



BEGINNERS GUIDE TO OUR SWIM CLUB

2026

WELCOME!

We are excited to have you join our Swim Club! This booklet is designed to help you get started with our club and give you the information you need to settle in.

Firstly, our Club is run by VOLUNTEERS, it is important to acknowledge this and help where you can. Our Club has been around for over 50 years we have a vision and mission statement; a set of values we expect our swimmers and swim families to live by. In return we hope to produce CONFIDENT, CAPABLE, COMPETITIVE and CONNECTED swimmers.



VISION

Established in 1974, our club supports swimmers of all levels — from beginners to high performers — in a fun, inclusive, and safe environment. We nurture confidence, fitness, and friendships while developing pathways for coaches, officials, and volunteers to grow and succeed.



MISSION

To nurture confident, capable, competitive, and connected swimmers who love the water and thrive in and beyond the pool.



VALUES

Commitment Respect Kindness Integrity Sportsmanship



• CONFIDENT • CAPABLE • COMPETITIVE • CONNECTED •

CLUB STRUCTURE

Like every Club we have a committee that runs the day to day operations. If you would like to be part of our Club Committee you would be very welcome!! Our committee is made up of:

 Chair
 Secretary
 Treasurer
 Membership Officer

 Funding Officer
 Communications Officer
 General Committee Members

COACHES

Sitting alongside our committee is our fabulous Swim Coaches. Kim Kone teaches our beginner and development swimmers and Meydi Bell who teaches the squad swimmers. From time to time we have parents and past swim club members that assist or take the swimmers when our coaches are unable to attend.

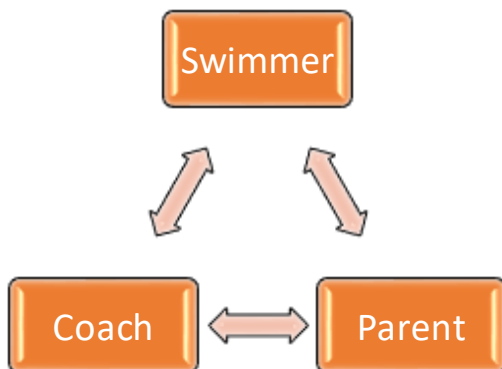
SWIM LEVELS

Beginner swimmers
Development swimmers
Bronze Squad
Silver Squad
Gold Squad

We value the presence of our families on the pool deck! It is a wonderful way to cheer on your child's progress and connect with other members of our swimming community.

To ensure our swimmers receive the best possible instruction, we kindly ask that you **refrain from approaching coaches immediately before or during practice**. Our coaches and swimmers are most effective when they can maintain their focus on the training session without outside distractions.

If you have any questions or feedback, our coaches would be more than happy to chat with you **once the session has concluded**. Thank you for your support in creating a focused and productive environment for our swimmers!



Frequent, positive communication between the coach, swimmer and parents is imperative for the development of the swimmer.

FEES

Like with every sports Club there are fees. It is important to note that the fees that we charge DO NOT cover the cost of hiring lanes, paying for coaches, and maintaining our gear etc.

Unfortunately, swimming is an expensive sport, but we try very hard to keep these fees low. We do this in a couple of ways:

1. Depending on the level your swimmer is at we either charge a termly fee or a monthly fee. Monthly fees are averaged out over the entire year, which means you still pay during school holidays! You will be invoiced for this fee, and we respectfully ask that you pay on time, so we do not have to chase you.
2. We apply for funding to subsidise our costs.
3. We fundraise at swimming carnivals, sausage sizzles, raffles etc.



If you have an amazing fundraising idea, please let us know!



Please remember that our treasurer is also a volunteer. No one likes chasing fees.

TRAINING

Before the start of every term your coach will get in touch with you via email, Facebook or through our WhatsApp group to let you know what group you are swimming in and what day(s) your training is. Training schedules are done by term, however there may be swimming lessons through the school holidays, but times will vary dependent on Coach availability and what level you are swimming at. If you are unsure, please ask your coach.

TRAINING GEAR

While we do have some gear available for our swimmers to borrow it is important for our squad swimmers to have the following gear:

-  Flippers
-  Hand paddles
-  Front facing snorkel
-  Kick board
-  Pull Bouy

You will also need the following items for our dryland stretching/strength training before swimming commences:

-  Skipping rope
-  Stretchy band
-  Yoga mat

These items can all be purchased through Arena who provide the Club with a discount on items. Otherwise there a number of other retail shops that sell this gear.



CLUB UNIFORM

All swimmers have the opportunity to purchase club kit through the website, (under member resources). For swimmers competing at any carnival, it is compulsory for every swimmer to purchase a cap. These can be purchased through the Coach or Team Manager on the day of a carnival or at training.



