

# HANDBOOK



# ACADEMY

***Fun. Skills. Confidence.***

This handbook is designed to help families have a successful term by providing information, guidelines, and policies.

Updated December 2020

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## Welcome!

Thank you for choosing the H2O Academy! We are pleased to welcome your family to our program and aim to provide you with a positive experience. This handbook prepares you for your journey with us!

## About the H2O Academy

The H2O Academy is an award-winning swim school for students' ages 4 months to adults in Winnipeg. We provide an innovative approach to swimming lessons through our proprietary AQUA-Lit™ Curriculum©. We create progressive results which are enhanced by small class sizes and a unique evaluation system based on an improvement scale rather than passing and failing. H2O represents faster results, better quality, and superior instruction and assessment methods compared with traditional swimming lessons. We are dedicated to creating confident and competent swimmers who are equipped to enjoy a lifetime of aquatic activities. As you read this handbook, you will learn how the H2O difference can work for your family!

### *Mission*

To create confident, safe, and proficient swimmers in a positive learning environment through our purposeful program.

### *Vision*

A world where people are as comfortable, confident, and efficient in the water as they are on land.

### *Guiding Principles*

These provide the foundation for our programming at H2O... we believe in **WATER!**

- **Well-rounded:** Students practice meaningful and purposeful activities. It's about developing the confidence to safely enjoy all water environments.
- **Accountable:** Our AQUA-Lit™ Curriculum©, is progressive and builds upon skills. We believe in continual learning and growth, which is why we assess students on a proficiency scale rather than passing and failing.
- **Technical Proficiency:** Learning is achieved through appropriate, relevant, and sequential learning experiences. We teach good habits from the beginning and focus on correct development of the basics.
- **Enjoyable:** Our approach keeps students engaged and active the entire class. We use innovative equipment to encourage creativity and promote social acceptance while learning the FUNdamentals of swimming.
- **Relevant:** The needs of all students are addressed through high quality instruction that is relevant, current, and balanced to meet the developmental and age appropriate needs.

### *Location*

Our brand-new facility is opening in January 2021 at 400 Fort Whyte Way! Check out [www.h2oacademy.ca](http://www.h2oacademy.ca) for details! Classes at the Winnipeg Winter Club are postponed until further notice due to COVID-19 restrictions.

## The H2O Difference

Swimming is a life skill – unlike traditional swimming lessons, we focus on technical swimming skills and knowledge to create proficient, confident swimmers who exercise safe, responsible behaviour. We put the FUN back in swimming lessons! Students will have an easier time transitioning to sport, recreation, and/or lifeguarding.

## Lifesaving

It is a common myth that you must achieve all the levels in the Red Cross Swim program or other traditional types of lessons (e.g. YMCA) in order to become a lifeguard. WRONG! The first step to becoming certified as a lifeguard in Canada is the Lifesaving Society's course called Bronze Medallion. The only prerequisites for Bronze Medallion are that you need to be 13 years of age. The H2O Academy prepares students with the technical skills to complete the pool requirements of the Bronze Medallion pool test (e.g. eggbeater, timed swims, retrievals, floating, kicking, strokes, etc.). The Bronze Medallion course will prepare those students with the lifesaving knowledge.

## It's a Life Skill!

### What is Physical Literacy in the Water Movement Environment?

We develop physical literacy in the water movement environment, but what does this really mean? Physical literacy should be acquired in 4 activity environments— land, water, air, and snow/ice. The water environment can be especially challenging as the “fear factor” adds another dimension to learning. Physical literacy can be described as the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities in and around the water for life. Developing physical literacy is the gateway to enjoying a lifetime of aquatic activities, whether it be in sport, recreation, leisure, arts, and/or vocation!



Our programming is rooted in Canadian Sport for Life's (CS4L) Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) Framework which is a 7 stage pathway guiding an individual's experience in sport and physical activity from infancy through all phases of adulthood. The diagram demonstrates how a strong aquatic foundation empowers children to safely go down many different pathways in life – from competing as a high performance athlete, to fearlessly snorkeling on vacation, to canoeing at the cabin, or becoming a police diver.

### To Sport or not to Sport...

We will develop a strong foundation of basic skills and knowledge should your child choose to pursue sport. We work in partnership with aquatic sport affiliates to identify early talent and ensure seamless integration into speed swimming, diving, artistic swimming, or water polo by instilling good habits from the beginning.

If your child doesn't choose sport, they will be able to safely enjoy and participate with confidence in recreational aquatic activities or continue on with lifesaving education. We believe that it's not just about sports... it's about giving children and youth the opportunity to succeed – to live a happy, healthy, long life.

## Classes

We offer classes for student's ages 4 months – adults. Our classes are progressive and skill-based; students build on skills which they eventually become proficient in, rather than being pushed through levels to collect badges. We have a “crawl-walk-run” approach. Visit [www.h2oacademy.ca](http://www.h2oacademy.ca) for class descriptions, details and mandatory pre-requisites.

