



**Llandudno 2024 coaches report –  
What a great camp, really fantastic.**

We have just safely returned from our annual swimming development camp in Llandudno. Well we arrived back yesterday but report being done today – so probably not just arrived back, we have been back a few hours now :)

This year we took new swimmers who not only have not attended a camp before, but hadn't been away from home before, as well as our regular established swimmers who have been attending for many years.

New to camp this year were Samuel M, Thomas, Clara, Lewis, Lily, Oliver, Lex, Iona, Amelie

Returning were Alex, Joshua, Jamie, Ruth, Sam B, Daniel, Fernella, Emily, Michael, Paul, Romilly, Marijka, Markus, Anna, Aran, Umr, John, Matthew, Esme Amarah, Violet, Noah

The youngest swimmers were aged 3 years old and the oldest was over 80 years old. Quite a large range.

Staff this year, were Karen, Jamie, Anji, Sarah, Heather, Dave. We were joined by Helen and Brenda on Wednesday. Anji and Sarah were both new to camp.

This year's camp was fantastic, although managing that amount of people was as expected, still hard work and tiring. We only had two people on time out ( although one seemed to be on time out more often than time in ) , just a few tears here and there, had a few people either unwell or getting dehydrated or over tired. We did however, have at least one very grumpy teenager, one small meltdown, a few arguments mainly between siblings or room sharing mates.

We had a really lovely group again this year. On the whole, we had very polite and respectful young people that bonded well and worked together to make this such a successful camp. The hotel and pool staff were complimentary on the behaviour and politeness of our group. The hotel staff, which were the same as last year, all stated they are looking forward to seeing us again next year. The Truckstop owners gave me a very large hug and chef came out to chat to the swimmers, which was lovely. They said our group was the best group of young people they have using their facilities, and again we are welcome to come again anytime. They gave us free drinks for the swimmers, and free tea and coffee, which was a lovely gesture and each person received either a chocolate bar or packet of sweets from the Truckstop. Even members of the public congratulated me on how polite and respectful our swimmers were. No one pushed to get in front, they stood to the side to let people pass, they waited patiently by the side of the road before crossing ( at least on most occasions). Such a delightful group this year, and everyone should be very proud to be part of it. They have all represented Birmingham Marlins with honour and pride.

I have to say I started laughing whilst trying to pack my car on Tuesday morning. You may have seen the photos. Packing of my car was a little like an arcade game Tetris, fitting in boxes into spaces and making spaces in the first place. Yesterday, there were 6 bags left over – sorry but there was absolutely no chance of getting them into my car, so they have been sent off with various other parents. Hopefully they will find their way back to the Morris Centre at some point. I did try and tell people to make sure they had picked up their belongings as I would be unable to transport them myself if left behind. Talking of packed car – As I had my car totally full, I had a lot of parents helping me out, carrying boxes and equipment to and from the coach – thank you.

I have laughed and I have cried and talked until my voice broke. I think that statement alone reflects how successful the camp has been. (The couple glasses of baileys in the bar helped too)

This morning has been spent hand washing Hi Vis Vests, and now my outside line looks like a council worker convention without the people. The sunlight really reflects

on the clean vests, and they will be packed up once dry, ready for next year. Thank you to Martin for cleaning the logo bit and for repairing the odd one here and there. We do have one missing – Dave I think it is yours according to the numbers.

We had seven swim sessions over 5 days and 2 land training sessions. We had trips to the beach, sandcastle building, seashell hunting, walks on the promenade, trips to the shops, trips to the amusement arcade x 2, walks to explore the town, trip to the rock/sweet shop, quiz night, board games, card games, trip to the local park with playground, piano playing, story time as well as the 4-6 times a day walk to and from the pool.

There was no party this year. Feedback from last year was that it took longer to set up than to implement. Swimmers remained in their rooms and missed the party completely last year as they did not want to attend, swimmers were tired and did not wish to participate, swimmers did not loud music, swimmers just sat around tables without joining in, swimmers preferred free time than party time, one swimmer fell asleep during the party last year. So we took the party out for this trip. However, all we got on Friday night, was when does the party start, why are we not having the party, when is the music starting. Odd really as it was the same people who stated they didn't really want a party last year who were asking for it this year.

