



## NORMAL OPERATING PROCEDURE (NOP) & EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN (EAP)

RIPON RACECOURSE LAKE

VERSION 1 – 04/04/25

### **INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this document is to provide a detailed overview of how each session will be operated and how incidents will be managed in a way that can be easily understood. It should be a blueprint for delivery that can be applied in the event of someone having to deputise for the regular organiser/session leader. It should be routinely referred to and not just left on a shelf to gather dust.

The document is split into three sections:

Section One: Normal Operating Procedures – provides background information in relation to the venue and activity as well as describing how safety will be managed routinely.

Section Two: Emergency Action Plan – describes the action that will be taken in the event of a foreseeable incident.

Section Three: Appendices – contains the risk assessment for the activity and other supporting documents referred to in the main document and/or risk assessment.

## CONTENTS

### NORMAL OPERATING PROCEDURES

#### Part One: Background Information

The Venue	Page 3
Venue Ownership, Organiser & Water Safety Provider	Page 3
Key Contacts & Responsibilities	Page 4
Event/Activity Description	Page 4
Site Plans	Page 5
Swimmer Tracking	Page 5
Entry and Exit	Page 5
Novice and Junior Swimmers	Page 6
Wetsuit Policy	Page 6
Water Temperature	Page 6
Water Quality	Page 6
Medical Arrangements	Page 7

#### Part Two: Water Safety Arrangements

Safety Cover Resourcing Levels & Positioning	Page 8
Communication Systems	Page 9
EAP	Page 10
Appendices	Page 12

## **Part One: Background Information**

The Venue: Ripon Racecourse Lake

W3W to the site entrance: ///ticked.decisions.oiled

How to get to venue: Turn off the B6265 (Boroughbridge Road) at the Wetlands Entrance. Drive through the gateway and take a right at the gap in the racecourse. Follow the track to the grassed parking directly in front of the lake.

Facilities: There are no changing rooms or toilets available on site. Nudity is strictly forbidden so please ensure you have sufficient cover to get changed – either towels, dry-robies or inside your vehicle.

### **Venue Ownership, Organiser & Water Safety Provider:**

The site is owned by the Ripon Racecourse Company and open water swimming sessions are operated by Ripon Triathlon Club volunteers.

Water safety is provided by Ripon Triathlon Club in the form of COWS (Coordinators of Open Water Swimming), Spotters and Paddle Boarders who have been trained in Paddle Board rescue.

## **UNDERSTANDING THE RISK**

RTC will ensure that every club member fully understand these risks before being permitted to swim at Ripon Racecourse Lake. However, all swimmers agree to swim entirely at their own risk and in the unlikely event of injury, accident, loss or damage suffered, regardless of however it may be caused, no responsibility whatsoever shall be attached to the organisers, landlords, or any persons involved in the organisation of the open water swimming at Ripon Racecourse Lake.

### **Activity Organiser**

The designated Duty Manager will assign tasks to staff present for the Open Water Swimming session. Primarily, the Duty manager is responsible for:

- Opening and closing the site
- Managing incidents should they occur.
- Weather monitoring and informing swimmers at the earliest possible time if sessions are cancelled.
- Checking the marker buoys are still in place
- Checking equipment – radios and paddle boards

The COWS are responsible for:

- Signing swimmers in and out of the water and ensuring they are RTC members
- Checking the temperature of the water
- Ensure parents have signed the disclaimer form for OW Junior Swimmers and confirm they have been competency assessed by OW Swim Committee member or BTF Certified Coach
- Ensure all swimmers have a tow float
- Ensure all swimmers adhere to the wetsuit guidelines

- Ensure swimmers have completed an Induction and understand the EAP
- Sound the Klaxon in the unlikely event of a major incident
- Complete an accident report form for any incident
- Coordinate the appropriate emergency response

**Who/which organisation(s) has been involved in developing the NOPs/EAPs.**

Senior members of staff (see key contacts) have been involved in the planning and development of open water activities including the risk assessment and documenting both normal and emergency operating procedures.

**Key Contacts**

Chair	Andrea McAuslan	07793654445
OW Swim Manager	David Sharp	07736808111
COWs	April Martin	07376181480
COWs	Christine Marshall	07303057940

**Event/Activity Description**

Ripon Triathlon Club sessions welcome all abilities and allow swimmers to train at their own pace around an accurately measured 350m and 500m course. Each session lasts for 2 hours and swimmers can complete as many or as few laps as they prefer. There is capacity for up to a maximum of 40 swimmers in the water at any time (with two on water Paddle Boarders).

