

Bedfordshire County Championships 2026

These notes are to provide help and guidance for athletes, officials and volunteers attending the County Championships from 24th January to 8th February 2026. All information relating to the championships can be found on our website - [County swimming competitions - Swim England Bedfordshire](#)

Safeguarding

Swim England Bedfordshire would ask that Coaches, and Team Managers remind all club swimmers and Parents, that no Parents will be permitted entry to poolside, through the changing areas. Swim England Bedfordshire have a zero tolerance in respect of mobile devices being used in the changing areas, and remind participants these items must be kept in bags or pockets at all times while in the changing rooms.

Swimmers should use either the team change area or the designated Open/Male or Female individual cubicles whilst in the changing area. Swimmers should not use any other changing areas within Inspire.

Photography

Swimmers will not be permitted to film or take photos during the Championships whilst on poolside. Anyone who wishes to be filmed for GCSE or A Level examinations please email the promotor swimming@swimbeds.org, so that we can make others aware. All filming must take place from the viewing gallery.

Coaches, Team Managers and Spectators are requested to follow the Swim England guidelines for photography and use of photographs on social media. The Swim England Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, Wavepower, provides guidance on the use of social networking and guidance on photography. This guidance applies if social media platforms are being used to share images or recordings either during or after the meet.

Poolside Access

Coaches, Team Managers and Swimmers will have access to the main pool no earlier than 7.45am. The carpark will be open from 7.40am. For distance events access to poolside will be from 5.30pm.

Entry to poolside will be through the changing rooms and door nearest the diving board end of the pool. Swimmers will not be permitted to access poolside until a Coach or Team Manager has arrived. Swimmers should only be on poolside if they are swimming in the session.

Swimmers should arrive pool ready for warm up. Those in the first event of each session may wish to arrive wearing their racing costume so to avoid overcrowding in the changing rooms at the end of warm up, as space will be limited. Changing rooms are available throughout the competition. Swimmers must put on footwear and wear shirt/hoodie for moving around the building. Parents or Guardians are not permitted in the changing room area or on poolside.

Can we remind swimmers that they should not get changed on poolside, the designated changing area should be used at all times. This will be monitored and swimmers who do not follow this rule will be asked to leave and not compete any further in the Championships.

Poolside Passes

Coaches and Team Managers will need to apply for the free Swim England Event Accreditation before attending the Championships. This will ensure that everyone on poolside has the correct qualification and a current DBS and Safeguarding Certificate. Passes must show a current picture. Coaches and Team Managers will be asked to show the pass before being allowed access to poolside. Sign on details can be found here [Swim England Member Options | Swim England \(swimmingresults.org\)](#) If you are unable to obtain a pass please email swimming@swimbeds.org

Please ensure that, as a club, you meet the required ratios for athlete supervision at all times. We have no choice but to ensure these ratios are met and there are no risks to athletes by being under or over supervised. If this does occur, we reserve the right to take action to remedy the situation.

Number of Athletes	Minimum Supervisory roles required	Minimum number of Coaches (one must be qualified to a minimum of Level 2 coach equivalent)	Minimum numbers of Team Managers (All TM1 qualified as a minimum)
Up to 10	2	1	1
Up to 20	3	1	2
Up to 30	4	1	2
Up to 40	5	2	2
Up to 50	5	2	3
Up to 60	7	2	3

Please ensure you also consider gender ratios. For teams of up to 10 athletes there must be a minimum of 2 supervisory roles in place however, an organisation with less than 3 swimmers may risk assess the situation to enable appropriate support for the athletes. Clubs should ensure that parents have a contact number for either the Team Manager or Coach at their athlete's sessions.

Withdrawals

All withdrawals should be made by email to swimming@swimbeds.org

Subject - CLUB NAME - WITHDRAWAL - by the following deadlines:

	Session	Deadline for Withdrawals
Saturday 24 th January 2026	1	6.00pm - Friday 23 rd January 2026
Friday 30 th January 2026	2	6.00pm – Thursday 29 th January 2026
Saturday 31 st January 2026	3 & 4	6.00pm - Friday 30 th January 2026
Sunday 1 st February 2026	5 & 6	6.00pm - Saturday 31 st January 2026
Saturday 7 th February 2026	7 & 8	6.00pm - Friday 6 th January 2026
Sunday 8 th February 2026	9 & 10	6.00pm - Saturday 7 th February 2026

Withdrawals after these deadlines may only be made on medical grounds and must be notified by the club to the promotor by email and in person by the start of warm-up. Failure to comply with these conditions may result in a £10 penalty which shall be paid before the swimmer competes again in the Championships. The club in whose name the competitor has been entered will be responsible for any penalties outstanding at the end of the Championships.

