

Swim@Barker FAQs

Learning to Swim

How long will it take for my child to learn how to swim?

Learning to swim well is a long-term commitment. Children learn skills at different rates, and need to continue swimming regularly to maintain proficiency. The key to learning to swim is regular attendance and persistence.

When is my child water safe?

Swim Australia recommends children should be able to swim 400m with good style before they can swim well. In conjunction, children should acquire valuable essential water safety skills such as back floating and basic rescue techniques. These attributes build a sound foundation for children to be able to enjoy water-based activities such as competitive swimming, lifesaving, surfing, water polo, and sailing.

Will my child get colds and flu if they swim through winter?

It's not uncommon for families to ponder taking a break from swimming lessons during winter. However, after 3-6 months of not swimming, children often need to re-learn skills when they return. While the air outside will be cooler, our heated and well-maintained pools provide a safe, warm and comfortable environment for exercise and learning. Being cold in itself will not cause a cold or flu, however we recommend children dress appropriately before they leave the centre after their lesson.

Are the instructors accredited?

Our instructors hold nationally recognised certifications in the teaching of swimming and water safety through Swim Australia and / or Austswim. Our coaches are licensed under the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme prescribed by the Australian Sports Commission. All staff are qualified in a minimum of CPR, and all have Working With Children Checks (WWCC), and Police Checks.

What can I do outside of lessons to help my child progress?

Spending time in the water away from lessons is not only beneficial, it's also a great fun family activity! Our aim during lessons is to reinforce correct technique in a purpose-built learning environment. Swimming outside of lessons provides an opportunity to reinforce these skills, but also to explore and experiment. Exposing children to swimming experiences away from our pool can help children understand that skills they learn at Barker can be transferred to other aquatic experiences. Of course, make sure children around water are always appropriately supervised by an attentive, responsible adult.

What should I do if my child isn't progressing?

Learning to swim well takes time and there are times where progress may seem to stagnate. This is normal! Some skills are particularly complex to master, and require repetition and coordination. We've often found holiday intensive programs (or as we call them, HILTS) an effective way to give plateauing students a boost. However if you have concerns regarding your child's progress we invite you to speak with our Deck Supervisors, who monitor progress and ensure the smooth operation of our programs.

How long will my child spend in each level?

There is no set length of time that children should spend in each level, as our program is skills-based. While repetition is an important component of skill acquisition, our instructors are also trained in student-engagement to keep your children interested and motivated. However, if you have concerns about the length of time your child has been in a certain level we invite you to please speak with our Deck Supervisors, who monitor progress and ensure the smooth operation of our programs.

What age should my child start lessons?

It's never too early or late to learn to swim! We welcome all ages and abilities, however starting when young provides a range of benefits. Research indicates early-age swimming lessons assists physical and psychological development including strength, mobility, self-esteem, and social skills acquisition. Our infant classes are designed to aid in water awareness, water safety, water confidence, and social interaction. Swim@Barker enrolls children from 6 months of age into our Jellyfish classes, which are also a great bonding activity for parents or guardians with their children.

Do you use floatation aids?

While floatation aids such as arm bands or bubbles can provide a child with greater independence in the water, we find that they are not conducive to teaching swimming. They tend to place the child into a more vertical body position, whereas the most efficient swimming posture is a horizontal, streamlined position. A good streamline is the foundation of all other important swimming skills.

Why do classes run through school holidays?

Regular attendance at lessons is key to maintaining progress and learning new skills. We've found establishing a regular, consistent routine and swimming year-round the best way to foster a successful learning environment. Complex skill acquisition requires repetition and appropriate intervention from Instructors to enable refinement on subsequent attempts. Attending weekly lessons all year round gives children the best opportunity to reinforce good technique, and learn new skills.

