



SW Safer Schools Team

13/05/2024

Dear Parent / Carer,

Open Water Dangers

As the hotter days approach, please communicate to your children the dangers of swimming in local rivers and other bodies of open water. Sadly we have seen children and adults lose their life in recent years in local rivers, some of which have been strong swimmers.

There are a number of dangers to consider, below is just a few:

- The shock of cold water can make swimming difficult and increase the difficulty in getting out of the water
- Lack of safety equipment and increased difficulty for rescue
- The height of the fall or jump if tombstoning
- The depth of the water – this changes and is unpredictable
- Underwater objects and hazards may not be visible
- Obstacles or other people in the water
- Strong currents can rapidly sweep people away
- Uneven banks and river beds
- Water quality, e.g. toxic algal blooms and industrial/agricultural pollution

The best advice is to stick to swimming areas with trained lifesaving staff present such as local authority swimming pools.

For more information please have a look at the Royal Life Saving Society website:

<https://www.rlss.org.uk/pages/category/open-water-safety-tips>

Kind regards,

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