

Dear Parents / Carers,

We often receive queries about badges and why children haven't received a badge for a while, so I thought I would explain a bit about the way it works at Abingdon Swimming Club.

Over our three terms, we work towards the badge syllabus during the Spring and Summer terms, during the Autumn Term we focus on stroke improvement with the aim of having a distance evening in December. This unfortunately didn't happen last year but will definitely be on the calendar this year.

We follow the STA (Swimming Teachers Association) International Learn to Swim Programme which has several stages - Octopus, Goldfish, Angelfish and Shark and within these there are three levels of award to be gained. As swimmers progress through the stages the skills they learn become progressively harder and will take longer to learn, therefore they may not receive an award in both the spring and summer terms. Sometimes we will move swimmers up to the next level before they achieve the next award if we feel their swimming is in line with swimmers of the higher level, especially if they are close to attaining the next award. Sometimes it is necessary to consolidate the strokes and skills that have been learnt in previous awards before moving onto to the next stage. The most important thing is that they enjoy swimming and are making progress. We cannot issue swimmers with awards if they are not able to perform all of the skills required for the award.

Please be assured that all of our teachers are working hard to help your children progress in their swimming.

Finally, people frequently ask me what they can do to help their child improve their swimming, it is actually really simple if you can take your children swimming in between their lessons they will be more likely to progress quicker. Children learn as much from 'fun' swims as they do in their lessons and it gives them the opportunity to put the skills they have learned in their lessons into practice. Also seeing parents enjoyment of the water and sharing it with them can also help children who may be fearful of the water or lacking in confidence. So all you have to do is get in the water and have some fun with them!

Kind regards,

Hayley Reynolds

ASC Chair / Swimming Teacher / Lifesaving Instructor