



Chase Swimming Club FAQ's Competitive Swimming





Club Policy Statement

It is the policy of Chase Swimming Club to offer opportunities for athletes within age group level, youth level, and open categories.

The Club's development programme for those members who wish to compete competitively is based upon the Amateur Swimming Association's Swim 21 Skill Development Programme.

About Chase Swimming Club

Location

Chase Swimming Club is based at Cheslyn Hay Leisure Centre and serves Cannock and all surrounding areas. We also train at Chase Leisure Centre (Cannock), Rugeley Leisure Centre and Darlaston Leisure Centre

Affiliation

The Club is affiliated to West Midland Region & Staffordshire Swim England

Administration

An elected committee manages the Club. Meetings are held each month. The swim programme is overseen by the Head Coach, Paul Grainger.

Club Constitution

The Club's rules are defined in the constitution. A copy of the constitution can be obtained from the secretary on request.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting is held in June. All parents and members are welcome to attend.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I apply to join?

Swimmers wishing to join Chase Swimming Club must apply for a 'trial' through the Contact Page on the website.

How much does it cost?

There is an annual membership charge due on joining the Club and renewed thereafter in January of each year. This charge includes the Registration Fee which the Club pays to the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA), Region and County. There are also monthly fees with the rates determined by the Club Committee and reviewed annually, or as necessary.

Can I pay monthly?

Yes. You need to pay the annual membership in one advance payment but the squad fees must be paid by monthly direct debit.

The monthly fees are due every month in full and have been calculated as 1/12 of the annual fee. The fee does not change due to holiday, sickness, injury, pool closure etc. Should a swimmer be affected by a long term illness then a break from fees may be authorised by the committee. Full details are to be submitted in writing. Payments are to be made by direct debit only for all swimmers and must be presented to your bank for payment on the 15th of each month for that month's swimming. Payment by cheque or cash may be approved by the committee in exceptional circumstances only.

What do my fees pay for?

Your fees mainly cover the hire of the pool and basic expenses incurred by coaching staff. Many of the people that you see poolside are volunteers, and galas / club events only run because people are prepared to give up their time to support the swimmers. In order to keep fees as low as possible, we aim to do fundraising and the committee is always looking for support.

Without volunteers the club cannot function. If you can volunteer to take on a role you will be supported and welcomed with open arms. You may be surprised at how enjoyable this can be. If you cannot volunteer your time or energy, please be respectful of those that do.

What equipment will I need?

- The following are essential items of kit:
- Swimming costume/trunks
- Swimming hat
- Goggles
- Drinks bottle
- Towel
- Short blade training fins (short flippers)
- Kick board
- Pull buoy

There are additional items which may be required for more advanced training as advised by the squad coach, for example:

- Hand paddles
- Training snorkels
- Drag shorts

A mesh bag to keep the equipment in is also a good investment as it allows it to dry after each session and stops it going mouldy.

Please note the Club kit, i.e hats, t-shirts and hoodies must be worn at all events in which the club takes part. These items can be ordered through the club and must be paid for at the time that they are ordered.

What does 'Licensed meet' mean?

Licensed Meets are Open Meets which have been sanctioned by the ASA as being either a Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 or Level 4 Meet. To be licensed the Meet organisers have to meet certain criteria imposed by the ASA.

All the times recorded in a licensed meet are shown in the National Rankings which is open to everyone to see so a swimmer can prove a time. This is particularly important for qualification into Regional or National Events where qualification can only be achieved at certain Levels of Meet.

Level 1 and 2 Meets are aimed the higher level of swimmer such as National and Regional qualifiers and the better County Level swimmers. Level 1 Meets must be held in a 50m pool and Level 2 Meets must be held in a 25m pool.

Level 3 Meets attract a wide spectrum of swimmers and require upper limit times and qualifying times. Level 3 Meets can either be in a 25m or 50m pool.

Level 4 Meets require upper limit times (except for Club Championships and time trials) but no lower qualifying time. Level 4 Meets are intended for either Novice events or Club Championships to enable those Meets or Championships to proceed as licensed events with the minimum of red tape.

Which competitions can I enter?

