

Learn to Swim Guidance Notes - Goldfish to Shark Levels

STA Pathway

Stanley Levels 1-7 or Octopus Levels 1-3 (older Beginners) are completed and then this moves to Goldfish Levels 1-3, then Angelfish Levels 1-3, then Shark Levels 1-3.

Please note we do not swim Stanley Star so after Stanley 7 they move to Goldfish 1.

Swim England Comparisons

Whilst Swim England Comparisons can be made with the ILSP STA Learn to Swim Programme it is important to note that the STA has a higher level of swimming required through Goldfish and Angelfish, except for BF. The levels on the old comparison sheet however are not actually that helpful, and so this has been removed. I have noted the following here as a basic and more accurate guidance for those of you who teach Swim England Stages elsewhere.

Stanley 7 - Stage end of Stage 2/start of Stage 3
Goldfish 1-2 - Stage 3
Goldfish 3/Angelfish 1 - Stage 4
Angelfish 2/3 - Stage 5
Shark 1/2 - Stage 6
Shark 3 - Stage 7

Travelling v Swimming and Distances Required

Emphasis is also made in these levels that a swimmer's preferred stroke should be used for the longer distance where noted. If you have a swimmer who is stronger at BRS, this should be considered the Learner's First Choice to promote positive attitudes to a balanced swim and motivate swimmers.

Swimmers in Stanley 6 do not need to show a breath on their FC. Stanley 7 is 10m attempting a head turn, so again, very basic level - if you see one as a try, then this is enough!

Rhythmical Breathing and Bilateral Breathing Patterns

Bilateral breathing is not introduced in a full swim until Shark 1 (approx Stage 6) and before this, from Goldfish upwards, rhythmical breathing patterns should be shown. Rhythmical breathing is a broad term for any timed or consistent breathing pattern.

Age ranges for levels

The Stanley levels of the programme begin for swimmers around the age of 2 years. If children begin swimming at a young age, they will begin these levels around 2 years with a parent in the water. Once parents leave the pool they continue on through these levels and can be in Stanley 6/7 around the age of 5 quite comfortably.

Swimmers who have completed the Stanley levels at a young age may well be in Goldfish 1 around the age of 5-6yrs.

New swimmers to lessons without a parent in the water begin Stanley 1 around the age of 4 years, so it is important to understand the level of which they are joining, ie being very basic.

Swimmers who are joining over the age of around 6 years at a new starter level will begin in the Octopus levels.