### *Aqua-Lit™ Curriculum©*

Our proprietary curriculum, AQUA-Lit™, is rooted in physical literacy, an international concept which the Canadian Government has endorsed as part of its Canadian Sport Policy. AQUA-Lit™ ensures progressive, balanced programming, and supports a holistic approach to learning. It puts the FUN back into learning to swim, and ensures students learn correct technique and terminology from the beginning without forming bad habits! We use props, SwimFins, and have low student to teacher ratios to create a fun and engaging environment!

### *AQUA-Lit™ Certified Teachers*

Our staff are all certified in the AQUA-Lit™ Teacher Training Program. Teachers are assigned to classes but may be absent on occasion due to exams, holidays, coaching, etc. Don't worry... our weekly assessments are similar to a medical chart in that any teacher will be able to read it and know exactly where a student is in their progress and current abilities (even if they've never worked with them before!). This ensures that the students continue to progress even though they may have a new teacher, and that when the teacher returns they are aware of what happened while they were away!

### *Schedule*

Classes are offered year-round:

- Fall (September – December, 12 weeks)
- Winter (January – March, 12 weeks)
- Spring (April – June, 12 weeks)
- Summer – 8 weeks over the summer H2O @ Home! (July & August, customized schedule)

We are constantly adding new classes to our schedule. Visit [www.h2oacademy.ca](http://www.h2oacademy.ca) for the most recent version of the schedule.

### *Pre-requisites*

Some classes have prerequisites (see class descriptions on [www.h2oacademy.ca/classes](http://www.h2oacademy.ca/classes) for details). H2O reserves the right to remove students from the class if they do not meet the prerequisites due to class management and safety reasons. A refund or a credit will be awarded in addition to a \$25 cancellation fee. If you are unsure if your child meets the prerequisites, please contact us.

## Evaluations

Please note that we do not hand out paper report cards or certificates at the end of each term as we are paperless with our new online evaluations through iClassPro! You can access all student evaluations and class recommendations through your account.

The 4-star evaluation system in our AQUA-Lit™ Curriculum© is based on 3 pillars of physical literacy (listening & understanding, physical competence, and confidence & motivation). Please note that we have a very robust skill tree, and you will only be able to see the skills your student has been evaluated on within our learn-to-swim algorithm.

## Underwater Baby Videos

As part of the class price all babies will receive a souvenir video!

## Breastfeeding

We know it's a mother's right to breastfeed whenever wherever, however breastfeeding **is not** allowed while physically **in** the pool as it is considered eating in the pool. If you must feed your baby during class time, please fully exit the pool with baby and sit on the pool deck bench or go to the changeroom if you want privacy.

## Attendance

Give yourself ample time to get ready for lessons as the feeling of being rushed can give students anxiety or put them in a bad mood. If you are unable to attend a class, please email [info@h2oacademy.ca](mailto:info@h2oacademy.ca) or please use the record future absence feature through your account in advance. Please note that if your child has been under sedation or anesthetics of any kind, it is not safe for them to attend class.

## Class Cancellations

If for some reason a class must be cancelled (e.g. stormy weather, pool fouling, etc.), we will contact all families that are affected. If the class cannot be rescheduled, we will provide a refund for that class.

## COVID-19

We believe that everyone deserves to have an incredible swimming experience in a fun and safe environment. We will be continuously updating our safety measures to be in line with government and health regulations. Please visit [www.h2oacademy.ca/covid19](http://www.h2oacademy.ca/covid19) for all our detailed COVID-19 policies and procedures.

## Attire

The following items are **mandatory** to participate in class:

- ✓ **Bathing suit:** all students are required to wear a bathing suit in the pool. We recommend that girls aged 2+ wear one-piece suits as bikinis can be distracting and not as secure. We recommend that boys wear tighter fitted swim shorts as baggy shorts as they can impede movement in the water and create drag. Parents can wear any bathing suit that they feel comfortable in. Please keep in mind that babies/toddlers like to pull at straps and suits when deciding what suit you'd like to wear.

- ✓ **Swim diaper:** mandatory for babies and toddlers. They can either be disposable or non-disposable. We recommend that babies also wear a bathing suit over their swim diaper.
- ✓ **Hair tie:** students with long hair and/or bangs (both girls and boys) must tie their hair back if they choose not to wear a swim cap.
- ✓ **Towel**

The following items are **optional**:

- ✓ Goggles (not necessary for baby/toddler classes)
- ✓ Swim cap (not necessary for baby/toddler classes)
- ✓ Deck shoes – standard flip flops that are clean and have not been worn outside. **Outdoor shoes are not allowed in the facility past the vestibule.**
- ✓ Shower Stuff – please note the showers at 400 Fort Whyte Way are a non-nudity rinse shower. Please keep your shower time to a minimum.

*\*\*\* All H2O families receive a 20% discount off all products (excluding triathlon wet suits) at Swimming Matters located at 1389 Grant Avenue. They can also fit your child for goggles at no charge. You must mention at check-out that you are a member of the H2O Academy in order to receive the discount.*

### **Prescription Goggles**

If a student wears glasses, you may want to consider prescription goggles. You can also inquire about this at Swimming Matters.

