



## **Bristol Penguin Olympic Swimming Club**

### **Squad Moves Policy**

#### **Assessments**

- Assessments are carried out at regular intervals throughout the year. These are used to monitor swimmer progress and provide a clear standard to attain to move into the next appropriate squad. For all squads, the principal consideration is the coaches' assessment of their swimmers' technique and training data from swim tests. For the higher squads some additional measures are introduced which include monitoring of attendance and results from times in licensed open meets.
- The specific squad criteria for each pathway of the club can be found on the Swim Squads page of the club website.  
[Bristol Penguin Olympic Swimming Club - Swim Squads \(teamunify.com\)](https://www.teamunify.com)
- Detailed feedback from assessments is available on request from the lead coach for each squad.

#### **Squad Moves**

- Squad moves take place four times a year. For the higher-level competitive pathway, squad moves take place at the most suitable time in the year to best match their training cycles and competition calendar.
- If a swimmer misses the assessment period, any available data will be used but if where there is insufficient information to make a credible assessment then they will have to wait to be assessed again at the end of the next 12-week cycle.
- You may find that your child stays in a group for a considerable length of time and 12-18, even 24 months in one group is not unusual.
- Please remember that the coaches' decision is based on the best interests of the child and their swimming.
- You will be advised the date at which your child will move squad.
- All squad moves are initially probationary for the first month (i.e., trial period). This is to ensure the new group suits the swimmer. It helps manage expectations for swimmers, so they understand initial moves are 'tryouts' and occasionally there is a need to revisit the squad move.

#### **Fees**

- When moving squad, you will be advised of any fee changes. These will either start from the next calendar month, or halfway through the month. If halfway through the month, a half fee may be applied to the account. However, the squad change may be effective immediately. If there are any concerns regarding the affordability of any squad, please contact our finance team in confidence – [helen.giles@bristolpenguins.com](mailto:helen.giles@bristolpenguins.com)

#### **Retaining a Place in Squad**

- Should a swimmer continue to meet the criteria for their current squad but not the criteria for the next squad up, the swimmer will be eligible to stay in their current squad until they fall out of the age bracket for that squad.
- Swimmers in Gold / Gold + and Youth Competitive may be in these squads for five years + and during this time squad criteria may vary, and swimmer performance may fluctuate. The Head

Coach may provide these swimmers with a longer period of grace if they fall behind the necessary qualification times required for the squad. This will be up to 12 months for swimmers in Gold +, to allow the swimmers a whole cycle to achieve at least two regional qualifying times, should these have not been achieved in the previous season. For swimmers in Youth Competitive, this will be six months, to allow swimmers to obtain at least two county qualifying times, should these have not been achieved in the previous season. There will be a 1% allowance for swimmers born from September to December (last third of the year) to provide some parity to those who find themselves born later in the year and must meet qualification times based on 'age at end of year'. The following conditions shall apply: -

- Should the squad be over capacity, the Head Coach reserves the right not to provide this period of grace. I.e., priority will be given to those who meet the qualification times or those closest to the qualification times. In this instance, the usual squad moves policy (see 'moves to a less competitive pathway') will then apply.
- The Head Coach may review progress towards achieving the necessary qualification times every three months. The swimmer must show sufficient progress towards the qualification times through times recorded at licensed open meets. If not, then the normal squad moves policy (see 'moves to a less competitive pathway') will then apply.
- All other squad expectations / criteria continue to be met. If not, then the normal squad moves policy (see 'moves to a less competitive pathway') will then apply.
- In the subsequent season, swimmers will then be expected to obtain the full qualifying times and if this is not achieved then the usual squad moves policy (see 'moves to a less competitive pathway') will apply.

#### Moving up a squad

- If a swimmer meets the assessment requirements for the next squad up (see above) then they will be moved up a squad. Please note places in the next squad may be limited in this instance priority will be given to those who have the strongest case against the assessment criteria. If the next squad is under capacity, the Head Coach reserves the right to move swimmers up to fill the spaces - even if they don't fully meet the assessment criteria. In this instance, those with the strongest case will be prioritised. Note - this will be discretionary as the Head Coach has to balance the need to fill spaces against the need to maintain squad standards expected at the club.
- When squad moves are sent out there may be some latitude for moving to the parallel squad or some different sessions within the squad.
- Unfortunately, we are not able to move children based on the convenience of the session times for the parent. However, we will work to accommodate swimmers in a parallel or lower squad provided there is space, and it is appropriate. Swimmers may not swim up a squad.
- If the alternative squad becomes full and the space is needed, any swimmers swimming out of squad will no longer be able to attend that session.

#### Extended Trials for Gold+ and Youth Competitive

- As standards for entering Gold + and Youth Competitive have become more stringent, there will be some allowance for those who are marginally short of the necessary qualification times. This will provide an opportunity for these swimmers to move into one of the squads on a **trial basis**. This will be six months for Youth Competitive and 12 months for Gold +. The definition of marginally short will typically relate to swimmers being within 2% of county qualifying times for Youth Competitive or only gaining regional consideration and not the full regional times required for Gold +. There will be an additional 1% allowance for swimmers born from September to December (last third of the year) to provide some parity to those who find themselves born later in the year and must meet qualification times based on 'age at end of year'. The following conditions shall however apply: -

- ❖ Should the squad be over capacity, the Head Coach reserves the right not to provide this trial. I.e., priority will be given to those who meet the qualification times or those closest to the qualification times. In this instance, the usual squad moves policy (see 'moves to a less competitive pathway') will then apply.
- ❖ The Head Coach may review progress towards achieving the necessary qualification times every three months. The swimmer must show sufficient progress towards the qualification times through times recorded at licensed open meets. If not, then the normal squad moves policy (see 'moves to a less competitive pathway') will then apply.
- ❖ All other squad expectations / criteria continue to be met and (as applicable) the swimmer continues to be within the age guidelines for the squad. If not, then the normal squad moves policy (see 'moves to a less competitive pathway') will then apply.
- ❖ Should there be extenuating circumstances and/or squads are under capacity, the Head Coach reserves the right to vary the definition of 'marginally short'.
- ❖ To stay in the designated squad swimmers will then be expected to have obtained the full qualifying times required by the end of the trial period. These are two county qualifying times for Youth Competitive and two regional qualifying times for Gold +. There will be an additional 1% allowance for swimmers born from September to December (last third of the year) to provide some parity to those who find themselves born later in the year and must meet qualification times based on 'age at end of year'. If this is not achieved, then the usual squad moves policy will apply (see 'moves to a less competitive pathway') and the swimmer will move to a less competitive squad at the end of the extended trial period.

#### Moves to a Less Competitive Pathway

- If a swimmer is identified as not meeting the squad requirements for the next squad or has reached an age too old for the current squad or does not meet the criteria for the current squad, then the process below will take place.
- The coach will have a conversation with the parents of the swimmer to discuss the situation. They will suggest a move to a less competitive squad. If the parents or swimmer do not want this, the swimmer could stay in the squad for one more assessment cycle to see if they can improve. They will be given feedback about what they need to do to improve to meet the requirements.
- The swimmer will be assessed again at the next assessment round (12 weeks later). A final decision about the squad moves will then be made and communicated to the swimmer and parents.
- This process may be fast tracked for reasons of poor attendance, poor punctuality and a swimmer not meeting the training values of Bristol Penguins.
- If there are extenuating circumstances (e.g., bereavement, injury) then a longer period of grace may be granted to the swimmer.