

GOULD SWIM ACADEMY NEWSLETTER - TERM 3 2018

LAST DAY - SATURDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER

(Apologies for the delay in issuing this newsletter)

TERM 4 STARTS MONDAY 15TH OCTOBER:

Please note: Most schools will have a pupil free day however we will NOT. Be prepared to swim on Monday 15th October. Term 4 shall finish on Saturday 15th December. These dates are printed on your invoice so please read and place in your diary. Term 4 shall be nine weeks in duration except for Friday afternoon swimmers who shall have an eight week term. This shall be reflected in your invoice.

TERM 4 ENROLMENTS:

All current Term 3 enrolments shall be rolled over so you will be automatically enrolled for Term 4. This has always been our policy. Please advise us if you will NOT be swimming so we may review our availability for those on the waiting list.

TERM 4 INVOICES:

The invoices shall be bulk emailed next week. Please READ the invoice for your class day/time, term dates and other relevant information regarding discounts and application of the NSW Active Kids Vouchers.

NSW ACTIVE KIDS VOUCHER:

We will now be accepting vouchers.

As previously stated, we had been monitoring the process and management of this scheme. We are now assured that all glitches have been ironed out and the process should be relatively pain-free for businesses.

When paying your term fees please provide a copy or email of your voucher and pay the difference via direct deposit, EFTPOS or cash. If no voucher is forthcoming or redeemed (by the Government) then you will be asked to pay the remainder.

It is YOUR responsibility to learn about the scheme and how you apply for a voucher. Please go to this website: <https://sport.nsw.gov.au/sectordevelopment/activekids>.

WAITING LIST:

No availability for school-aged children for Term 4...sorry. We will keep you on the list.

We have been working through all preschool-aged and baby levels in the past two weeks. If you have a missed call from 60400400 then do not delay in returning our call. We cannot wait two days...a week...to hear back from you as our waiting list is lengthy and we wish to be timely in contacting everyone.

INSTRUCTOR CHANGES:

Unfortunately like most workplaces we have staff who get ill, experience family crisis, sit exams, etc. We don't always feel comfortable about their absences either however we do believe that the health and welfare of our staff is a priority. We do try to retain consistency with instructors, both in their regular shifts and those who are covering shifts. This is sometimes hampered by the fact that most staff are available to only work a few shifts a week due to school, university, other employment or family commitments.

Please also bear in mind that if you are unable to regularly attend your set lesson and do make up lessons then the consistency of instructor shall ordinarily be impacted.

Whilst change is difficult at times for some, it is also inevitable in life.

PUDDLE PICS UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY:

It was amazing to see so many fantastic underwater photos of the children. We were delighted to have Jane, Jasmine, Emma and Leslie with us to provide a great opportunity to all our families. There is no doubt that extended family members will be treated to the photos as Christmas gifts. It is unusual to take or have underwater photos taken so we have no doubt you shall enjoy them for years to come.

We welcome your feedback regarding this experience and will look to perhaps hosting Puddle Pics Underwater Photography again in another 12 months time.

RIVER SAFETY:

This week during Safety Week we have been focusing on river safety and aiming to start conversations around this. As you know we have the mighty Murray and the Hume Dam on our doorstep. Children and adults frequent both for varying activities, in the water and out. We ask that you continue the conversation with your children and educate them in how to stay safe, respond to dangers and to assist others when they are near these waterways. You may not 'like' the river or dam yourself but remember children grow to teenagers and young adults who are more than likely to frequent these waterways.

The river and dam are very different to swimming in a pool. One obvious difference is the water is not clear and this inhibits visibility of the water depth, hides snags and other obstacles and the fluctuation of the river floor. The children this week wore blacked out goggles to try to replicate this. Ask them how it felt to not be able to see underwater.

Another difference is the current which is always changing in speed and strength and in some parts of the river it can be like a whirlwind turning in circles. The current can also change the depth of the water and move the riverbed, snags and push logs etc downstream. It can also change the temperature of the water very quickly. Discuss with your child how best to stay safe should they get tired or the current becomes stronger than they are. Instil in your child that if they are in

danger or get tired then they should float on their back with feet pointing downstream so they may see where they are going. This keeps their limbs up high away from snags; their body is in the warmer water; they will be more visible to others and they can call out and place a fist in the air to attract attention. Do not panic and allow the current to work for you. It will eventually push you to the river bank even if it is a couple of kilometres away from where you started. It is a far better outcome to be able to walk back to your original destination than to panic and fight against the river.

