

# Frequently Asked Questions and Direct Debit Guidance Notes



aqualearn

## What are the benefits of aqualearn membership?

- It's a continuous programme with progressive development.
- A Direct Debit monthly payment option is available **from only £19 per month**.
- The aqualearn pathway is based on the Amateur Swimming Association's (ASA) Swimmer's Journey. Visit [www.swimming.org/go/parents/learn-to-swim](http://www.swimming.org/go/parents/learn-to-swim).
- A range of awards recognise achievements and progress.

## What does the aqualearn package include?

- The complete aqualearn package includes:
  - One lesson per week.\*
  - A minimum of 45 lessons per year (includes removal of bank holidays), subject to lesson cancellations.
  - Unlimited access to public and family swimming sessions.^
  - A welcome pack that includes a child's Swimmer's Journey or an adult passport to record your progress and awards to celebrate your achievements.

## What are the advantages of paying by Direct Debit?

- Spreads the cost monthly rather than a lump-sum payment each quarter.
- Removes the inconvenience of queuing at reception when payments are due.
- Takes away the hassle of remembering payment dates.
- **No contract is required.** You will not be signed into a minimum term agreement or contract.
- The aqualearn package includes **unlimited access to public and family swimming sessions**.^

## I want to sign up to pay by Direct Debit - What do I need to do?

Please visit your local swimming pool to complete a Direct Debit form and pay your pro-rata fee. You will need to bring with you some ID showing proof of your address and your bank account card plus a payment method for your pro-rata payment.

After we have received your form we will send you a letter in the post confirming your payment plan details.

## What is a pro-rata fee?

A pro-rata fee is a one-off payment which must be paid after completing your Direct Debit form. This payment covers the cost of swimming lessons until the date of your first Direct Debit payment. This amount will vary depending on what date of the month you join the programme. Please be aware that if you complete a Direct Debit form on or soon after our monthly Direct Debit cut-off date then a full month will need to be paid for in advance. You can pay your pro-rata fee by cash, card or cheque (made out to Durham County Council).

\*Subject to lesson cancellations/bank holidays

^Does not include aqua-fun sessions



## So I am not tied into a contract?

No, the Direct Debit forms are set up as a simple payment plan. There are no terms and conditions attached or any hidden admin fees. You do not have to pay for a minimum term, however, we do ask for 28 days notice if you wish to cancel your membership.

## What about bank holiday refunds?

The aqualearn programme is continuous and your child's lessons may on occasion be due to take place on bank holidays. To take away the inconvenience of bank holiday refunds we have removed all bank holidays from the price in advance. This means that you don't have to worry about bank holiday refunds regardless of which day your child's lessons land on. The aqualearn programme breaks between Christmas and New Year for two weeks, these weeks have also been removed from the price in advance.

## What if I experience financial difficulties?

If you experience any financial difficulties please don't hesitate to contact us early to see how we can help. Don't forget, the Direct Debit option does not tie you into any contract, so you are able to terminate your Direct Debit providing you give us 28 days notice.

## What if I want to pay quarterly?

You will need to contact your local swimming pool to book your place and you can make your quarterly payment at the same time. We cannot reserve spaces until you are able to pay. You can pay and book over the phone if this is easier. We try to send reminder letters a month before your quarterly payment expires. Please note that if you miss your quarterly payment date this will be classed as non-payment and could result in you being removed from the programme. We encourage customers to select the Direct Debit payment method to avoid missing payment dates.

Quarterly payments are non-refundable unless you are prevented from swimming due to a medical condition or if you move out of the area. Refunds will be only be given at the discretion of centre management.

## What happens if I don't pay the quarterly fee on time or my Direct Debit payment defaults?

Unfortunately, if a quarterly payment is not made on time or a Direct Debit payment fails and the account is not brought back up to date within seven days, then we will class this as non-payment. This could result in you being removed from the programme. To avoid confusion and disappointment, please make sure payment is made as soon as possible, as we will not be able to teach anyone that is no longer registered.

**Chester-le-Street Leisure Centre**  
**Freeman's Quay Leisure Centre**  
**Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre**  
**Spennymoor Leisure Centre**  
**Teesdale Leisure Centre**  
**Woodhouse Close Leisure Complex**

**03000 266 444**  
**03000 268 488**  
**03000 266 446**  
**03000 261 161**  
**03000 260 862**  
**03000 261 322**



\*The benefits of the aqualearn membership are only available to the child or adult who holds this membership. The benefits of membership cannot be transferred or used by those without a valid aqualearn membership. Does not include aqua-inflatable sessions. Child admission policy applies. Contact the centre or visit our website for details.