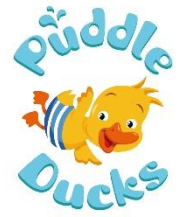


# FAQs regarding the restart of Puddle Ducks lessons from September 2020 in relation to COVID-19



We have put together some FAQs which we will add to over time, but for now, we have tried to answer the questions we think you may have at this time. Many of our own children swim in the Puddle Ducks programmes so we hope we have some insight as to the questions you may have.

## 1. What will classes look like when we return?

Your classes will still be the Puddle Ducks classes you know and love but with some temporary changes to ensure we keep everyone as safe as possible whilst we are still dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

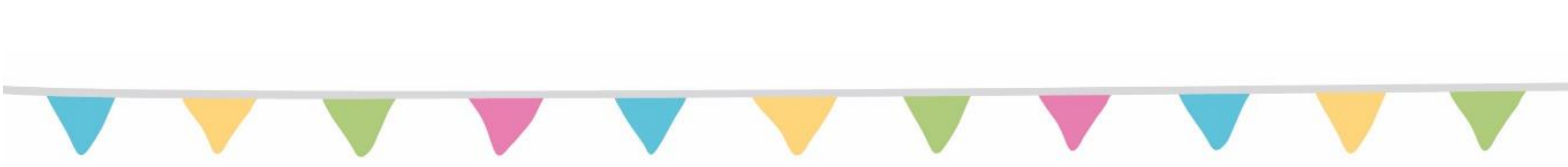
New, temporary lesson plans are being written for two reasons:

- i) We will run at least two weeks of 'reintroduction to swimming' lesson plans as it will have been almost 6 months since some of our swimmers will have been in a pool. We want to take the opportunity to get to know our teachers and classmates again and to regain any lost water confidence. The first couple of lessons will concentrate on having fun and remembering everything we love about our Puddle Ducks lessons and our time in the water
- ii) We have had to rethink the way we use our equipment and the way you all interact with your teachers and each other. All of this will be explained in detail before you attend your lesson but please be assured it will still be the Puddle Ducks lesson you know and love

## 2. How are Puddle Ducks keeping equipment, pool facilities and high traffic areas safe and clean?

Puddle Ducks are already leaders in the industry; our standards for operating pools are the highest and we work in accordance with PWTAG guidance to ensure this. These standards are even more important in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and we have produced robust procedures to ensure all public health requirements are in place.

Poolside Assistants will be present at many of our lessons to help co-ordinate social distancing as well as to clean poolside and, where necessary, in changing rooms. Some of our customers will be used to seeing Poolside Assistants but at many of our lessons it wasn't previously necessary to employ one, however, many more of you will now be seeing them. They won't necessarily be required at pool venues where the pool owner is taking responsibility for the cleaning of the pool room and changing areas. We will be using only safe and approved cleaning products and will be providing hand sanitiser for all our customers and team members to use before entering and after exiting the pool area.



More details about the pool you swim in will be provided, by your local team, in a document specific to that pool once they have carried out a physical risk assessment of that pool.

### 3. What is the situation regarding equipment during the lessons?

Regarding equipment, we are following both Government guidance and the guidelines set out by our governing body, the STA.

Full details can be read on the following links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings#left-area>

<https://www.sta.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/STA-Covid-19-Swim-Schools-Re-Opening-Guidance-V20-7.pdf> (pages 35 and 40 of this document are particularly relevant)

The guidance recommends that use of equipment is reduced and that customers should be encouraged to bring their own equipment if possible.

However, where customers don't want or feel the need to bring their own equipment or where they forget, there will be equipment available for use. The temporary lesson plans will reduce equipment to:

- A woggle (one long or two short or both, depending on the level – two short woggles are simply one long woggle cut in half)
- A floating toy (Puddle Ducks will provide floating balls that are easy to clean and don't hold water). If you decide to bring your own floating toy, a duck or other such toy is fine, as long as they are not dirty or showing signs of mould\*
- A sinking ring/toy for those children in Little Dippers, Dippers, Dabblers and Swim Academy swimmers

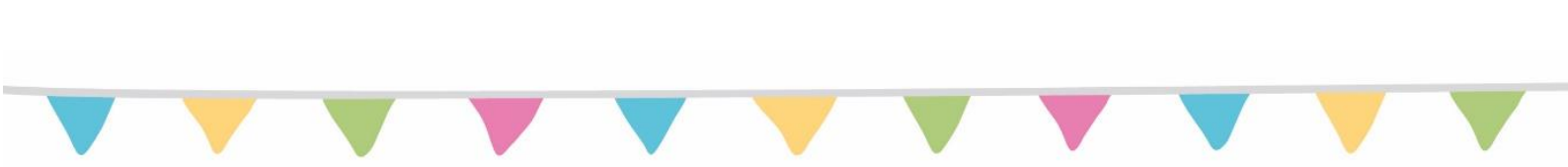
If you wish to purchase these items for yourself, we have worked with Splashabout to put together 'kits' with the appropriate equipment for your child's class level.

