Diving Block Safety and Use Policy

Pāpāmoa Swimming Club

Policy Number	PSC-POL-007
Effective Date	1 September 2026
Approved By	Committee
Review Date	1 September 2027
Applies To	All PSC Committee Members, Paid Staff, and Coaches & Pool Users

Purpose: To establish strict safety protocols, clear lines of responsibility, and best-practice guidelines for the use of diving blocks at the Papamoa Swimming Club facility. This policy errs on the side of absolute safety to reduce the risk of preventable injuries.

All new members to the club will be asked to read through this policy upon joining and as part of membership, they will sign that they have read and understood section 3 below regarding the specifications of Papamoa Swimming Club pool.

1. Policy Statement

Papamoa Swimming Club recognises that diving from starting blocks presents an increased risk of serious injury if not properly managed. The Papamoa Swimming Club is committed to providing, so far as is reasonably practicable, a safe environment for all participants through effective supervision, competency-based instruction, equipment maintenance, risk management, and continuous improvement in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

2. Purpose & Scope

This policy refers only to the use of the diving blocks.

(Please note however - any jumping, diving, 'bombing'...etc from any other entry to the pool - i.e the remaining three sides of the pool, is strictly prohibited).

This policy governs the access, supervision, maintenance, and use of all diving blocks at the pool facility. It applies to all Papamoa Swimming Club members, paid coaching staff and committee members.

This policy applies whenever Papamoa Swimming Club controls or manages activities involving the diving blocks

The objectives of this policy are to:

- protect swimmers, coaches and visitors from injury;
- establish minimum competency requirements for diving from starting blocks;
- provide clear responsibilities for supervision;
- ensure diving activities are subject to appropriate risk assessment and control.

3. Papamoa Swimming Club Pool - Specifications

It is noted that the Papamoa Swimming Club pool located at 65 Parton Road is 1.4 m deep at the diving end sloping to 0.8m deep at the shallow end.

This does meet specification 4 of NZ Swimming 'Position Statement - Dive Entries: June 2017' for dive entries for the use of dive blocks which states:

> ***(Policy)***
> ***"4.*** *1.2 metre to less than 1.35 metre – Concourse or Platform dive (As long as the platform is not more than 0.75 metre above the watersurface.)"*

However Specification 5 of this same policy reads:

> ***"5.*** *1.35 metre and more - As per FINA Rule FR2.7."*

(*Footnote 1)

In these 'FINA Facilities Rules' (FR 2.18 'Starting Platforms') it is stipulated that

> *"A minimum depth of 1.35 metres, extending from 1.0 metre to at least 6.0 metres from the end wall is required for pools with starting blocks."*

It is noted that the Papamoa pool has a depth of 1.40m at 0m from the diving wall, but only 1.26m of depth at 6.0m from the diving wall due to the slope of the pool. Hence not the stipulated 1.35m depth by FINA at 6m.
(*Footnote 2)

Swimming NZ state (as per NZ Swimming 'Position Statement - Dive Entries: June 2017):

> "*Given the overriding responsibility for determining Health & Safety rules and procedures falls to the respective pool owner/operator, Swimming NZ maintains that the suitability of this policy for use at a specific facility, is at the sole discretion of the swimming pool owner/operator who must themselves determine its suitability or not for use at their facility*."

The Papamoa Swimming Club acknowledges that dive entries into water of this depth involve an inherent level of residual risk. Diving block use is therefore permitted only when all controls described within this policy are implemented and supervised by competent coaching staff.

4. Roles & Responsibilities

A. Paid Coaching Staff

Papamoa Swimming Club coaches hold delegated responsibility for supervising diving activities during all club-sanctioned training sessions and meets.

- **Competency Assessment:** Coaches are the sole arbiters of which swimmers are competent to use the diving blocks. No swimmer may use a block without explicit, verified permission from a designated coach.