For swimmers representing our club outside of Northland it is compulsory to also wear our red polo shirt.

There are a number of other noncompulsory items your swimmer may want to wear including shorts, hoodies, pool-deck coats, togs, equipment bags, hats etc. There are even navy-blue polo shirts for supporters of the Club. You will see a lot of parents wearing these at Club night or carnivals and it's a great way to identify your Club members!



COMPETITION SWIMMING



Approximately once a month we hold a Club Night. These are designed to allow all our swimmers for all the levels of swimming to come together, generally, on a Friday afternoon and race each other in a fun safe environment. Races range from 25 metres through to 200 metres of all sorts of strokes including kick board. For those swimmers starting out this is a taste of what swimming in a swimming carnival is like.

For our Developments and Squad swimmers it is encouraged to register with Swimming NZ (includes an annual fee) which enables you to enter local, regional and national swim meets (or carnivals). Your coach will talk you through this process. Our Club holds a carnival at least once a year and all swimmers are encouraged to attend. Other swimming clubs in Northland also hold local carnivals while our more competitive swimmers regularly attend carnivals in Auckland and further afield.

Navigating Your First Swim Carnivals

We are excited to see our swimmers take the leap into competitive racing! To help make this experience smooth and rewarding for everyone, here are some helpful guidelines on how to get started:

Consulting with Your Coach

Your coach will keep you updated on when your swimmer is ready for their first carnival. However, if your swimmer feels they are ready to compete, please feel free to have a chat with your coach. They can provide expert advice on which carnivals or specific events best suit your swimmer's current ability.

Choosing the Right Distances

It is important to build confidence and stamina gradually.

- **Newer Swimmers:** Often start with 25m distances.
- **Progressing Swimmers:** As stamina increases, they will move up to 50m, and eventually 100m or 200m events.
- **Pro Tip:** Always check with your coach before increasing race distances to ensure your swimmer is physically prepared.

Managing Race Entries

To ensure our swimmers perform their best without overexertion, please avoid entering swimmers into back-to-back races unless it is necessary to qualify for a specific event and has been pre-approved by the coach. You can check the event order on the carnival flyer to ensure there is an adequate break between races.

For those just starting out, we recommend one-day carnivals. These events are designed to help swimmers develop their racing skills and gain confidence in a supportive environment. It is also worth noting that swimmers race girls and boys and different age swimmers as well. Every carnival is about getting a time and racing yourself for a better time, (PB or personal best).



Entering the Carnival

All entries are managed through the **Fast Lane Swimmer Portal** at fastlane.swimming.org.nz. Once your membership is finalized, you will receive an email with your login credentials.

- **Browsing Events:** The portal allows you to view upcoming meets across both Northland and the rest of New Zealand.
- **How to Enter:** Locate your chosen carnival to view the event flyer or proceed directly to entry. Your swimmer's current personal bests (PBs) will automatically appear next to each event.
- **Qualifying Times:** Some carnivals require specific entry times. In these cases, the portal will only display events for which your child has successfully qualified.
- **Payment:** Entry fees are typically paid via credit card directly through the portal.

Withdrawals and "Scratchings"

We understand that plans change. If you need to withdraw or amend a race, please contact your coach.

- **Refunds:** Amendments or withdrawals may mean that you do not get your carnival entry fee refunded.
- **Short-Notice Absences:** If your swimmer becomes unavailable the day before or the morning of a meet, please notify your Coach, and the Team Manager immediately.
- **Late Fees:** The club can "scratch" swimmers up to 30 minutes before the meet begins. Failure to notify us in time can result in a \$50 fine from the organizers.

Real-Time Results

To stay updated on the day of the event, we recommend downloading these mobile apps:

1. Meet Mobile
2. My Togs

These apps often provide results faster than the physical printouts at the venue and serve as a digital archive for all your swimmer's historical times and progress.

What to Expect on Race Day

To help our swimmers stay focused and supported, we follow a consistent routine at every carnival. Here is a breakdown of how the day typically unfolds:

The Warm-Up

Every carnival begins with a scheduled warm-up period (usually one hour). This is a vital time for swimmers to get a feel for the pool and work with their coaches.

- **Multiple Sessions:** For carnivals spanning two or three days, a warm-up session is held before the start of each new session.
- **Team Environment:** Swimmers will share lanes with their squad mates and other clubs under the guidance of our coaching staff.

Squad Seating and Support

To foster team spirit and streamline logistics, **swimmers sit together as a squad** along with the Coach and designated Team Managers.

- **Coaching:** The Coach will speak with your swimmer both before and after their races to provide guidance and feedback.
- **Team Managers:** Our managers ensure swimmers stay hydrated, eat at appropriate times, and, most importantly, arrive at the marshalling area on time for their events.
- **Tracking Progress:** Team Managers also record race times (collected from the official timekeepers) so swimmers have immediate feedback on their performance.

