



Victoria Artistic Swimming Club Athlete/Parent Handbook

For further information on policies or for details not included in the handbook, please visit the VAS website at: <https://vssc.poolq.net/>

Contents

Our Mission:.....	2
Our Vision:	2
Our Goals & Objectives:.....	2
Victoria Artistic Club Charter	3
Practices	6
Attire and equipment	6
Aqua Go.....	6
Limited Competitive.....	6
Competitive: Provincial stream 10 & U, 11-12, 13-15 and 16-20	7
Competitive: National Stream athletes, all age groups	7
Code of Conduct	9
Athlete Expectations.....	10
Attendance/Lateness	10
Team and Routine Selection	10
Summer and pre-season Camps and training:.....	12
Contact Information.....	12

Competition expectations * refer to separate handbooks for each stream



Our Mission:

Victoria Artistic Swimming supports and promotes the sport of artistic swimming by encouraging commitment, excellence, fair play, and fellowship among the club's athletes, coaches and parents, and by inspiring each individual to reach their potential in a safe, secure and supportive environment.

Our Vision:

To provide athletes access to the training, coaching, facility, performance and competition experiences that inspire their pursuit of personal excellence in and out of the sport of artistic swimming.

Our Goals & Objectives:

- To promote and showcase the sport of artistic swimming.
- To provide a range of high-quality programs and opportunities for growth and performance for high performance, provincial stream, recreational and masters level athletes.
- To offer a pathway for athletes to pursue personal excellence and achieve high performance training and competition by offering ongoing support, specialized training, and unique development opportunities.
- To offer access to quality instruction and positive leaders and role models, including through highly qualified, dedicated and collaborative coaches.
- To deliver excellence in coaching and training opportunities within an exceptional high-performance facility.
- To give athletes the opportunity for fitness, fun, friendship, and travel.
- To emphasize family involvement
- To foster athletes' growth and well-being through ongoing opportunities for improvement, accomplishment, leadership, teamwork, mutual respect and the development of confidence and self-esteem.



Victoria Artistic Club Charter

Winning Mindset and attitude

A team with a winning mindset is one that is focused on achieving their goals and is willing to put in the hard work necessary to succeed. They are confident in their abilities and believe that they can overcome any obstacle that comes their way. They are also able to stay calm under pressure and maintain their focus even when things get tough. This kind of mindset is essential for success as an artistic swimmer, as it allows athletes to perform at their best and achieve their full potential.

With the right mindset, we can accomplish great things and achieve success both in and out of the water.

Integrity

An athlete who shows integrity, is one who is a good role model, competes fairly and understands the concept of sportsmanship. They uphold the value of honesty and are truthful and transparent in their actions.

They treat others with respect and fairness. They take responsibility for their actions and are accountable for their mistakes. They show respect for themselves, their teammates, their opponents, and the rules of their sport. They are humble in victory and gracious in defeat. They are reliable, responsible, and respectful to everyone on the team. They show empathy and compassion both in and out of the pool. They show courage by standing up for what is right, even when it is difficult or the unpopular opinion.

Supporting the team

Protecting and supporting the team in artistic swimming is an important responsibility that requires a combination of skills and qualities. In supporting the team, we need to TRUST one another, trust is built through developing an understanding of one another and their position within the team. When protecting the team, we also require **communication**. Athletes must be able to communicate effectively with each other in order to work together towards a common goal. This includes being able to give and receive feedback, as well as being able to express their thoughts and feelings in a constructive manner. By taking accountability,

building trust, and communicating effectively, athletes can help protect their team and achieve success.

Stepping outside your comfort zone

Stepping outside of your comfort zone is an essential part of being an artistic swimmer. It means pushing yourself beyond your limits and taking on new challenges that will help you grow as an athlete. We all need to embrace failure and welcome learning. We all need to create environments that set high expectations but also offer forgiveness when error occurs. When you step outside of your comfort zone, you are taking a risk, but it is a risk that can pay off in big ways. You may discover new strengths and abilities that you never knew you had, and you may find that you are capable of achieving things that you never thought possible. It can be scary to step outside of your comfort zone, but it is also incredibly rewarding. In a sport where creativity can mean the difference between our team winning or Team B winning, stepping outside your comfort zone is a vital component.

Respect the club

Respecting your club means creating and maintaining a culture of respect by practicing safety, fairness, and equality. Building a respectful culture requires the involvement of everyone in the club, from volunteers to athletes and coaches to board members. It involves aligning values, working well with others, effective communication, judging success and failures in the right way, ownership, modeling respect.