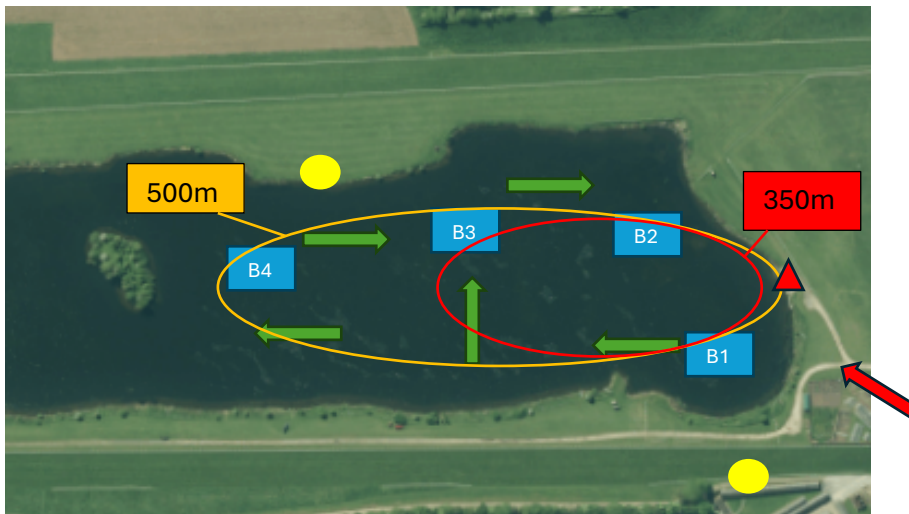
The course is marked by 4 buoys and swimmers are to swim in a clockwise direction around the outside of these buoys. Once the bathing capacity has been reached no further swimmers can enter the water until space becomes available as swimmers exit the water. Ripon Triathlon Club welcomes swimmers over the age of 12 years, age related details and conditions are found in the appendices.






Swimming is only permitted:

- Between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 31<sup>st</sup> Oct each year (dependant on water temp)
- Tuesdays and Thursdays 18:00-20:00 and Saturdays 08:00-09:30
- Once the water temperature is reliably above 11°C. Wetsuits are mandatory for adults AND children when water temperature is below 18°C (unless cleared to swim without a wet suit by Duty Manager following confirmation of experience), wetsuits become optional when the water temperature is over 18°.
- There is a Club Open Water Supervisor present.

There are no other users of the lake whilst sessions are running. The banks slope to a uniform depth of around 2-3m. The lake is strictly private so should be free of items such as cans and bottles, although the lake is used by anglers and therefore a risk of fishing line. There are no known currents or eddies, overhanging or hidden underwater hazards in our designated swim areas. Please take care on entry and exit – it is more slippery when wet. Water temperature is generally uniform. The lake can from time to time have weeds, particularly in the warmer weather. These tend to be visible, and advice is swim around rather than through.

## Site Plans



Blue Square		Marker Buoys
Green Arrow		Direction of swim
Yellow Circle		Spotter positions
Red Triangle		Swim entry / exit & registration point
Red Arrow		Road Entry
Orange Circle outline		500m course
Red Circle outline		350m course

## Swimmer Tracking

Swimmers to arrive and change by their cars or arrive changed and ready to swim. There are no changing rooms and there is a strict no-nudity rule. Once changed they are to sign in with the member of staff based at the swim entry point. This member of staff will have the online database of those who have paid online. Any swimmer arriving without having paid will be directed to the payment app. We will not be accepting cash.

Each swimmer will then hand in their membership card or Photo ID in exchange for a swim band. If a photo ID is being used instead of Membership Card (if this has not been allocated in time), the COW will cross reference the ID with the Spond Membership App to confirm membership.

The COW on duty stays at the swim entry point for the entirety of the session to ensure collect bands on exit from the water, reducing opportunity for 'lost' swimmers.

There are Paddle Boarders on the water at a 20:1 swimmer:PB ratio and 2 'Spotters' based on either side of the lake. These safety crew are equipped with a radio and a whistle.