There is plenty more you can talk about too. Don't just talk though, take the children to the river and dam and get them familiar with these waterways and practice some safety skills.

SCHOOL STARTERS 2019:

If your child currently swims in a morning class and shall be commencing school in 2019 then please let us know. We have started the process of transferring them to an afternoon class for Term 1 2019. This is not a simple process due to our school-aged levels being at capacity however we like to do it now so we can assure your child remains enrolled with us. If you're uncertain if they will continue swimming next year then it is better to be placed into an afternoon class now and take them out later. Your cooperation makes this task easier, thank you.

TRANSITIONING TO SWIM CLUB:

We are always delighted to see children progress from our Academy to a swim club. It not only shows a great level of skill but also enthusiasm and passion for swimming. If your child is leaving GSA to register in a swim club then please let us know. This will allow greater availability in our squad lessons and aid in the progression of other children.

A LIFE SKILL AND SOCIAL SKILL:

It shouldn't have to be said but sometimes we all have differing perspectives. Swimming is the ONLY sport that has the potential to SAVE your child's life. Please consider this when trying to juggle your family's schedule and prioritising activities. Whilst other sports provide valuable life skills and fun, they do not have the potential to save your child's life. Consider the child's age and timeline in their activities. It makes sense to introduce learn to swim lessons at an early age as children are around water from an early age such as baths, water play with buckets, fishing with dad, backyard pools, dams on the farm, watching parents play water polo, holidays by the beach etc. Children sometimes venture near water unsupervised and this is the time that swimming skills can be life-saving. During the past nine years of operating this Academy we have seen most children who have started lessons around the age of two or three progress to squad level around seven years of age. Most other sports or activities do not require a full commitment or development of skills until a child is around the age of ten or later. This is due to the child being able to learn, practice and play this sport for

years to come. The timeline for a child to enter and continue other sports or activities is at a later stage than swimming.

We do not undermine the value or fun in other sports and activities however my teenager's hockey skills are not going to help her when she is frequenting the river with her friends.

COMMUNICATION: PLEASE CHECK THE MANY WAYS WE TRY TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOU:

Facebook - reaches a great number of people with one status. This is updated regularly each week, sometimes twice a week.

Whiteboard - situated in our reception area and is updated every two weeks with important messages and dates. A weekly countdown of the term is in the top right hand corner eg Wk 3/10.

Newsletter - is generally issued via email once a term. It is also added to Facebook. Please read carefully as it contains lots of relevant information and dates.

Invoice - is emailed before the commencement of each term. The email and cover letter always contain the day/time of class and term dates. It also will have notations regarding application of discounts and redeeming of vouchers. The cover letter shall advise how to pay and what to do if requiring assistance with payment.

SMS - text messages are often used to deliver an urgent message or a message to a specific target group eg Friday morning swimmers.

Email - reaches a great number of people at once as well as one on one communication. It can be time saving and efficient for those at work or unable to phone at particular times.

Verbally - at reception or in the pool. We like to hear your feedback and have you ask questions and our staff, both at reception and in the water, are happy to verbally communicate with you.

Website - provides information for those wanting to know more about our Academy.

Telephone - a convenient and fast tool that allows action to be taken there and then such as arranging make up lessons or notifying of absences. We also have an answering machine so if we are unable to answer then please LEAVE A MESSAGE so we may get back to you.

Signs - at the front door, in reception area, in the changerooms and showers, up the ramp, on pool deck, everywhere! Please read and adhere to signs.

...we can only try 😊

As always, we welcome and encourage your feedback on all elements of our Academy. We strive to be the best we can and your input may highlight areas for improvement or enhancement. We do not know

you have concerns if you do not let us know. We cannot rectify a situation or concern if we don't know about it. We also appreciate hearing about your positive experiences so we may build on the elements of our Academy that you value. Our staff also appreciate knowing they are valued in what they do.

Please feel free to contact us on 60 400 400 or janine@gouldswimacademy.com.au.