By respecting your club in these ways, you can help create a positive environment that promotes growth, teamwork, and success both in and out of the pool.

Supporting the Victoria Artistic Swim clubs mission statement and its vision will also show your respect for cultivating a community where we are all working together for a united club. Respect the history, learn from it and always strive to move forward with integrity.

Growth Mindset

Having a growth mindset means that you believe that your abilities can be developed through hard work, dedication, and perseverance. According to TrueSport, to establish a growth mindset throughout a team, all players must believe that they can get better by learning new skills and practicing, and that their improvement will be valued.

A growth mindset allows us to embrace learning, welcome challenges, mistakes, and feedback.

When athletes have a growth mindset, they are more likely to handle physical, environmental, and emotional changes better. With the resilience they develop from having a positive mindset, they can cope better with changes when exposed to new and unfamiliar environments. By cultivating a growth mindset as an athlete in a sports team, you can help yourself and your team achieve success both on in and out of competition.

Work ethics

Work SMARTER not always longer...Good work ethics in athletes are characterized by a combination of qualities and skills. An athlete with good work ethics is one who is willing to go above and beyond what is expected of them. They show up prepared and ready to go, they are self directed and use self motivation as a tool to "get the job done". They know that hard work today will make tomorrow easier. They know that in order to be able to "leave it all in the pool" on competition day, they have to practice how they want to compete.

Ultimately strong work ethics builds a strong character that is respected by all.

Ambition

Having ambition as an athlete means that you are motivated to achieve your goals and are willing to put in the hard work necessary to succeed.

Ambition is what drives athletes to push themselves beyond their limits and take on new challenges that will help them grow as athletes. It means setting high goals for yourself and working tirelessly to achieve them. It means that some days may be harder, more mentally tough, more tiring, but you will still push through and do your 100%.

Ultimately, having ambition as an athlete means that you are committed to your sport and your team and are willing to do whatever it takes to achieve your goals not only at the pool, but in your everyday life 😊

Practices

Swimmers are expected to attend all scheduled practices and arrive on time, in appropriate attire, with all the required equipment. Enthusiasm and effort are part of all sports, so please bring them to every practice!

At the competitive level no athlete is permitted to miss practices within 2-4 weeks of a competition (depends on level and competition importance)

At the National level, any camps or extra training leading into a National competition is MANDATORY for all swimmers. Coaches will communicate camps as soon as possible (dependent on our pool and coach availability).

Attire and equipment

- Club equipment purchase day will be at the start of each season
- Our equipment manager can always provide caps, goggles and nose plugs during the season

***Note all items are mandatory unless otherwise stated)**

Aqua Go

- Swimsuit of choice
- One club red cap is provided at registration.
- Nose plugs
- Goggles

Limited Competitive

- Practice Swimsuit
- Club black cap
- Nose plugs
- Goggles
- Red club t-shirt
- All black competition suits.
- White cap
- Routine suit

Optional

- Club jacket
- Club backpack

- Club practice suit

Competitive: Provincial stream 10 & U, 11-12, 13-15 and 16-20

- Club swimsuit (to be decided on at start of the season)
- Club black cap
- Nose plugs
- Goggles
- Black figure suit
- White cap
- Routine suit(s)
- Club t-shirt
- Club jacket
- Club backpack
- Black yoga shorts
- black leggings
- Lululemon club yoga jacket (optional)

Equipment: other items may be added per coach's decision, such as (but not limited to):

- Skipping rope
- Yoga mat
- Exercise bands
- Tubing
- Inflatable water jug for in water

Competitive: National Stream athletes, all age groups

- Club swimsuit and team suit of choice each year
- Club black cap
- Nose plugs
- Goggles
- Black figure suit
- White cap
- Routine suit(s)
- Club t-shirt
- Club tank top
- Club jacket
- Club yoga jacket
- Club backpack

- Black yoga shorts
- black leggings
- sweatpants TBD (travel)

Equipment: other items may be added per coach decision, such as (but not limited to):

- Yoga mat
- Skipping rope
- Exercise bands
- Tubing
- Inflatable water jug for in water
- Weights

Optional

- club parka

Code of Conduct

Victoria Artistic Swimming Club's Code of Conduct applies to all of its members, which includes staff, volunteers, coaches, athletes and their families. When members are involved in any public activity connected to "VAS" they are representatives of the club. This includes online activities like social media and blogging.

