

Water safety – Important message for parents and schools

Following recent tragic incidents involving water, this is an important reminder of how quickly situations can change. As the weather gets warmer, more children and young people are spending time around rivers, lakes and the coast, increasing the risk of harm.

Even on hot days, open water can be dangerously cold, and conditions are often unpredictable.

Children and young people may not always recognise these risks, so it's vital that key safety messages are shared.

Key water safety messages

Please help reinforce the following advice with children and young people:

- 🛑 **Stop and Think:** Check for hidden hazards such as deep water, currents and cold temperatures
- 👫 **Stay Together:** Never go into or near water alone; choose areas with lifeguards where possible
- 📞 **Call 999 in an emergency:** Ask for the Coastguard at the coast, or Fire & Rescue if you are inland



Cold water shock

Many recent incidents have involved cold water. Even strong swimmers can be affected. Sudden immersion can cause panic, loss of breathing control and reduced ability to swim. If you fall into water:

- Try to stay calm: The effects of cold water shock usually pass within the first minute
- Float on your back to regain control of your breathing
- Once calm, call for help or swim to safety if possible

A Life-saving skill: Float to Live

Teaching children how to float could save a life:

- Tilt your head back with ears in the water
- Relax and breathe slowly
- Move hands and feet gently to stay afloat
- 📖 **Float** – If you fall in, stay calm, float on your back and control your breathing