1. Woggle (to be kept as one long woggle) and Duck – Floaties and Splashers
2. Woggle x 2 (one woggle to be kept long and one to be cut in half), Duck and Dive Toy – Kickers, Little Dippers, Dippers & Dabblers
3. Woggle x 2 (one woggle to be kept long and one to be cut in half) and Dive Toy – Swim Academy Levels 1 & 2
4. Woggle by itself – Swim Academy Levels 3 & 4

You can find these 'kits' here:

[https://www.splashabout.com/baby-swimming/puddle-ducks-bundles.html?utm\\_source=puddle%20ducks&utm\\_medium=affiliates](https://www.splashabout.com/baby-swimming/puddle-ducks-bundles.html?utm_source=puddle%20ducks&utm_medium=affiliates)

Toys and equipment, owned by Puddle Ducks and used within swimming lessons will be sanitised throughout the lesson by submerging in the pool water as the levels of chlorine are sufficient to kill the virus after 15-20 seconds. At the end of the day, full disinfection will take



place, where the toys and equipment are cleaned, sanitised, disinfected, rinsed and dried ready for the next day.

Following a confirmed case of COVID-19, we will follow government guidance which states we must immediately CLEAN, SANITISE, DISINFECT, RINSE & DRY.

During a lesson, equipment must not be shared between swimmers. Our teachers will set the lesson up to reduce the risk of this happening by accident but we ask our parents/carers to make sure that children only use the equipment they have either brought with them or has been allocated to them for that lesson and that children don't put equipment or toys in their mouths.

It is the responsibility of our customers to clean toys and equipment that they own and bring to lessons.

\* Teachers have the discretion to refuse the use of equipment that it is not clean or fit for purpose.

#### 4. Will we be able to use the changing rooms?

This will be pool specific. Some pools have changing rooms where the layout will enable social distancing and cleaning in a viable way and others don't. It is likely that we will encourage customers to turn up 'swim ready' and to spend minimal time getting changed after the lesson to be able to maintain social distancing between classes and in high traffic areas. More details about the pool you swim in will be provided, by your local team, in a document specific to that pool once they have carried out a physical risk assessment of that pool.


#### 5. I have a child/children in Swim Academy, will parents/carers/guardians have to get back in the water as there are going to be no teachers in the water for the time being?

This depends on which Level of Swim Academy your child is in and also, their ability and confidence in the water after such a long period of no swimming.

If your child is in Levels 1 or 2 the answer is yes. We normally have teachers in the water for these levels but, due to social distancing guidelines, all teachers will teach from the poolside so we will need parents and carers to get in the water with their child to support them. Even if the pool were large enough for the teacher to get back in the water and still have social distancing, they are not allowed to handle the children plus they have a much better vantage point from poolside of all the children and parents/carers pairs.

This decision has been made in line with the current laws on social distancing and the guidelines from our governing body, the STA. As and when these guidelines/laws are updated, we will update our policies.

**Swimmers in Wales – please note** – the guidelines are slightly different and due to there being no need for children under the age of 11 to be socially distant from each other or adults, our teachers will be allowed in the water and parents will not have to get in.



However, you may find this differs slightly for your pool due to various factors. Your local team will be in touch to confirm asap.

If your child is in Level 3 or 4, your local team will get in touch to discuss whether or not parents/carers will need to get back in the water. This will be dependent on the following factors and will be decided on an individual basis:

- Your child's ability in the water and the need (or not) to rebuild confidence after a long period of no swimming
- The depth of the water in the pool in which your child swims e.g. can the child stand in the shallow end? Is the water too deep for a parent/carer to stand and support their child?

Your local team will be in touch regarding Level 3 and 4 children as soon as they have risk assessed the pools in question.

Levels 5 and 6 will remain the same as before lockdown as the children in these levels are confident swimmers and need no additional adult support in the pool.

If your child is going to be in the water without their parent/carer, please ensure your child knows how to adjust their hat and goggles before they re-start lessons as the teachers are not permitted to manually assist with hats or goggles.