- **Active Supervision:** Coaches must maintain direct, uninterrupted line-of-sight supervision whenever diving blocks are in use.
- **Pre-Session Check:** Coaches must inspect the blocks and check the water depth/area beneath them before allowing any diving to commence.
- Further responsibilities of the coaching staff before each session include:
    - assess weather (if outdoor)
    - visibility
    - water clarity
    - lane configuration
    - swimmer numbers

COACH COMPETENCY

Only coaches authorised by the Papamoa Swimming Club may supervise diving.

Authorisation should include:

- Knowledge of this policy
- Incident procedures
- Safe progression teaching (see 'Diving License' Section)
- First aid training

B. The Papamoa Swim Club Committee

- **Policy Enforcement & Review:** The committee is responsible for ensuring this policy is distributed, understood, and enforced by all staff and members. The policy will be reviewed annually.
- **Equipment Maintenance:** The committee will oversee regular structural safety audits of the blocks and fund safety equipment (such as block covers). If damage or wear and tear is seen on the blocks or covers, this should be reported to a committee member.
- Further responsibilities of the Papamoa Swimming Club Committee include
    - review incidents annually
    - maintain risk register
    - ensure coach competency
    - consult with coaches following incidents

C. External Users & Public Bookings

- **Public Bookings (Club Responsible):** On the rare occasions the club books the pool out to the public, **the Papamoa Swimming Club retains overall responsibility for the facility.** However, **the use of diving blocks by the public is strictly prohibited.**
- **Local Primary School use and school invited users (Between 8:40 and 2:40) (Papamoa Swimming Club NOT Responsible):** The local primary school utilizes the pool via an independent agreement. **The Papamoa Swimming Club bears zero operational or legal responsibility** for the school's sessions, their supervision, or their choice to use or not use the diving blocks. This includes school invited users for Swimming / Flipperball competitions, all tournaments / festivals, school based training or practices…etc that occur during school hours.

5. Risk Assessment

Papamoa Swimming Club have conducted a risk assessment and have identified the below risk and mitigations:

Key hazards include:

- spinal injury
- head impact
- collision with another swimmer
- slips on wet pool surrounds
- defective starting blocks
- inadequate supervision
- unauthorised use
- poor diving technique
- reduced water depth
- Equipment / obstacles on pool deck

Risk controls include:

- competency assessment
- Progressive teaching (diving license)
- coach supervision
- Specifications of groups able to dive / undertake dive licence
- lane clearance
- block inspections
- signage
- block covers
- emergency procedures
- incident review
- Moving any obstructions / objects from pool deck

6. Facility Security & Access Control

To prevent unauthorized use and ensure a controlled environment, facility access is strictly regulated:

- **Locked Gates:** When the pool is not actively being used for scheduled Papamoa Swimming Club sessions, official local primary school activities, or authorized public bookings, **all entry gates to the pool area must remain locked.**
- **Last Out, Lock Up:** The final Papamoa Swimming Club official (e.g meetings) or coach leaving the facility after a club training session is strictly responsible for ensuring the facility is vacant and all gates are securely locked.

7. Usage Rules by Program Tier

Junior 'Learn to Swim':

- Diving blocks are **strictly off-limits** for all Learn to Swim levels during all lessons.

'Pre-Squad' and 'Aquafit' Groups:

- Diving blocks are **strictly off-limits** for all standard 'Pre Squad' and 'Aquafit' groups during all lessons.
- Seated, kneeling and crouched dives from the poolside can be taught during dive clinics or one on one instruction.