Once swimmers have finished their swim, they are to return their band to the COW in exchange for the membership card / Photo ID.

## Entry and exit

Only enter and exit the lake via the jetty. There are two further emergency exits which can be used both marked by flags. In the event of a controlled evacuation, Exit 3 (the usual exit point) is to be used.

## **Novice Swimmers**

New swimmers must book an Induction via the Ripon Triathlon Club Members Forum (Facebook). On arrival the COWs will conduct the induction process prior to swimming.

For new members and for any members who wish to signify that they are not confident with OW swimming and would like to swim with another club member they will be given a yellow swim hat.

## **Children**

OW Junior members are only permitted to swim with a supervising Adult in the water with them, on a 1:1 ratio and within 5m of each other. The recommended distances for each age group are:

- a) 12-year old – Max 350m
- b) 13 to 14-year old – Max 500m
- c) 15 to 16-year old – Max 750m
- d) 17-year old – Max 1,500m
- e) Wetsuits are mandatory.
- f) Tow floats are mandatory.

## **Wetsuit & Tow Float Policy**

Wetsuits are mandatory for adults and children when water temperature is below 18°C (unless cleared to swim without a wet suit by Duty Manager following confirmation of experience), wetsuits become optional when the water temperature is over 18°.

All swimmers must use a **tow float** when OW swimming (either with or without a wetsuit), this provides them with an immediate buoyancy aid, and **wave** to attract attention, and should be easily recognisable to the safety crew.

## **Water Temperature**

Water temperature is taken before each swim session.

Swimming is only permitted when the water temperature reliably exceeds 11°C and the safety arrangements for the lake are based on this presumption.

There is no minimum air temperature for swimming to be permitted. Safety crew advised to dress appropriately for the weather.

## **Water Quality**

The water is tested at the beginning of the season and again in July. Samples are taken in line with the testing protocol set by Swim Safety who provide our water testing. Ripon Racecourse Lake has a long history of excellent water quality.

After the first over threshold reading, swimming sessions are postponed until further test results are confirmed. If high levels of bacteria are indicated on the re-test, the management team will discuss the best course of action and treatment, and the lake will be closed until conditions are within the acceptable range. In relation to blue- green algae, the lake is regularly monitored for visible signs of surface algae and tested as above.

If blue green algal blooms (any visual change to the water) are present, then swimming is suspended until further below thresholds tests have been received.

Duty Managers provide swimmers as much notice as possible.

Water quality tolerance limits are shown below.

<b>EC Bathing Water Directive 2006/7/EC</b>				
<b>Rating</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Sufficient</b>	<b>Poor (Fail)</b>
Escherichia coli (cfu/100 ml)	<b>&lt;500</b>	<b>&lt;1000</b>	<b>&lt;900</b>	<b>&gt;900</b>
Intestinal enterococci (cfu/100 ml)	<b>&lt;200</b>	<b>&lt;400</b>	<b>&lt;330</b>	<b>&gt;330</b>

pH between 6 and 9

- Cyanobacteria 20,000-100,000 cell/ml (or if forming visual surface algae in swim areas)
- E'Coli not more than <900 per 100mils
- Entero-cocci <330 per 100mils

Blue Green Algae guidance Levels: No. Cells/ml	<20,000	>20,000-<100,000	>100,000
Rating	Relatively Low	Moderate (warning threshold)	High

### **Medical Arrangements**

COWS are First Aid qualified. A defibrillator and First Aid equipment is located in the main store shed (this will be on hand for each session at the swim entry point with the COWS along with vehicle).

Address & contact details for nearest hospital with A & E department:

Harrogate District Hospital

Lancaster Park Road

Harrogate

HG2 7SX

01423 885959

During an incident the COWS on shift is responsible for ensuring emergency services have been contacted.

Emergency services are able to drive directly next to Lake if necessary. Handover point of casualties from the COWS to the medical support – emergency crews on site will alert Land based safety cover personnel to either continue or change over. Staff will defer to emergency service expertise in hand over situation.

**Reporting:**

All incident and near miss will be reported and investigations will be tasked to the Duty Manager.



