



## Schools' Swimming Service Guidance for Parents About Secondary Drowning Parental Advice Note

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent,

During the school swimming lesson today, your child got into difficulty. As a result of going under the water, he/she may have inhaled a small amount of water. As a result of this happening we are issuing a warning about secondary drowning.

Secondary drowning occurs when water has entered the lungs. This causes irritation and a build up of the fluids within the lungs and in turn prevents oxygen from entering the blood stream. In the majority of cases, an involuntary reflex action occurs preventing the water from entering the lungs.

**PLEASE NOTE THIS IS PRECAUTIONARY ADVICE. IF YOU NOTICE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS OR ARE UNHAPPY ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S CONDITION, THEN YOU SHOULD RING YOUR GP FOR FURTHER ADVICE:**

- **Irritation of the lungs causing coughing and spluttering**
- **Uncontrolled vomiting**
- **Lethargy (extreme tiredness, little or no response to verbal or physical commands).**
- **Possible frothing at the mouth and nose.**

Secondary drowning is very difficult to detect and as a result, we decided to make parents aware of the problem.

Children get into difficulty for a number of reasons and rarely are any circumstances the same involving submersion or inhalation of water. Our Instructors are trained to deal with these situations and will request an ambulance immediately for serious incidents to ensure the child is checked out at hospital.

For any child who has got into difficulty, this can result in a temporary loss in confidence, however, it is essential for them to continue with their swimming lessons in order to conquer those fears. Our procedure is to encourage children back into the water as soon as possible if they have had a bad experience. Occasionally, moving them temporarily into shallow water to build up their confidence as this is important.

**Mags Heathfield**

Manager Schools' Swimming

**Copy to be held at school.**