant code of conduct as published on the ESSA website (About Us | Welfare Policy)

d) Parade

i) Each Team should nominate a Team Captain who will take part in the Team Captains' parade at the commencement of the Championships.

10) Awards

a) National Final of the Championships:

i) Teams placed 1st, 2nd and 3rd :

(1) Each member of these teams will be awarded a Championship medal.

(2) The School will be awarded a commemorative plaque to be held permanently.

ii) Challenge trophies will be awarded to the winning school in each event.

iii) The Presidents' Award will be given to the highest placed state-funded school in each event,

(1) Each member of these teams will be awarded a medal.

(2) The School will be awarded a commemorative plaque to be held permanently.

iv) Council may issue awards at other levels of the Championships, at its discretion.

b) Qualifying stages:

i) Awards at galas during the qualifying stages is at the sole discretion of the organiser of that gala.

11) Expenses

i) Each competing school will be responsible for its own expenses.

12) Responsibility

a) At least one qualified school teacher, or suitable adult as approved by the Head of the School, must accompany each team at each stage of the competition.

i) The accompanying adult(s) shall act as Team Managers and be responsible for the welfare of their team

ii) Sufficient Team Managers shall be provided by the school to cover the welfare needs of the teams, bearing in mind that larger school entries (e.g. comprising four teams) may be located off-poolside.

iii) The number of Team Managers for each school may be limited but consideration for a safe ratio of Team Managers to swimmers will be accommodated, taking into account the venue layout.

b) Adults accompanying a team may be required to complete an accreditation process as directed by the organiser.

13) Photography/Video

a) An official photographer may be used during Championship events; selected photographs will be made available for purchase from a password protected website and may be used for promotional purposes.

b) Championship events may be videoed with images streamed live to the internet and made available for later playback. Access is not password protected.

c) Schools must make sure that parents of swimmers are made aware and any welfare or privacy issues raised with the organisers and/or the ESSA welfare officer as required on the entry details for each gala.

d) Any child welfare/protection issues that arise subsequent to the gala should be raised to the attention of the ESSA welfare officer at the earliest opportunity.

Attachment A: **Primary Schools' Team Championships (Para events)**

P1) Regulations

The para events shall form part of the Primary Schools' Team Relay Championships following the relevant parts of the World Para Swimming Rules:

- a) Swimmers may dive into the pool providing the Team Manager is aware of their capabilities.
- b) There will be no disqualifications for stroke infringements in the Para events.

P2) Eligibility

- a) Entry is open to all ESSA Divisions.
- b) Competitors must be 'on the roll' of a School located within the Division entering the Championship and in full-time attendance there on the closing date for Divisional entries.

P3) Transfers

- a) Pupils that transfer from one division to another between qualification stages and the Championship finals are only eligible to swim for the division for which they were first entered.

P4) Age

- a) Competitors must be aged 9 or 10 years as at midnight August 31st/September 1st at the commencement of the academic year of the Championships.

P5) Control

- a) The selection of a Divisional team entry is under the sole control and management of the relevant ESSA Division. The Para team will sit with their Division wearing Divisional shirts.

P6) Para Category groups

- a) Category Groups
 - i) **Group A – Severe Motor Difficulties**
 - (1) Quadriplegia, Tetraplegia or multiple amputee/ dysmelia (all 4 limbs affected)
e.g. Cerebral Palsy, Spinal Cord Injury, Polio, Arthrogryposis.
 - (2) Any others with a severe impairment.
 - ii) **Group B – Moderate Impairments**
 - (1) Wheelchair users (2 limbs affected)
e.g. Cerebral Palsy, Spinal Cord Injury, Polio, Spina bifida.
 - (2) Achondroplasia - restricted growth i.e. dwarfism.
 - (3) Hemiplegia - affects predominately same side.
 - (4) Double amputee/ dysmelia.
 - (5) Visually impaired since birth – no functional vision.
 - (6) Any others with a moderate impairment.
 - iii) **Group C – Minimal Impairments**
 - (1) Single limb amputee/ dysmelia.
 - (2) Single limb paralysis or severe joint restriction.
 - (3) Visual Impairment – some vision.
 - (4) Learning Disability – one swimmer per team, per event (in practice this means that it is likely that young people will be from an MLD special school setting, or within an MLD unit of a mainstream school, or with Downs Syndrome.)
 - (5) Any others with a minimal impairment.