## **PART TWO:**

### **Water Safety Arrangements**

#### **Safety Cover Resourcing Levels and Positioning**

Number of engine- powered craft (safety boat) – N/A

#### **Number of human-powered craft**

1 x COWS, 2 x Land-based Spotters and Paddle Boarders on the water (ratio of 20:1 swimmers:PB)

COWS on swim entry to manage, sign in and out, first aid, emergency response and general information for swimmers at swim entry location. When not signing swimmers in and out the COW will coordinate regular swim counts and can be an additional pair of eyes for spotter duties. At the beginning of the session the COW at point of entry will ensure that no swimmers enter the water until safety cover is in position and have overall responsibility for the session.

Paddle Boarder will:

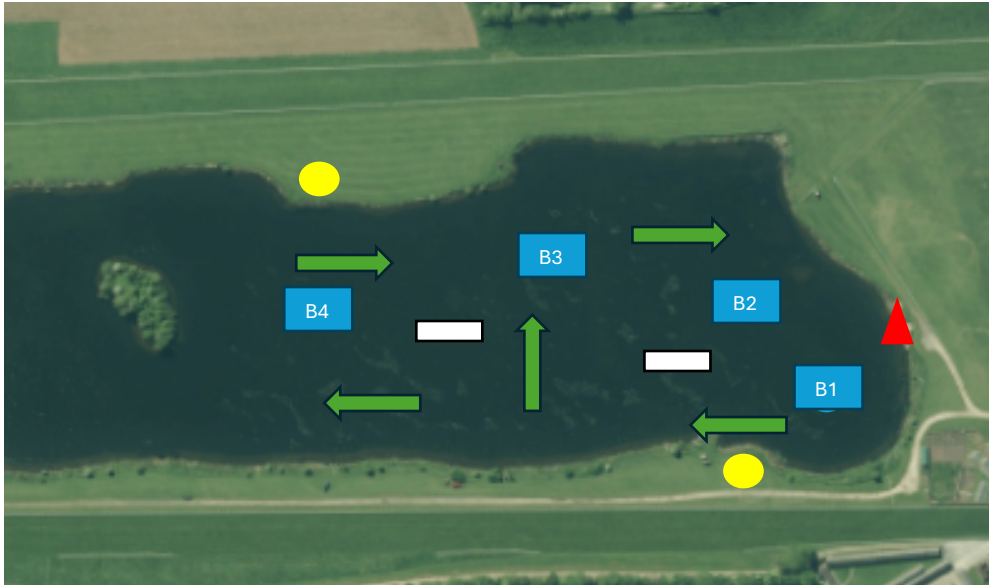
- Provide assistance at all entry/exit points if required and monitor swimmers' ability where necessary.
- will move up and down swim sections ensuring they are responsive to swimmer requirements.
- In an emergency event, if required the on-water PB will encourage swimmers to exit at the nearest bank and walk back around to entry point.
- Look for signs of swim failure in cold swimmers and assess the swimmer's ability to continue safely.
- Provide support to conscious swimmers who get into difficulty and returning to the nearest bank.
- Recover unconscious swimmers to the nearest bank.
- Paddle boarder will have a whistle and radio.

Spotters will:

- Monitor swimmer activity and spot signs of distress.
- Alert Paddle Boarder and COW of any swimmers with signs of distress or requiring assistance.
- Confirm regular swim counts with COW.
- Will have a whistle, radio and binoculars.

Notice board is used at Swim Entry to inform new and regular swimmers of general swimmer information and checklist, swimmer signals, water temperature, swim route and length, emergency protocols and whistle blast meanings.

#### **Positioning**



Blue Square		Marker Buoys
Green Arrow		Direction of swim
Yellow Circle		Spotter positions
Red Triangle		Swim entry / registration point
White Rectangle		Paddle Boarder

#### Spotters:

COW – at swim entry

Spotter 1 - on the East side of the lake at the inlet near the first Island

Spotter 2 - on the West side of the lake at the inlet by the wooden steps

#### Paddle Boarders:

Paddle Boarder 1 will remain within the bottom half of the course between Buoys 1 and 2

Paddle Boarder 2 will remain within the top half of the course between Buoys 3 and 4

#### **Communication System**

The communication system for the water safety team will comprise of radio communication with whistles being used as a backup and an air horn.

Communication between the water safety team and swimmers in the water will be whistle signals and verbal instructions

If swimmers need to get the attention of lifeguards they are to stop and wave one hand in the air and shout if they are able to.