'Transition' Swim Group

- **'Diving License'**
    - Before any transition swimmers can use diving blocks they must obtain their 'Diving License'.
    - This will involve students progressing through a series of diving skills under the direct supervision of the coach. The coach will 'sign off' each progression, if competence is met consistently by a swimmer at that progression. (Sign off will be at coaches discretion, but as a guideline 6-8 successful demonstrations are recommended before progression is signed off).
    - Progressions include:
        - Seated dive from poolside
        - Kneeling 'Trackstart' dive from poolside (1 knee, 1 foot)
        - Crouched 'Trackstart' dive (back knee slightly off ground) from poolside
        - Full dive from poolside
        - Kneeling 'Trackstart' dive from dive blocks (1 knee, 1 foot)
        - Full dive from blocks (Supervised - with coach reminding of technique cues)
    - Note - Coaches are encouraged to 'regress' swimmers down a level (or levels) if they have had a significant absence from lessons and believe they need to refresh their skills in earlier progressions.
    - An example of recording of 'Diving License' sign off's can be found here. Link
    - It is assumed that a hardcopy of names and levels will be printed off and every month a photo will be taken of the current sheet and uploaded into a folder on Google Drive.

- **Coaches conducting any dives need to check pool depth and diving block condition**
    - *Pool Depth just needs to be a visual check to see water level is the approximate same depth as usual - i.e, no cracks in pool / unforeseen maintenance…etc has had an obvious effect on water depth.*

Competitive Swimming Groups

- **Competency:** Coaches will be responsible for determining swimmers who are able to use blocks

and should not assume 'Learn to Swim' graduates, or those new to the Competitive Swimming group are proficient to dive from blocks without first assessing / using a progressive learning model (as described above).

- **Safe Execution:** Competitive swimmers must only dive when the lane is clear of other swimmers - coach to determine the specific details for this, based on experience / ability of swimmers. Relays and practices involving multiple divers must be tightly coordinated by the coach on deck. 'Diving over the top' in swim meets is only permitted at the discretion of the event organiser and must consider the suitability (age and ability) of entrants involved.

8. Equipment

A weekly visual inspection of the diving blocks is to be undertaken by the Head Swimming Coach at Papamoa Swimming Club.

An annual structural inspection of the diving blocks is to be undertaken by the Health and Safety Officer from the Papamoa Swimming Club.

A diving block will have immediate removal from service if:

- loose block
- cracked platform
- damaged grips
- corrosion
- instability

All inspections are to be documented and records held by the Papamoa Swimming Club.

9. Diving Block Covers & Equipment Management

To add a physical layer of protection against unauthorized use, the Papamoa Swimming Club is attempting to find funding for **Diving Block Covers**.

Until covers are purchased - Papamoa Swimming Club coaches will manage if diving will take place and who is eligible to do so during these sessions..

When covers are purchased:

Diving Block Cover Usage

- ➢ **Covers must be fitted tightly and securely whenever the blocks are not under active Papaopa Swimming Club coaching supervision.**

- **Public Bookings & Learn to Swim:** During all public bookings and standard Learn to Swim sessions, the safety covers **must remain on and secured** over the diving blocks. This provides a visual and physical barrier, removing any temptation or accidental usage.
- **School Use:** While the Papamoa Swimming Club is not responsible for school sessions, as a matter of community best-practice, the covers should remain on the blocks prior to handing over the

facility.

- **Post-Session Protocol:** The coach for the swimming session is ultimately responsible for checking that the covers are fitted onto the blocks securely, immediately at the conclusion of training sessions.

10. Signage and visibility

- Signage around the pool saying ‘no jumping, diving, bombing’ (or similar) is to be clear and visible to add a further layer of safety to prevent random or unsanctioned pool entries from any pool user.

11. Emergency Procedures

In the event of any emergency in relation to the Diving Blocks the Papamoa Swimming Club Emergency Procedures will be followed.
Link to Emergency Procedures Document

12. Incident Reporting & Compliance

- **Zero Tolerance:** Any swimmer using the blocks without coach permission, will face disciplinary action, at the discretion of the Papamoa Swimming Club.

- **Incident Reporting:** In the event of a "near-miss", accident, or injury involving a diving block, a formal Incident Report Form must be filled out by the attending coach within 24 hours and submitted directly to the Papamoa Swimming Club Committee for review.

***Footnote 1: Swimming New Zealand ‘Position Statement - Dive Entries June 2017’ Link**

***Footnote 2: FINA Facilities Rules 2021 - 2025 ‘Part X’ (Valid as of 5 August 2021) Link**