b) The following impairments do not meet the eligibility criteria for Para Swimming:

ADHD	Aspergers	Asthma	Autistic Spectrum	Deafness
Epilepsy	Cystic Fibrosis	Diabetes	Dyspraxia	Haemophilia
Hydrocephalus	Obesity	Scoliosis	Transplants	

- c) Swimmers may be classified or unclassified on the date of the competition.

P7) Entries

- a) **Each Division** may enter:
 - i) one Freestyle team of 4 boys, or girls, or any combination of both;
 - ii) one Mixed Stroke team of 4 boys, or girls, or any combination of both
(stroke order: Backstroke, Breaststroke, **Any Stroke**, and Front Crawl).
 - iii) Additional teams may be accepted subject to available space and at the sole discretion of the championship organiser.

- iv) **Teams** should consist of:
 - (1) 4 swimmers plus 1 or 2 reserves, if thought necessary.
 - (a) 1 swimmer from group A or B category
 - (b) 3 swimmers from group A or B or C category.
 - (c) Reserves should come from A or B category so that they can cover any withdrawal from the team.
- b) Divisions whom are unable to find 4 athletes may join with other divisions to form a combined team.
 - (a) In the absence of sufficient para teams to form a suitable competition opportunity, the events team may, at their sole discretion, replace the Para team events with 25m individual events.

P8) Team Lists

- a) At each gala a signed team nomination form shall be handed to the Organiser by a representative of the Division. The form shall include:
 - i) the name, date of birth and Para category of all swimmers representing the division (mark 'LD' on team sheet for Learning Disability swimmer);
 - ii) A statement of swimmers' specific needs including:
 - (1) whether any swimmers require a helper/carer with them;
 - (2) whether a visually impaired swimmer requires a tapper;
 - (3) whether a hoist is required or other specific pool entry/exit needs;
 - (4) whether any swimmers will be using a wheelchair and need extra space on poolside
 - iii) a statement certifying conformity with these conditions.
- b) Substitution of reserves is permitted between each gala, and between heats and finals. The swimmer details must be included in the relevant signed form in P8)a) above.

P9) Conduct of Championships

- a) **Notification**
 - i) Divisional representatives shall submit full details of divisional entry to the Hon. Primary Team Championships Organiser (National Organiser) by the date set by the national organiser.
 - ii) Times submitted may be based on estimates and are for information only.
- b) **Pool Length**
 - i) 25m pools will be used at all stages of the Championship.
 - ii) Each swimmer will swim one length.
- c) **National Finalists**
 - i) No preliminary rounds for para events are anticipated. National Finalists will be those as submitted on the entry form by each Divisional representative.
- d) **Code of Conduct**
 - i) All participants (swimmers, parents, school/team staff, officials, organisers) are expected to abide by the code of conduct as published on the ESSA website (About Us | Welfare Policy)
- e) **Parade**
 - i) Each Team should nominate a Team Captain who will take part in the Team Captains' parade at the commencement of the Championships.

P10) Awards

- a) National Final of the Championships:
 - i) Teams placed 1st, 2nd and 3rd :
 - (1) Each member of these teams will be awarded a Championship medal.
 - (2) Council may issue awards at other levels of the Championships, at its discretion.
- b) Qualifying stages:
 - i) Awards at galas during the qualifying stages is at the sole discretion of the organiser of that gala.

P11) Expenses

- a) Each competing division will be responsible for its own expenses.

P12) Responsibility

- a) A suitable adult as approved by the Division, must accompany each team at all stages of the competition.
- b) Adults accompanying a team may be required to complete an accreditation process as directed by the organiser.

P13) Photography/Video

- a) Please note the statement and obligations in 13) above.
- b) Divisions must make sure that parents of swimmers are made aware of these conditions and any welfare or privacy issues raised with the organisers and/or the ESSA welfare officer as required on the entry details for each gala.