



An information sheet - Types of Galas

For Parents of Swimmers who are coming up to the age of 9 and they have joined the competitive swim squad (red or orange hats)

1. Unlicensed Galas – these are mainly team galas usually held in the evening when your child has been selected to represent the club

Swimmers selected for an unlicensed team meet must be aged 8 or over on the day of the gala and will be at least paid up Swim England Category 1 (club train) Members. Beachfield have an expectation that all competitive swimmers if selected will make every effort to attend these excellent team galas.

- Learn to Swim Galas for ages 8-11 – one length races, no diving, few DQs. Selection is via a team manager (Sam Dolman)
- Millennium League development galas for ages 8+ – one or two length races - selection is via a team manager (Neil Marsh) – a joint team with Sittingbourne SC 4 or 5 galas per year
- Kent Junior League for ages 9-13 – two or four length races - selection is via a Head Coach (Keith Hopkins) – a joint team with Sittingbourne SC 3 times per year
- Local Friendly team galas for ages 8+: one, two or 4 length races such as the Mike LeGrys Gala, the Sittingbourne SC Simon Watson Gala or the outdoor Faversham SC Gala – selection is via the club team manager (Sam Dolman)

NB In addition, Beachfield club championships are unlicensed and do not depend on being selected for a team – all members are invited to compete (usually held on a Saturday Evening in November or December). Time trials are also unlicensed and are held periodically throughout the year in training sessions to gauge all swimmers' progress. No swim times achieved at any of the events above are eligible to gain a place in the Kent Championships as they are "unlicensed" (although some other larger clubs, with more qualified officials, do license their club championships at Level 4 and currently the Kent Junior League is licensed at L4).

2. Medway Galas (licensed at L3)

These are the Galas we encourage all our competitive swimmers to attend, there are 5 of these per year held on Saturday evenings. They are licensed at L3 so cat 2 membership is required and this is why we register all our competitive swimmers as Cat 2 swimmers as our expectation is for a swimmer to attend some of these throughout the season. Races are mainly of 100m in length (except for one 50m and 200m gala) and vary throughout the 6 galas. Generally a swimmer will swim in their age group event at each

gala. No qualifying times are required for age group events but if you enter the open events this will be subject to entry times as the number of heats may be rationed.

Suitable for Orange Hats up aged 10 or older by the end of 2019. They are a great first gala to enter.

Please sign up for these via a Swim Club Manager email link at least 3 weeks before each gala. John King is in charge of entries to these.

3. Licensed Team Galas (L3)

All competitive swimmers at Beachfield are eligible to join Kent Weald Swimming Squad and membership is free: This is a joint team with Sittingbourne, Medway Maritime and Gravesend Swimming Clubs; National Arena Swimming League – selection is via the Kent Weald Swim Squad Head Coach (Richard Skirving). This is the top inter club team event in the country. 3 galas per year on the second weekend in October, November and December.

Beachfield have expectations that if competitive swimmers are selected to represent Kent Weald team they make every effort to accept the invitation. The galas are excellent team galas and have a great atmosphere particularly in the third gala when the team could be going for promotion to a higher division.

4. Licensed “Open” Meets – these galas do not rely on your child being selected for a “team”

At the age of 9, swimmers may start to enter Licensed Open Meets and the Medway Championships (the latter if aged 10 by the end of 2019) if in Orange hats or above. “Open” meets are open to all swimmers from all clubs, sometimes subject to achieving qualifying times. A list of our open meet fixtures and how to enter them, usually via an email to johngking119@live.com, is published on the website on the “events” page. Deadlines for signing up are also given via emailed invitations. To enter Open Meets, swimmers must be paid up Swim England Category 2 (club compete) members. Orange hat swimmer parents - Orange hats will be upgraded to cat. 2 as a matter of course by membership secretary Antonia Stephenson. Open Meets tend to be all day on Saturdays or Sundays (or all weekend).

Open Meets are licensed by Swim England at Level 1, 2 and 3. Level 1 is long course (50m Pool) and of the highest standard and levels 2 and 3 are short course (swum in a 25m pool). Occasionally, a L3 meet will be swum long course. Qualifying Times (upper limit – must not be faster than) and (lower limit– must be faster than) may be required. Entries per race will vary between £4 and £10 depending on the meet.