### Swimming

Each swim session was divided into 4 lanes, with a training programme specifically written for each of the four lanes. All sessions were between 1.5 hours and 2 hours each, with some one-to-one coaching taking place within one lane for several swimmers, whilst the other 3 lanes had a full training session.

One to one coaching focused on weak points of an individual and training sessions focused on speed, stamina and distance work. Some very hard work was required to complete sets, and yes swimmers rose to the challenge. Our top swimmers completed just over 42,000m this week, which is why most of them are very tired.

We had one late evening session, which has always proved to be successful from previous camp experience, focusing on just starts, turns and finishes. We all worked hard but had some fun too. The walk back in the dark also proved to be interesting and hot chocolate was waiting for us upon our return.

We had one session, focusing on diving and sprint speed. Some high challenges were set, and whilst not everyone achieved the target time, everyone gave it their best effort, which was all I asked.

Those who could not dive off a block, were given a teaching session looking at how to dive. Some swimmers had not used a block before, and found this a great experience. Everyone had a turn off the blocks, even if it was just a jump off, as due to their impairment, it meant they would not be able to dive off ( except Oliver as no amount of encouragement could we persuade him to try jumping off it)

Our relay session was on Friday afternoon. To take part, swimmers had to be selected and meet criteria including hitting turnaround times set in previous sessions. Only swimmers who had shown that they had the stamina and speed took part. Therefore, it really was a great achievement to be included, swimming alongside our teenagers and strong competitive swimmers. Anyone not taking part in the relays, were given their own session with Anji, and Alex J as much as he denies it fell asleep in his chair.

Alex J returned to the water and swam over 30 lengths on his first sessions and then same again the following session. Bearing in mind Alex cannot swim at the Morris Centre, due to lack of access, he has limited opportunities to train, so we took advantage of the camp, to give him the opportunity he needs. Well done, Alex. He couldn't move the next day due to stiffness mind but he achieved his target.

### Meal times

At each meal time, when everyone was gathered together, we gave out stickers and medals for those who had achieved. Swimmers were acknowledged for their hard work, meeting a target, doing something kind and considerate, or showing their team working skills. Land training achievements were also acknowledged. Unfortunately, I do not reward negative behaviours and therefore, although someone may well have worked hard or done something to earn a reward, they then lost that reward through demonstrating negative behaviours, which was a shame.

Shall I mention the spillages ?

Noah – knocked over drink

Lily – knocked over drink although she should have been drinking out of bottle and it went all over Iona who had to change

Emily/ Lex – knocked over drink

Markus – knocked over drink

Everyone ate well, and there was very little food left over at the end of each meal. There was a little scramble over the ice cream to go with the puddings, and we don't talk about the salt and pepper, tomato sauce and other extras that we removed from the tables. Two / three swimmers were tasked every meal time to do the drinks for every table. Thank you as you all did a great job. . Meals including Lasagne, pizza, chicken pie, spaghetti bolognaise. We had yoghurts, cereal, bread in the morning, we had a cooked breakfast after swimming, with beans, bacon, sausage, eggs, Lunch time we had soup and sandwiches with salad, cucumber, tomatoes, tuna, cheese, ham, and other selections. For supper we had hot chocolate, with biscuits, sandwiches and other 'nibbles' There was a lot of food provided.

There were jugs of squash as well as hot drinks available.

We did have one swimmer become become dehydrated and that in turn made them feel unwell. The old saying of we can only take the horse to the water, but we cannot make them drink comes to mind. We encouraged drinking, provided squash every meal time in the jug full, swimmers were told to bring full drinks bottles to the swim sessions and there was access to drinks in their rooms. In the evening the bar has iced water available. Next year, we will need to look at how to address this further.

## Evening Entertainment

In the evening, we were all entertained by different events.

Tuesday evening we went out to the Arcade

Wednesday evening was quiz night and there are photos on the web site (Llandudno 2024 page) of the swimmers taking part. Most staff had the evening off, whilst Josh was our quiz master. There was something for everyone, and well done to Josh for organising. There were sweets and other rewards given, followed by supper and then bed. .

Thursday evening was spent at the pool.