Withdrawals from FINALS must be notified within 15 minutes of the announcement of the finalists. There will be no reserve swimmers for a final.

Requests to refund entry fees will only be considered when a swimmer medically withdraws from the entire Championships or all events during an entire weekend. Notification of any such withdrawal must be received by the Promotor (swimming@swimbeds.org) by 6pm on the Thursday evening preceding the corresponding weekend. Medical evidence must be sent to the Promotor before any refund will be considered.

Relay declarations

All Team Declaration Forms, stating the names of each relay team swimmer, should be made by email to swimming@swimbeds.org

Subject - **CLUB NAME -- RELAY DECLARATION**

The declarations should be emailed by 6pm on the Thursday preceding the corresponding weekend. Thursday 29th January for Weekend One and Thursday 5th February for Weekend Two of the championships. If Teams can be submitted before the cut of dates it would be appreciated.

By these dates, each Relay Team swimmers Swim England membership record must display a **CLUB COMPETE** membership in addition to membership of the Swim England Bedfordshire club in whose name they are entered.

If a member of a relay team can no longer take part, and your teams have already been declared please notify us immediately of any substitutions.

Officials

Swim Meet is now set up for officials to sign up to officiate at the Championships. Please use this link <https://swim-meet.com/OfficialsSignup/Bedfordshire/>

All Officials are required to wear Swim England Bedfordshire white polo shirt, black trousers or skirt (no shorts), black footwear (no flip flops) at the championships. The polo shirt will be available for collection by all licensed officials at the first session you attend.

Officials will use the function room as usual except for Sessions 1 and 2 when the room behind the café will be used. Refreshments will be available. Food will be provided for those who are officiating at more than one session per full day.

Spectators

Spectators fee will be £5 per session or £8 per day. No charge for children aged 9 years or under. Payment will be contactless, but would suggest you bring a bit of cash too – just in case!

Programmes will not be available on the day but will be available to downloaded from the website. Coaches pack will include a copy. Live results will available via the SwimBeds.org website

Presentation of County Colours

There will be a presentation to swimmers who swam at the National Inter County Team Event in October 2025. The presentation will take place before the finals in Session 7.

Warm Up

Each club will be allocated its own lane for warm up and coaches will be responsible for supervising this on the pool deck. Coaches can use the hour in whatever way they choose but must be mindful of athlete numbers in the water and on the pool deck at any one time.

Ln1 – Putteridge SC
Ln2 – Bedford SS
Ln3 – Linslade Crusaders SC
Ln4 – Biggleswade SC
Ln5 – Dunstable SC
Ln6 – Leighton Buzzard SC
Ln7 – Team Luton SC
Ln8 – Flitwick Dolphins SC

Relay Only Swimmers Warm up

There will be a warm up for athletes attending the championships to swim in relays only, which will be at the end of the heats and before the finals. Approx times of the start of the relay warm are published with the schedule of events.

Medals and Trophies

Medals can be collected by individual winners during each session, they will not be available to collect during the breaks. Medals for Top Age Group Awards will be presented to the winners at the end of Session 10, before the relays. Trophies will not be awarded at the championships but will be available for photographs to be taken. They will be engraved with 2026 winners and we aim to have these with clubs during March. A podium will be set up to allow individual club photographs to be taken.

Swim Shop

Rapid Swim Shop will be in attendance both weekends. They will be positioned in the area at the top of the stairs.

Inspire Café

Will be open during the Championships except for the 1500 Freestyle event. It provides both hot and cold food and beverages.

Car Parking

We have been asked by the centre management that you do not arrive at the venue before 7.40am. The car park is unlikely to be open and cars queuing to get into will lead to congestion on neighbouring roads.

The car park is managed by an external company Ring Go.



For those who will be utilising the facilities there is no charge for the first 4 hours of parking. We advise that payment is made on arrival for any additional hours needed as it must be paid BEFORE the end of the 4-hour free parking period. You can pay by downloading the App and we recommend you do this at home before you leave. A small convenience fee is charged when using the App. There is no charge for Parking for the first 4 hours and charges are for a maximum of over 8 hours. The site code is 48025.

Parking terms and conditions apply to all area's including the grassed overflow car parking.