You make your child's Open Meet entries via a sign in link by responding to a Swim Club Manager email sent to parents of orange hat upwards swimmers. Please read the meet conditions and programme of events which is attached, before signing up for any races. The gala entries secretary (John King) will usually use your child's short course PB as the entry time. You will be contacted by email to pay BSS by Bacs shortly after the entry has been made. A list of accepted entries will be shown on the website. Events from which your child's swim has been rejected (as perhaps the event is over-subscribed) will not be charged for.

Spectator entry fees for open meets vary from £4 to £12 per day again depending on the venue. Payment for this is made on the day at the door.

Gala entries you make from the events list are up to you and your child. The ones on the events list are "club-supported galas" and we will endeavor to provide a coach and team manager poolside to support the swimmers if at all possible and we have enough swimmers entered to justify it.

Any other licensed gala not on the BSS events/fixture list but listed on the Swim England website list which you wish your child to enter, you will have to enter directly yourself to the host club and pay them directly. A poolside coach or team manager will not be provided as such a meet is not a "club-supported gala", so you will have to do that yourself. If you are not a qualified teacher or coach of swimming, you will need to go on a Team Manager 1 course to do this, attend a safeguarding course and also be db's checked.

Usually your child should not be entered for an open meet as soon as he/she turns 9, unless your child is extremely advanced in his/her skills (the coach will advise you) and, even then, only into 50m races. Enter him/her for the Medway Championships first (£5.00 per entry per race) or at least have some experience of local interclub unlicensed meets first. This is because open licensed meets may contain very fast swimmers and the high standard may be quite a shock for your child. Also correct technique is essential in a licensed gala, or your child may be disqualified, if the technique is not perfect

Medals are usually awarded to swimmers finishing 1st, 2nd and 3rd in their age group. Age groups are usually 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16+ with age on last day of event or age on 31st Dec. Sometimes there are fewer age groups or age groups are combined. Only L3 licensed open meets should be entered to begin with. Occasionally Open Meet entries are rejected due to the gala being oversubscribed in which case only the faster entries will be accepted. You will be reimbursed for this. L1 and L2 meets are for more experienced "county standard" swimmers and they have tough qualifying times.

Beachfield holds an Open L3 Meet at Medway Park in July which we encourage all our competitive swimmers to attend. Kent Weald Swim Squad holds an Open L3 Meet in January which we encourage him/her to enter.

Please go to the www.beachfieldswim.net website and then choose the “competitive swimming” tab. You will then see 11 further tabs on the left hand side giving further illustrative information. Peruse these 12 tabs.

5. **Kent County Championships (long course - licensed at L1)**

All events are offered but tough qualifying times need to be met. These times must have been attained at (licensed at L1,2,3 or 4) open meets or the Medway Championships in the previous 12 months. The Kent Qualification times can be found on the Kent Swimming Website

6. **South East Regional Long Course Championships (licensed at L1)**

All events are offered but very tough qualifying times need to be met. These times must have been attained at (licensed L1,2 or 3) open meets or at the Medway Championships or National Arena League in the previous 10 months

7. **English and British Long Course Championships (both licensed at L1)**

All events are offered but very tough “variable” qualifying times need to be met. Those qualifying must be in the fastest “x” swimmers in their age group in a period of 2-3 months (the “qualifying window”) before the Championships. Only times attained at L1 open meets or the regional championships in this “qualifying window “will count.

NB There are also Regional and National Short Course Championships (both licensed at L2)

Any questions/queries to enquiries@beachfieldswim.net

Beachfield Swimming Squad March 2023

Swim England fees:

Category 1 (club train) - 2023 Swim England membership fee approx £18.50

For members of any age who are learning to swim or who are swimmers at any level, who do not compete in any open meets other than local unlicensed (or licensed at Level 4) meets such as the Simon Watson Gala, the Emma Starling Gala, the Beachfield Learn to Swim Gala, the Mike Legrys Memorial Gala, the Millennium League and Beachfield Club Championships

Category 2 (club compete)- 2023 Swim England membership fee approx £38

For members of any age 9+ who want to compete in the Medway Championships (L3), in open meets (L3, L2 and L1). E.g. Beachfield Summer Open L3, the National Arena Swimming League L3, the Black Lion Spring Open L3 or the Kent County Championships L1