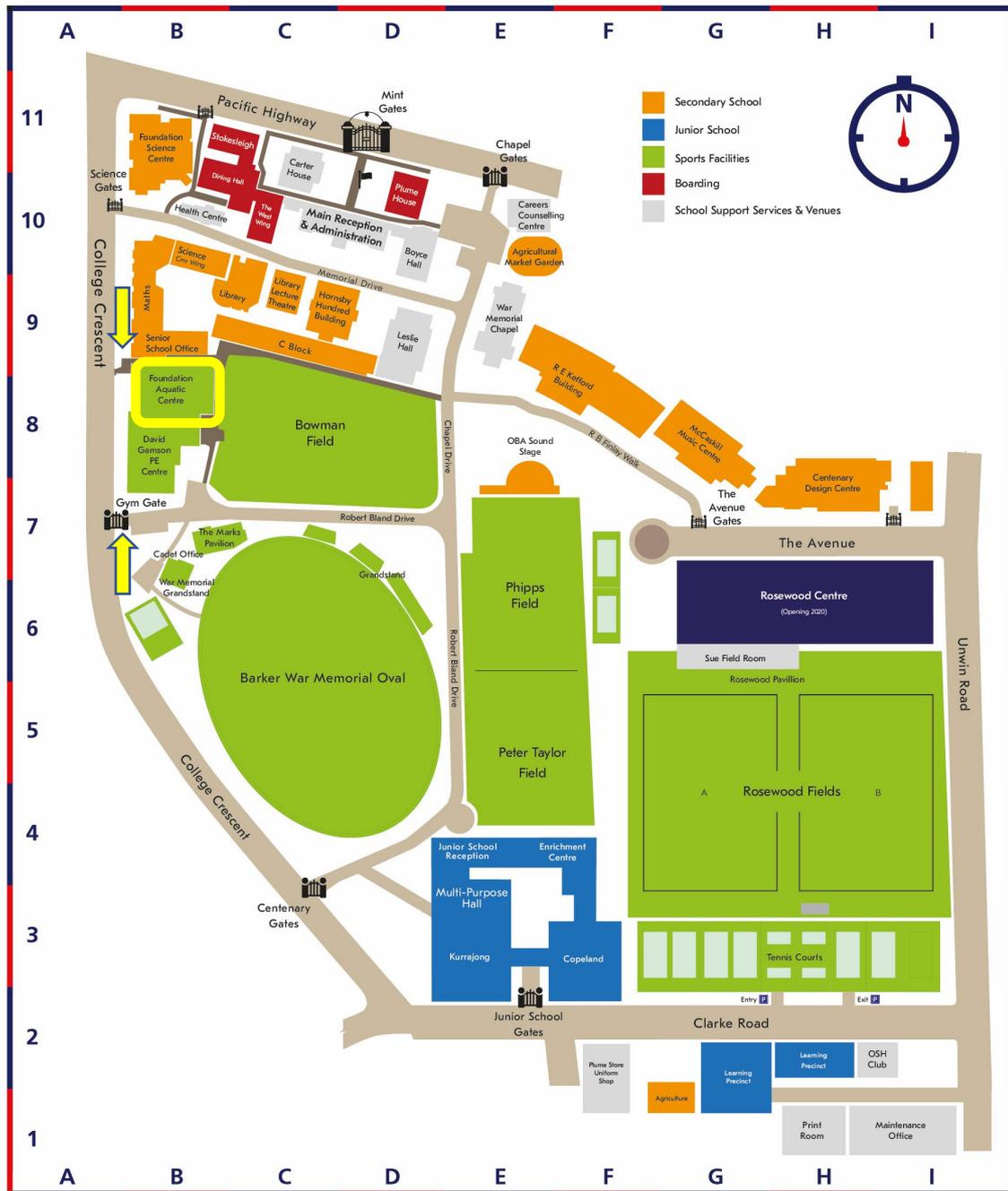
Why does my child have to wear a swimming cap?

Wearing caps help keep a child's hair away from their face which is often a distraction and impediment to effective learning, even for children with shorter hair. Additionally, wearing caps makes a significant difference to the load on our filtration system, helping us keep our pool water quality pristine.

What kind of nappy should my infant wear in parent and child classes?

All children in our infants classes or not fully toilet-trained must wear a disposable swim nappy. Additionally, we strongly recommend the wearing of a durable, re-usable firmly-fitting "Happy Nappy" as they are the most effective way of preventing accidents, and hence keeping our water quality at the high standard our customers are used to.

How to find us



Entry via the two pedestrian gates on College Crescent marked on the map

-  = Barker Foundation Aquatic Centre
-  = Pedestrian Gates