All Chase swimmers are encouraged to enter our annual Club Championships. This is the opportunity to compete with your team mates. Your coach will advise you on the events to enter according to your age.

The Club Championships take place over a Saturday and Sunday usually during June. Points are awarded to the top swimmers in each event and trophies awarded to the best male and female swimmers in each age group. These are presented at the Presentation Evening in the autumn. There are also other trophies presented to the swimmers at the Presentation Evening.

How do I enter Open Meets

The Coaches target Open Meets on a rolling basis throughout the season. These meets are carefully chosen in the lead up to major meets such as the Counties, Regionals and Nationals as

well as the registering of swim times for new swimmers. A list of targeted meets is placed on our main notice board at Cheslyn Hay. This information is also posted on our Facebook page and the Coaches' WhatsApp groups.

Once you have discussed with your child's coach which events within a targeted meet would be suitable to enter, go to the relevant Club's website and download the entry pack. This will give you all the information you need – Promoter's information, qualifying times, meet timetable, entry form. Fill in the entry form. This, along with a cheque for the amount for the events entered (made payable to Chase Swimming Club), plus an extra £3.00 to help cover Coaches passes, need to be handed into the Open Meet Secretary before Chase's deadline date (noted on the targeted meets sheet).

When do swimmers move between squads?

The progress of swimmers is continually assessed by the coaching staff. The assessment factors include performance, consistency, attitude and attendance. When the time is right to move to the next squad you will be contacted to discuss the move. Please note that as a swimmer progresses through the squad structure, the required level of commitment to training and competition increases.

How do I keep the Coach(es) happy?

Easy! Follow these tips: Listen to the Coach, attend training as often as possible, be willing to compete for the Club, and always try your best.

What should I do if I feel unwell at training or a competition?

You must let the Coach or Team Manager know as soon as possible.

How do I find out my personal best times?

Swimmers should keep a record of all times they achieve in training and competition. They should also try to remember these. Times gained at Open Meets on electronic timing systems, can be found on this link:

<https://www.swimmingresults.org/individualbest/>

What does Heat Declared Winner (HDW) mean?

If a gala states HDW, (Heat Declared Winner) this means there are no finals, the winner is the swimmer with the fastest time regardless if the swimmer swam in the first or last heat.

Why have qualified Officials?

We need to ensure that competitions are fair and follow Health & Safety regulations. Fair play is achieved by following the laws and technical rules of the various swimming bodies, which leads to consistency not only within a single event, but also across all events in a league or championship.

What types of Officials are there?

There are five basic levels of qualification for a technical swimming official:

- **Timekeeper:** Competent with a stop watch and able to act as a Chief Timekeeper at an event.
- **Judge:** Knows the laws of the various strokes and is able to place the finishing order of an event.
- **Starter:** Nice loud clear voice with the ability to settle the swimmers and start them fairly.
- **Referee:** Responsible for running the event safely and fairly.

There are also other non-technical officials such as recorders and announcers. These do not require any particular qualification, but are still vital for the successful running of an event and include:

- **Announcer:** Reads out safety announcements prior to gala and announces each race and any other information as directed by the referee.
- **Recorders:** Record results of each race from slips provided by judges. Normally two recorders required, with both writing down results and cross-checking them throughout the evening.
- **Runners:** Throughout the gala getting results sheets from the Recorders and displaying them in the gallery, behind the spectators.
- **Door Money and Programme:** Man a table in reception area to give out programmes and collect fee per adult spectator. For some galas there may also be raffle tickets to sell.
- **Marshals/Stewards:** To make sure swimmers know what and when they are swimming (from lists provided) and guide them towards the starting blocks at the appropriate time.

How do I go about becoming an Official?

We are delighted when people volunteer to become an official – without them there would be no competitions. Each level of technical official requires some training, a short examination and a practical evaluation of the skills required. Examples of the examinations and other helpful material can be found on the British Swimming Web site. If you are interested, have a look at the British Swimming site and speak to other members of your club about it. Most of the officials at an event are also approachable, so why not ask them about their experiences.

What is a PB?