## 6. When will my lessons restart?

Puddle Ducks have issued an official statement saying lessons restart on the 1<sup>st</sup> September. What this means for you is dependent on two things:

- i) Which day of the week your lesson takes place
- ii) Whether the pool where your lesson takes place is reopen for business. A small number of pools may be able to start lessons in August and some pools may not be ready until later in September or even October or beyond

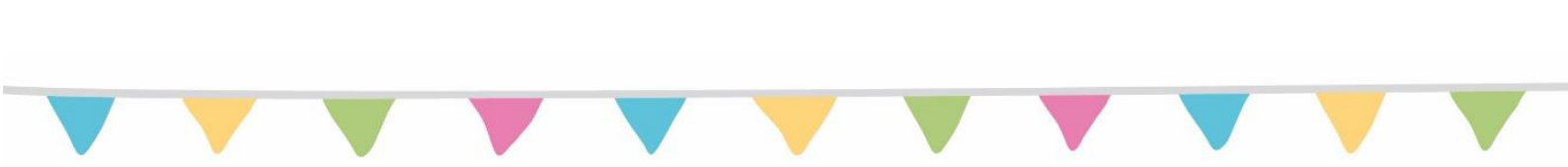
Your local team will be in touch with you as soon as they have all the details regarding your first lesson back.

## 7. When will my monthly payments be restarted?

Your monthly payments will restart in the month when you restart lessons. For most of you this will be September (it won't be any earlier than this but it may be later), but your local team will be in touch to confirm the exact date of your next payment.

Your payments will continue on the same date of the month as they did before e.g. if your payment came out on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month, it will continue to be taken on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month etc. Your September payment (assuming that is when your payments restart) will be for the normal monthly amount i.e. 4 lessons. Your My Puddle Ducks account online will detail this also. Please contact your local team if you have any further queries regarding payments.

Any money paid before lockdown that has not thus far been redeemed on lessons has been held on your account and when lessons restart, will be used in the normal way. No lessons or monies will have been lost as a result of lesson suspension.



**NB there will be no monthly payment taken in August despite what it may say on your My Puddle Ducks account unless you have been contacted by your local team about lessons restarting in August.**

## 8. My child has a temperature, but no other symptoms can I still bring them swimming?

The short answer is no, unfortunately not.

The most important symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of ANY not ALL of the following:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

We understand that a temperature is common in children and may be due to other viral illness not COVID-19 but it is one of the key symptoms and thus must be considered COVID-19 until proven negative by testing.

For most people, COVID-19 will be a mild illness. However, if you have ANY not ALL of the symptoms above you must follow the NHS guidelines regarding self-isolating and getting tested. If you or your child is being tested for COVID-19 and has not yet got the results back, please do not attend lessons until you have a negative result.

Please read the NHS guidelines with relation to testing for COVID-19.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-an-antigen-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

If you let us know, any time up to the start of your lesson, that you can't attend, you will be issued with a Courtesy Class voucher to use when you/your child are ready. You can let us know you can't attend via your My Puddle Ducks account online at <https://my.puddleducks.com/account/login>

Please see Question 15 in this document to update yourselves on the revised Courtesy Class policy during COVID-19.

## 9. What happens if my child or I develop symptoms during my lesson?

If you developed symptoms during a lesson, such as a temperature or new persistent cough, we would ask you to tell the Teacher or Poolside Assistant, from a safe distance, and then immediately leave the pool and return home and follow the NHS Guidelines.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>



10. **What if I/my child needs the toilet during our lesson?**

It's OK, just attract the attention of the Teacher or Poolside Assistant who will let you know which toilets to use and any additional hygiene procedures that need to be followed.

11. **My child is nervous about getting back in the water, what is in place to help?**

We will run at least two weeks of 'reintroduction to swimming' lesson plans as it will have been almost 6 months since some of our swimmers will have been in a pool. We want to take the opportunity to get to know our teachers and classmates again and to regain any lost water confidence. The first couple of lessons will concentrate on having fun and remembering everything we love about our Puddle Ducks lessons and our time in the water. If you still have concerns, please contact your local team who know your child personally and can speak to your teacher ahead of your first lesson back. Most importantly, don't worry, your child will not be the only one feeling nervous. Remain positive around your child and they will feel encouraged that there is nothing to worry about.


12. **What happens if my child has grown too old for their current class?**

This will be the case for many of our swimmers, particularly in the Floaties and Splashers class levels as well as those moving from our Baby & Pre-school programme into our Swim Academy. Your local team are looking at every child in every class and will be in touch to advise you of any class moves. Some of our local teams may decide not to do any class moves for the first few weeks until everyone has settled back in. Please be reassured that if your child is restarting lessons in a new class, they won't be the only one and all of our classes will have at least two weeks of 'reintroduction to the pool' lesson plans.