Spotter and paddle boarders to use radios to communicate with each other and the COWS with a whistle as a back- up method of communication.

1 short whistle blast – to get the attention of a swimmer

2 short whistle blasts – to get the attention of another lifeguard

1 long blow of the air horn – to clear the swimming area

### Water Safety Team Briefing

Pre-season

The water safety team will be sent a copy of the NOP & EAP ahead of the season and a run-through of these practices will take place prior to the start of the season.

Further training/practice will be arranged during the season including as/when new members join the team to include Paddle Board refresher sessions.

Pre-session

Prior to each session the Duty Manager and COWS will ensure the safety team are aware of their responsibilities.

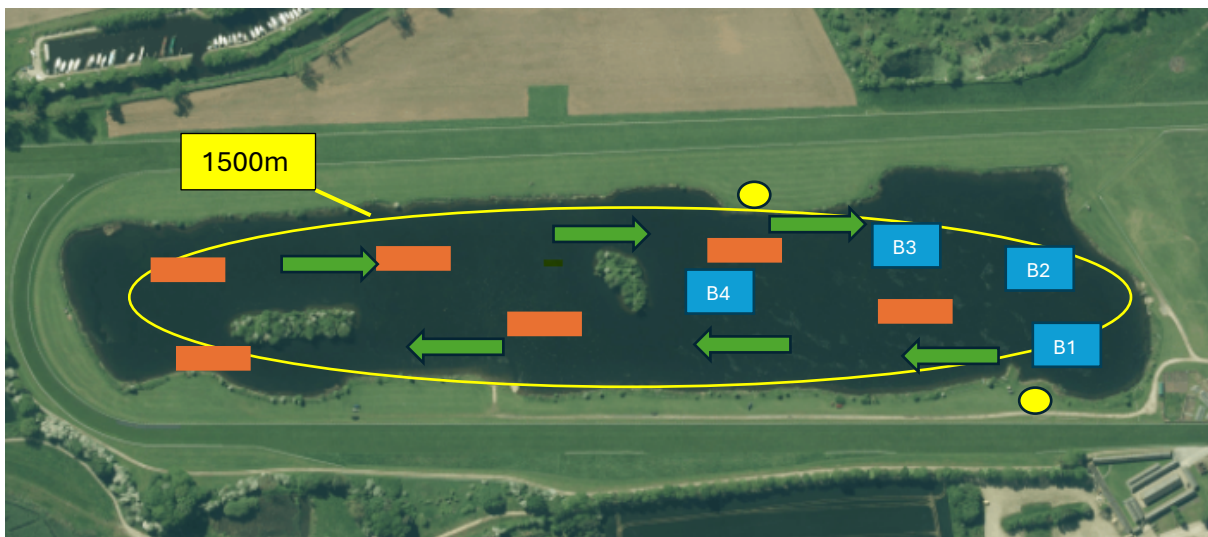
### '2nd Island' (Longer course Swim)

On pre-arranged dates during the year there will be the option to swim the full 1500m course of the lake.

Long course sessions will take place during the normal Thursday evening sessions where all normal operating procedures remain the same. The normal 350m and 500m courses are also still available to swim at this time.

On these dates additional cover has been arranged and will be provided by the Dales Canoe Club who have all received water rescue training.

6 canoeists will be provided and will be stationed as per the diagram below.



Blue Square		Marker Buoys
Green Arrow		Direction of swim
Yellow Circle		Spotter positions
Red Triangle		Swim entry / registration point
Orange Rectangle		Canoeist
Yellow oval outline		1500m Course

## **EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN**

### Recovery of a conscious casualty

The Paddle Boarder closest to the swimmer to encourage them to swim to the bank. The lifeguard should position themselves where the swimmer can see them and direct the swimmer towards them.

If established the swimmer cannot swim themselves to the bank, the PB should use the radio to get the attention of the COWS and the other safety team before entering the water. At this point the COW is to ensure that the lake is still being effectively supervised. The PB enters the water and carries out the appropriate rescue which is covered in the site-specific training. Once initial first aid checks have been made, the swimmer should be escorted back to the swim entry and checked over by the COWS, allowing the PB to return to their stations. An incident form will be filled out and an accident form filled out if required.

### Recovery of an unconscious, non-breathing casualty

PB closest to swimmer to alert the COWS and other safety team, via whistle before entering the water to perform a rescue. Use of the evacuation horn to indicate evacuation.