A Note for Parents and Caregivers

We want our swimmers to have the best possible experience. To ensure the team stays organized and the environment remains positive, please keep the following in mind:

- **Communication:** If you have concerns about how your child is feeling or their eating habits when they are nervous, please have a quick chat with the Team Manager before the session starts.
- **Seating Policy:** Due to limited space at venues and to maintain a focused professional environment for the athletes, parents and caregivers are not permitted to sit in the squad area. We appreciate your cooperation in cheering from the designated spectator stands!



Supporting Our Swimmers: The Role of Officials (that's you!)

Swimming is a volunteer powered sport. For our swimmers to achieve official times, set new PBs, and qualify for regional or national events, carnivals must meet strict Swimming NZ and World Aquatics (formerly FINA) standards. This requires a dedicated team of officials at every meet.

Getting Involved: Where to Start

To ensure our carnivals run smoothly, we ask all parents to become part of the officiating team.

- **Timekeeping:** In the near future, we will invite you to train and qualify as a Timekeeper. This is the perfect entry-level role and provides a front-row seat to the action.
- **Advancing Your Skills:** BOISC is currently looking for parents ready to progress beyond timekeeping. If you're interested in learning more advanced official roles, we would love to hear from you! You can become the Chief Timekeeper, Inspector of Turns or a Judge of Stroke. The options are endless. 😊
- **Team Managers:** These volunteers support the squad poolside. Please note that Team Managers must complete police vetting via the [Swimming NZ website](#).

Our Club Obligations

When we are entering a carnival held in Northland every family is required to provide one helper. This is to help officiate and team manage, if we are hosting then we also require helpers to man the BBQ, bake, sell raffles etc.

- **Entry Considerations:** Before entering your swimmer, please consider how your family can help meet this requirement. Do not assume enough officials are already available; if you have specific constraints, please contact the **Committee** early to see if we can accommodate your circumstances.



YOUR ROLE AS A SWIM PARENT

Your most important job is to create a supportive, calm and encouraging environment where your child can grow both as a swimmer and as a person. Children feel what we feel, so modelling positivity and good sportsmanship matters. Show respect to coaches, officials, teammates, opponents and supporters, and your child will learn to do the same.

Every decision should centre on what's best for your child. Focusing on effort and learning, not just winning this helps them enjoy the sport and reduces fear of failure. Praise the process, not their worth: **"You tried so hard in that swim"** goes much further than tying praise to results.

Your encouragement shapes how your child sees themselves. Strong self-esteem helps them take on challenges, enjoy progress and cope with setbacks. Success isn't only about medals, improving a PB, mastering a skill or giving their best effort are all wins worth celebrating.

Let the Coach, Coach!

Coaches provide technical feedback; parents provide support. Too much advice can overwhelm young swimmers, so keep communication positive and avoid contradicting the coach in front of your child. Stay connected with the coach but let them lead the swimming side.



"For myself, losing is not coming second. It's getting out of the water knowing you could have done better. For myself, I have won every race I have been in."

Ian Thorpe

CLUB COMMUNICATIONS

All swim families will be communicated to via email directly from their coach regarding your swimmer's lesson or squad level. Squad members will then be communicated through a WhatsApp Group if there are changes to the day-to-day schedule.

The Club committee will communicate with you through Facebook page and email. The committee will publish newsletters to help you keep up to date with events that are happening and to highlight our swimmer of the month.

Please make sure you have provided us with your email address and that you are following the Facebook Page. Term schedules, information about upcoming carnivals and a newsletter will be communicated through these forums.

We have a noticeboard at the pools (under the cardio room staircase) if you would like to read about our swimmers or look at upcoming events. Like all good clubs we also have a website which has a lot of useful resources on it, please take the time to have a look: <https://www.boiswimming.org.nz/>



WELCOME TO THE TEAM

We hope this guide provided a helpful introduction to the upcoming swimming season and gives you a clear picture of how our club operates. We've aimed to cover the essentials, but we know there is always more to learn as you dive in.

If you have any further questions, no matter how small, please don't hesitate to reach out. You can contact any of the committee members, coaches or simply strike up a conversation with our seasoned club members poolside.

If you would like to offer your time in helping to run the Club (big or small!) we would love to hear from you.

We are a community, and we're all here to support you and your swimmer.



HAVE A QUESTION?



Check out our webpage:

boiswimmingclub@gmail.com



Check out our Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/BayofIslandsSwimmingClub/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/278165258897818>



Our email:

boiswimmingclub@gmail.com



Make sure you have requested to be on our WhatsApp Group.