As representatives of VAS, all members are expected to conduct themselves appropriately in public. Members are to demonstrate a positive attitude towards the sport and the club and treat all officials, coaches and other swimmers with courtesy and respect at all times.

Members are expected to maintain self-control, and behave with dignity, decorum, and respect at any club meeting, practice, competition or other club function.

VAS expects that its members will not be involved in any behaviour that could be defined as harassment towards another member, individual, or group. The club also expects its members to report any behaviour that they consider to be harassment, illegal, or unethical, whether it be directed towards, or conducted by a member(s).

Please refer to our policies section on our website for further information.

Athlete Expectations

- Swimmers are expected to bring their enthusiasm to every practice and event!
- Swimmers are expected to attend all practices and give their best effort. When possible, if the swimmer is injured, they are expected to attend and watch practices.
- If a swimmer is ill, please stay home to recover.
- Swimmers are expected to be on time for all practices and competitions.
- Swimmers and parents are to treat coaches, officials and fellow swimmers with courtesy and respect. Negative remarks always reflect poorly on the club, and will not be tolerated.
- As representatives of VAS, all swimmers and parents are to be courteous to fellow competitors and to conduct themselves appropriately in public.
- Swimmers and parents are expected to observe all pool rules and respect the requests of pool staff, coaches and officials.
- No use of alcohol or illegal drugs will be tolerated
- No form of abuse of other athletes, coaches or officials will be tolerated.

Attendance/Lateness

We understand that circumstances arise that are out of our control, however, **please** notify the coach at the earliest possible date if your athletes will be late or missing a practice. This may be done via email, team chat, phone or in person. If due to illness or unforeseen circumstance, an athlete will be late or absent, again, please notify the coach. Should absence or tardiness become chronic, disciplinary action may be taken, at the discretion of the coach.

Remembering this is a team sport, and athletes continually missing practices could result in losing their place on a team.

****PLEASE NOTE****

At the competitive level no athlete is permitted to miss practices within 2-4 weeks of a competition (depends on level and competition importance)

At the National level, any camps or extra training leading into a National competition is MANDATORY for all swimmers. Coaches will communicate camps as soon as possible (dependent on our pool and coach availability).

Team and Routine Selection

Coaches will select athletes for teams and second routines based on but not limited to the following:

- Skill of athlete
- Attendance past and previous
- Previous and current performance
- Attitude and enthusiasm
- Strength and flexibility
- Synergy with teammates
- Similarity of styles
- Age group
- Testing results at the National level
- Please refer to what is expected at PS and NS levels in their specific handbooks

The head coach's decision with the collaboration of club coaches on placement will be final. Extra Routines (Solos, Duets, Acrobatic Team etc.) are evaluated and determined by the Head Coach in collaboration with team coaches and coaching staff at the beginning of each season. A swimmer must be on a team to be able to be eligible for an extra routine unless there is no team for them to swim in their age group.

Whenever possible, 8-person teams in each group will be the expectation. At the Provincial level age groups may combine to form the average age group of that group. At the National level, only one athlete upon approval from CAS may swim down an age group for their first year in a new age group, otherwise, athletes can only swim up.

If athlete numbers exceed 8 in a given team grouping, tryouts may be set up and alternates will be chosen. This may also happen when skill levels are not met for the given team that an athlete is trying out for, but for developmental reasons, the athlete is best suited to train with the team to build their skills.

When moving from one stream to another...Development to Provincial / Provincial to National, evaluations and testing will take place to ensure athletes are meeting the standards of that level.

Summer and pre-season Camps and training:

Development camps happen every summer for Development swimmers. These optional camps generally run in August, daily from 9-1. Dates announced before the end of the current season.

Competitive training camps are also in August and have mandatory times set for each Competitive stream.

Pre-season Provincial stream camps: 2 weeks of MANDATORY training. Weeks are announced before the end of the current season whenever possible.

Pre-season National Stream camps: 4 weeks of MANDATORY training for all returning athletes and for any athletes wishing to be considered for the National stream. Weeks are announced before the end of the current season whenever possible.

Contact Information

Club Website: <https://vssc.poolq.net/>

Registrar: jennifervicsynchro@gmail.com

Head Coach: victoriaheadcoachbrenda@gmail.com

BC Artistic Swimming website: <https://www.bcartisticswimming.ca/>

Canada Artistic Swimming website: <https://artisticswimming.ca/>

VERSION: 19-Jul-2026 JG/BS