The PB is to bring the casualty back to the closest bank, casualty taken out of the lake and CPR to commence. The COWS will take control of the scenario, safety team should remain radio silence so that all messages can get through. The COWS to take first aid kit and defibrillator round to the unconscious casualty whilst phoning for the emergency services.

Duty Manager to manage lake evacuation and to then meet emergency services and direct them to the casualty.

COWS to continue with CPR/first aid until emergency services arrive. Once lake has been evacuated, remaining safety team to await further Instructions from Duty Manager.

### Missing swimmer

Swimmers to drop bands back at swim entry finishing their swim so they can be signed out of the water. Periodic checks between COWS, PB and Spotters to check number of bands signed out correlates with the number of swimmers in the water.

If a swimmer is recorded as missing, then a quick search of facilities undertaken.

If a swimmer still unaccounted for, a phone call to their mobile number to be made (available on their waiver form).

If contact cannot be made, then a call to their listed next of kin to be made (available on their waiver form).

If contact still cannot be made, then a thorough search of the facility will be conducted, and emergency services called (Duty Manager will coordinate).

### Course Evacuation e.g. lightning, declining visibility, lifeguard performing in water rescue

In the event of Lake evacuation, air horn will sound and PBs will encourage swimmers to exit the water at the nearest point.

There will be no revised course as we cannot effectively manage swimmers in other configurations without boat based support.

Session to be cancelled with as much prior notice if water temp falls below 11° or if water quality samples come back positive for algae or coliforms or if lightning predicted.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1 - Swimmer Checklist

1. Register at swim entry and collect swim band just before you enter the water.
2. Ensure hat is on before entering the water.
3. Ensure tow float is secure before entering the water.
4. Make sure you are aware of the swim route.
5. Inform COWS of any details that may impede your ability to swim.

## Appendix 2 – Junior Swimmer Guidance

### Accompanied Junior Swimmers

1. All Junior under 18 swimmers MUST be accompanied by an adult (over 18) in the water, who is a competent Open Water Swimmer creating a supervised swim system.
2. There must be evidence of the juniors swimming ability (parental consent).
3. The adult swimmer MUST be a parent, guardian or a known person who has permission from the parent/guardian to swim with the junior.
4. They cannot be ‘any’ other swimmer who does not know the child and parent/guardian.
5. The venue requires a signed parental consent form from the junior's parent/guardian.
6. Staff have the right to refuse any junior entry to the water on the grounds of safety.

<b>Appendix 3 - Age related conditions Age</b>	<b>Conditions</b>
12–17 year-olds	Accompanied in and out of water by a competent over 18 swimmer and a signed waiver form.

## Appendix 4 – Junior Swimming Competency

Ripon Triathlon Club have established the following guidelines, terms and conditions of use, Competence Tests and Competence Declaration for juniors aged 12-17 wishing to participate in Open Water swimming accompanied by an adult at Ripon Racecourse Lake

### Competency Tests

1. Junior swimmers must be able to competently swim the 500m course continuously and be confident and competent in deep water.
2. COWS require a signature from a parent/carer to say that their child is competent as per declaration below.

The child will then need to attend a session where the Duty Manager can assess their competence by observing them swim a lap of the lake. If COWS or Duty Manager have concerns over the ability of the child, they will not be allowed to swim unaccompanied.

**Competency Declaration**

The following named junior swimmer ..... is over the age of 12 yrs and can competently complete a continuous swim of the 500m course without stopping, other than to turn at each buoy to sight, and is confident and competent in deep, cold water in a wetsuit.

Duty Manager Name and Signature: .....

Parent/Carer Name and Signature: .....

**Swimmer Details:**

Swimmer Age: .....

Emergency contact name: .....

Emergency Contact Relationship to Swimmer: .....

Emergency contact phone number(s): .....

Allowing junior swimmers to open water swim at Ripon Racecourse Lake may be agreed on a case by case basis, provided that;

1. You are able to satisfy the Duty Manager that you are safe and competent to swim in open water, based on an acceptable level of experience of swimming in cold, open water conditions previously and provided that you can complete the above competence tests.
2. The parent/carers and Junior swimmer has read and understood the junior swim rules. You will be asked to complete the open water swim test in a wetsuit