PB is short for Personal Best. It is the best time an individual has achieved for a particular stroke at a given distance. A record of PBs from licensed events can be found by searching the British Swimming website:

<https://www.swimmingresults.org/individualbest/>

What does 'age on 31st December' mean?

If a gala is run on an 'age on 31st December' basis (e.g., our Club Champs) it refers to how old the swimmer will be on the 31st December in the year of competition. It does not mean the age of the swimmer on the day of the competition, which may be different. So for example, if a swimmer's birthday was the 20th December and they turned 12 on that date, they would swim as a 12 year old in the Club Champs even though at the time of the events (October/November) they were still 11 years old.

What does 'Short Course' mean?

Events held in a 25m length pool.

What does 'Long Course' mean?

Events held in a 50m length pool.

What happens on the day of a gala?

If you are going to be at a gala for most of the day, you will need to make sure that you have enough drinks and snack/food to keep you going. Coaches will advise on the sorts of things that you should and should not bring.

Arrive on poolside, in your swimming kit, about 15 minutes before the start of warm up and make yourself known to our Team Managers who will tick your name on the register. Your Team Manager will tell you when to start warm up. After warm up, your Team Manager will tell you which heat and lane you will be in for your event.

When it is time for you to go for your event the Team Manager will direct you to 'marshalling', officials will then show you where to sit and, eventually, to the start end of the pool. You should then go to your lane where a time keeper will be sitting. The time keeper will check your name on their heat sheet to make sure you are in the correct heat/lane.

You must wait for the long whistle blast before stepping up onto the blocks (or getting into the pool for a backstroke event, or if you have not achieved the Competitive Start Award and therefore have to start in the water). Once the long whistle blast has sounded, it is important for ALL those on poolside to be very quiet, otherwise it will be very difficult for swimmers in the current heat to hear the starting signal. The starter will say; 'take your marks' and will then fire a gun or sound a buzzer. In the event of a false start, the gun or buzzer will sound again and you should return to the starting end of the pool and climb out. You must once again wait for the signal to climb onto the blocks.

At the end of your race, it is important that you wait until you are told to climb out of the pool as at many meets, a system of 'over the top starts' will be in operation. This means that swimmers from the previous heat remain in the water close to the wall while swimmers in the next heat start their race.

Once you have left the water, do not wander around at the starting end of the pool. This can be very distracting for swimmers and officials. Once the long whistle blast has sounded for the next race, anyone behind the starting blocks should stand perfectly still and remain quiet.

After each of your races you should dry yourself and put your T-shirt on. Once again, remember to have a drink. Please note that for obvious reasons, glass bottles are not allowed on poolside.

Once swimmers have gone onto the poolside, it is very important that they do not leave without informing their Team Manager. There have been occasions where swimmers have left the poolside to go into the spectator gallery and their Team Manager has been unable to find them when they are called for their next race.

Will I be able to take photos at the gala?

Some galas do allow photography (though some don't) but you will first have to register with the meet organisers and provide details such as address and phone contact details to get a pass to take pictures or video. This is to satisfy child protection policy.

My name is on a results list but has DQ by the side, what does this mean?

Swimmers may find themselves disqualified from a race for a variety of reasons. While this can be very disappointing, the important thing is to understand why the disqualification has taken place. The reasons can be summarised under the following headings:

- Starts
- Strokes
- Turns
- Finishes
- Fouls

The ASA (Amateur Swimming Association) lays down technical rules for how swimmers should start and finish races, how turns should be performed and how each of the recognised strokes should be executed. Any swimmer failing to swim according to these standards will be disqualified. The best person to talk to on each of these is your swimming Coach.

Although it can be upsetting for young swimmers to find themselves disqualified from a race, it is important not to become disheartened – it happens occasionally at all levels of competitive swimming, even to world champions! The important thing is to find out the reason for the disqualification from the judge or your coach and learn from the experience.

The rules on fouls cover a whole range of possibilities, but it is sufficient to note at this point that a foul is defined as any action which results in another swimmer suffering an unfair disadvantage. Anyone wishing to study the technical rules in detail should consult The Extract of ASA Law and ASA Technical Rules.

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