### **Parent/Guest Viewing**

Guests are invited to watch classes from our viewing lounge. Viewing classes from the pool deck is not permitted due to safety reasons, unless there is an extenuating circumstance which has been discussed with H2O staff. Due to COVID-19 restrictions we are only allowing one adult caregiver per student, please visit [www.h2oacademy.ca/covid19](http://www.h2oacademy.ca/covid19) for all our detailed COVID-19 policies and procedures.

### **Change Rooms**

Our new facility at 400 Fort Whyte Way only has family style changerooms! Our universal locker-room is designed to accommodate all genders which is a widely popular concept in Europe. The washrooms are all single stall locked doors and there are private lockable changing stalls. It allows parents to bring children of both sexes into the common room and still have a private cubicle.

## Behaviour

All families must abide by the facility and pool rules at the H2O Academy. At H2O we take safety very seriously. By following some simple guidelines, we make our environment and classes' safe. At H2O we discuss these general rules with the students before each class and hope that parents can follow and reinforce them:

1. Always walk on deck (no running!)
2. Never swim alone, always make sure a teacher or adult you trust is with you
3. Only jump when the teacher says it's safe
4. Always listen to the teacher or you might get a timeout
5. Keep your hands to yourselves
6. We never say, "I can't" and we try everything once (I can do it cheer) – that's how we learn!

## Discipline Protocol

Staff are to conduct themselves in a friendly, respectful way, however they will follow our discipline protocol if necessary:

1. **First warning:** if a student isn't listening or is misbehaving, they will receive a stern warning. Staff must be clear that the student is receiving a warning, and that if this behaviour continues, they will get a timeout (e.g. "Sally, you are not listening, this is a warning, if you do it again you will get a timeout.").
2. **Short Timeout:** if after the first warning the student continues to not listen or misbehave, they will receive a short timeout. They must completely exit the water and sit in a chair/bench for 15 seconds – 1 minute.
3. **Long Timeout:** if after the short timeout the student continues to not listen or misbehave, they will receive a long timeout. They must completely exit the water for more than 1 minute.
4. **Excused:** if after the long timeout the student continues to not listen or misbehave, they will be excused from class and must exit the water.

If steps 2 or higher are exercised, then staff will communicate exactly what happened with the parent immediately after class. Note: if a student exhibits any sort of physical violence (e.g. pinching, slapping, hitting, punching, etc.) staff may jump to step 3 of the discipline protocol as physical violence is not tolerated.

## Policies

### Privacy Policy

Our privacy policy is simple. We don't give or sell anyone's information to anyone else and we don't keep any credit card information on file. That's as easy as it can get!

### Make-up Class Policy

We understand that things come up, but unfortunately, we are not able to offer make-up classes at this time.

Repetition is a key aspect of physical literacy, so we encourage families to attend all classes. Feel free to take your child for a swim - the more opportunities, the better!

## Cancellation/Refund Policy

For cancellations/refunds related to COVID-19, please refer to our COVID-19 information page at [www.h2oacademy.ca/covid19](http://www.h2oacademy.ca/covid19).

We completely understand that having to pay for one or two missed classes can be irritating, but our costs remain the same whether everyone is present or not. Therefore, H2O Academy is under no obligation to refund or transfer your money if you can't attend part, or all, of classes.

You may cancel your class registration or apply a credit to your account up to 7 days prior to your first day of classes for a full refund and no cancellation fee. Any cancellation less than 7 days before the first lesson will be charged a \$25 cancellation fee. If the term has started, families will be refunded for the classes not taken in addition to the cancellation fee. If payment has not been received 7 days prior to the first class, H2O reserves the right to cancel your spot and you will be notified.

For private/semi-private classes, cancellations done less than 48 hours will not receive a refund as the teacher will already be working their shift. If your cancellation is done 48 hours or more prior to the scheduled lesson you will receive a 50% refund of the cost of the class.

SwimFins can be fully refunded, exchanged, or applied as a credit to your account if it is in original condition with unopened packaging and returned within 14 days of purchase. The baby videos are part of the class cost and are non-refundable regardless of attendance as we are still paying a professional videographer to attend filming days.

## Contact Information

We believe communication is key at H2O! If you have any questions or concerns, please let us know by way of any method below.

Mailing Address	Phone Numbers	Email	Website	Facility Address
H2O Academy PO Box 412, RPO Corydon Winnipeg, Manitoba R3M 3V3	204-299-6215 204-880-2523	<a href="mailto:info@h2oacademy.ca">info@h2oacademy.ca</a>	<a href="http://www.h2oacademy.ca">www.h2oacademy.ca</a>	400 Fort Whyte Way Oak Bluff, MB R4G 0B1

## Stay Connected!

Stay up to date with the latest H2O updates by following us on social media! Feel free to share photos of your swimmer with us by tagging H2O, we can also repost them on our social media!

Happy with you H2O Experience? Let us know! Please share your thoughts and experience on Google review, Facebook, other social media and/or our website!