

## DORSET SCHOOLS SWIMMING ASSOCIATION

Secretary: Gina Wilcox ( [wilcoxgina@hotmail.com](mailto:wilcoxgina@hotmail.com) )

Headteachers  
Swimming Co-ordinators  
Bournemouth & Christchurch Primary Schools

20 November 2009

Dear Colleagues

Re: Bournemouth & Christchurch Primary Years 5 and 6 Swimming Gala

Due to extra professional responsibilities, John Littlewood, from Moordown St John's School, has chosen to stand down from his extremely successful role as Event Organiser and we thank him for his guidance, which has brought about the continued success of the Event. We will miss him!

As a consequence of this and other issues, I am writing to inform you of changes to the format of the Bournemouth & Christchurch Primary Schools Gala held in January each year.

The huge popularity of the Event, held annually at the Littledown Centre, has given both the Pool Management and the Organisers cause for concern, in particular the large numbers of enthusiastic spectators!

So, for this coming event in 2010, we will trial some changes. A pilot for future years is proposed as follows:

A ) Two tandem Events will run:

Block 1:	Saturday, 16 January:	8 schools:	6.00 - 8.30 pm
Block 2:	Saturday, 23 January:	8 schools:	6.00 - 8.30 pm

Your schools will be invited to compete in one block or the other; this will reduce the gala to one heat per event and shorten the gala. We have regularly over-run which has caused difficulty for pool staff and our volunteer officials.

B) The reduced number of schools per event will enable ALL spectators to sit safely and comfortably. In the past many have had to stand and gangways have been blocked.

C ) Block 1 and Block 2 will be seen as one Event with 'Heat Declared Winners'. This is a common approach to swimming events and precludes the necessity to have heats and finals.

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D) No medals will be presented; in the past over £500 has been spent on medals and we can no longer afford this expense; the other six areas of Dorset who run identical events, do not present medals at this level. However, they will still be presented at the County Primary Finals in June and certificates will be posted out to 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, immediately after the 2 blocks have been completed.

E) An entry fee of £1.50 will be charged to adult spectators with free entry to accompanied children. This will help towards the pool hire costs and be reviewed for future years.

F) An important element of the Gala is the English Schools Swimming Association (ESSA) Team Relay Event, when the BEST swimmers from Years 5 & 6 make up the team. This is swum in all 8 areas of Dorset; the fastest teams go forward to an Inter-County Division 12 Final at The Quays, Southampton and can possibly be selected for a National Final; a unique opportunity for many of our competitors, which we would wish to maintain.

I trust this long and somewhat wordy letter will re- assure you that much consideration has been given to the proposed changes and we hope you will support the move. This full transcript will be made available on the web site, [www.dorsetswimming.co.uk](http://www.dorsetswimming.co.uk) for those staff and parents who may have questions.

The Year 4 'teaching' style gala, which has been most excellently run by Christchurch & New Milton SC, will continue to be held at the Two Riversmeet Pool, Christchurch on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2010.

Yours sincerely,

Gina Wilcox ( DSSA - Secretary )

As I shall be away throughout December any queries or questions should be made via my 'e' mail address: [wilcoxgina@hotmail.com](mailto:wilcoxgina@hotmail.com)