

# Help Pupils With Autism Enjoy Swimming

## A Support guide for Parents, Teachers and Pupils



Claire Bullock, Pembrokeshire Inclusion Service

## Get Ready...

- Take care when entering the Leisure centre, the car park can be busy
- When you enter the building , you need to go to reception where

you can pay or show your leisure card



- You may need to queue
- You will need to wear a swimming costume to go into the pool.
- In some swimming pools you will have to wear a swimming hat. If the hat is difficult to wear owing to sensory difficulties, tell a member of leisure centre staff before you go in to the pool
- Most swimmers wear goggles in the water, to protect their eyes
- You can change in the changing rooms. Some leisure centres have small changing cubicles where you can change privately
- The changing rooms can have different kinds of bumpy or non-slip flooring
- The Flooring in the changing rooms may be wet so take care
- The changing rooms can be noisy and the lighting can vary
- There may be noisy hand driers in toilets and changing rooms

## Get Set...

- When you walk out onto the pool side, the sound can be loud. Lots of voices can echo.
- The pool water is a bright blue.
- There can be lines on the bottom of some pools
- The movement of the water can make it sparkle and the lines can seem blurry
- There may be lots of people swimming and moving about
- Some people will be swimming fast, some may be still with just their heads above water and some people may be playing or splashing



## GO...

- There may be steps into the pool. Hold onto the hand rails to stay safe
- It may smell and feel different to bath or other water
- Do not run along the pool side, the floor may be slippery
- Take care with the depth of the pool. Some pools have shallow and deep ends. Stay near to the side if unsure.
- Lifeguards will be on duty. They may sit on high chairs where they can watch everybody to keep them safe
- Lifeguards may blow whistles to communicate with one another and the public. This can be quite loud.

### Note to Parents:

Sensory difficulties may affect your child hugely. Talk to leisure centre staff if you need to discuss quieter visiting times, exemption from wearing swimming hats, or anything that will help your child enjoy the swimming experience.

The weather, lighting used and how busy the pool is can all make the pool and environment look and feel different. Your child may be happy to go into the pool one day but not on others.

Visit the pool in advance to have a look to see if you can identify any potential difficulties. Show your child pictures of the leisure Centre, visit with them and introduce them to swimming teachers in advance if needed.

<http://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/content.asp?Language=&id=10262&na..> – For membership information  
<http://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/content.asp?nav=107,2004,2005> -For Pembrokeshire Leisure Centre information