13. **My child has outgrown their swimwear, is the Puddle Ducks shop available to purchase the next size?**

We know many of you will have this issue. The Puddle Ducks shop will be open from 8th August 2020 and due to the COVID-19 situation, it will take between 8-10 working days for delivery with a delivery cost of £3.50 so any orders placed early enough should arrive in time for your first lesson. We will update you further as soon as we have concrete plans.

We would have loved to facilitate a 'swimwear swap' between our customers but unfortunately, the implications for our Teachers and Poolside Assistants in terms of ensuring hygiene and social distancing has proved too much to add into the equation. However, we encourage you to talk to the other swimmers in your class to see if there is any appetite to swap swimwear as we know much of it will not have seen much usage and it is a shame for it to go to waste. Some of you have local Puddle Ducks Facebook groups and this may be a way for you to communicate with other customers who are local to you about what you need or



what you have that no longer fits your little one. Please speak to your local team about any further details.

#### 14. Someone in my household/support bubble has symptoms but not yet had test results back can I still bring my child swimming?

If someone in your household/support bubble is waiting for COVID-19 test results, then no, you cannot come swimming until the test results are returned negative. Please follow NHS and Government guidelines regarding self-isolating and testing.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

#### 15. Can I still use my Courtesy Classes to attend other venues?

Any Courtesy Classes you had before lockdown are still on your account and expiry dates have been extended for at least six months and we will continue to extend them as necessary or until the opportunity to use them is the same as it was pre-lockdown.

For the time being, we have switched off the booking of a Courtesy Class function on your My Puddle Ducks account, meaning you won't be able to go online to book a Courtesy Class. In order to keep our lessons as safe as possible, we are not going to allow Courtesy Classes to be redeemed because we believe that whilst customers are getting used to the new way of doing things, we don't want to risk someone turning up to a pool last minute when they potentially haven't read the guidelines for that pool. We hope to be able to reintroduce this in time when we are comfortable that everyone is used to the new procedures.

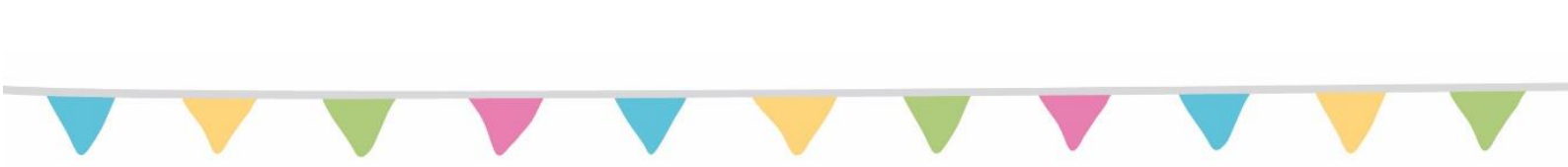
However, you will be able to let us know you can't attend a lesson in the usual way, via your My Puddle Ducks account and therefore be issued with a Courtesy Class voucher to use when we reopen the booking of Courtesy Classes. There is no time limit on this i.e. you can let us know, up to the start time of your lesson, that you can't attend as we have removed the 24 hour requirement temporarily while we are in the COVID-19 pandemic.

When it is safe to begin facilitating Courtesy Classes again, we will let you all know.

Just a reminder of our Courtesy Class policy, Courtesy Classes can only be taken by current paying customers so you cannot use them once your paid-for lessons have finished and they have no cash value.

#### 16. Will spectators be allowed at lessons?

The guidance from our governing body advises no spectators at lessons. This is to ensure that social distancing can be adhered to in venues where there is often little space. The pool specific document for the pool at which you swim will give full details. There may be some pools where space is less of a premium and therefore some spectators are allowed.



If you require assistance due to a disability (either your own disability or your child's), then you are able to bring a spectator to help as necessary.

Some of you may have been used to Poolside Assistants being able to watch over siblings while you (the parent/carer) is in the water but this is no longer possible given the additional responsibilities that Poolside Assistants will have for the time being.

### **17. Face Coverings – do I have to wear one to my lessons?**

We are recommending that customers wear face masks/coverings in the pool venues as much as is reasonably possible but not in the pool itself. This is in line with Government guidance where, in addition to the places where it is now compulsory to wear face coverings, you are also strongly encouraged to wear a face covering in other enclosed public spaces where social distancing may be difficult and where you come into contact with people you do not normally meet.

### **18. I have a question not covered here, who should I ask?**

Please contact your local team with any other questions you have. You will find their details on our website [here](#).