Friday evening we went to the Pier and Arcade (although not everyone went out)

## Weather

We had some very mixed weather this year. Dry but a little windy for two days, one morning of rain and we did get a little wet, one day of bright blue sky and sunshine, that was warm enough not to wear coats. Very brisk at 6.30am but by the time we walked back after swimming the sun was out and the temperature came up. I am not really complaining, as we have experienced so much worse in the past, so to have nearly every day dry and at least one day of warmth was great.

## Beach time

Our beach trips were really exciting. We had swimmers exploring the rock pools and several little crabs and other creatures were found.

We built sandcastles, stone castles, collected shells, paddled in the freezing puddles left behind by the tide going out.

We spent a long time on the beach, as although cold it was dry, so took advantage of the weather. Wet trousers, socks and in one case wet shoes, didn't really matter when everyone was having a good time. I think Lewis and Clara managed to be wettest, closely followed by Michael. It really did not matter; we were less than 10 minutes' walk from the hotel, and they could change and get dry again. Life is too short to spoil fun because someone is getting wet, especially when there is dry option very close by.

## Trip to shops/ Rock Shop/ Freetime

Swimmers who had permissions to go out without supervisions were given their freetime on Thursday morning, except those who had list their time through issues ( see below)

I took a small group of 8 to the rock shop to make purchases, and the shop keeper remembered us from last year (difficult to forget us really). She really remembered Fernella in particular (unsure why Fernella in particular) but they had a nice chat

whilst Fernella made her purchases. The shop keeper donated some lollipops to the swimmers, which was nice.

Oliver had a trip out with his mum to make some purchases – he brought a Welsh dragon, that ended up eating breakfast on my table.

Jamie had some free time, whilst Anna and Lily had a sleep on their bed, except Anna gave Lily her phone to play on, so she didn't have her nap, which made Lily grumpy all afternoon.

Anji discovered Sainsbury's and other discovered the Donut shop whilst out and about. Brenda and Helen found Wetherspoons.

### Behaviours/ Issues

We did have some issues this year, a lot more than last year. We did have to contact one set of parents as the behaviours were not acceptable. The parents were very supportive and spoke to the child concerned and between us, we managed to bring the problem down to a controllable level – just.

Mobile phones are one of the biggest sources of issues this year. This camp is a mobile free zone, and yet several people ignored that until phones were removed from them. We had swimmers phoning parents in the middle of the night because they were home sick, or because they had been told off. We had swimmers taking inappropriate photographs in bathrooms and bedrooms. We had swimmers playing age restricted games with young swimmers. We had swimmers playing loud music from their phones and annoying others. We had swimmers taking phones out on activities when it was clear this was not allowed. We had phones in the dining room, distracting swimmers from eating, which again was made clear not allowed. Swimmers were on the phone when they should have been doing something else, swimmers in the day room speaking to friends, parents and others on the phone, disturbing the quiet time of others. We had swimmers asking to borrow other swimmers phones and then promptly losing them causing tensions, and arguments and upset. We will be addressing this next year, as it is just not acceptable to break the rules and annoy other people, phoning parents that resulted in my break being disturbed as parents then phoned me, safeguarding issues being raised around photographs etc, etc.

Not sure yet how we will address this but I trusted swimmers this year to bring phones as long as rules were not broken, but within minutes of arrival the rules were being broken. Well done to those who did follow the rules (Ruth, Marijka, Amelie, Alex J, Jamie)

We had swimmers on time out. We had a major incident over the lift, resulting the lift being unavailable for those who really needed it. Those two swimmers were put onto a sanction, not only for playing in the lift when been told not to, but for answering back and making threats to staff who tried to prevent them. It resulted in one staff member having to go for a long walk away from the swimmers, as they got very upset at being spoken to in that manner.

We had swimmers missing out on free time for not listening or following the rules or being rude to staff.

We had swimmers on time out or taken out of activities for using swear words.  
We had one swimmer told off and put on a sanction for trying to 'pick pocket' other peoples coats and belongings  
We had several older swimmers lose their free time for not doing tasks when allocated – for example one person was asked to look after my laptop and to keep it safe whilst I was dealing with personal care of another swimmer who needed help. This person was old enough and responsible enough to do such a task. When I returned the laptop as been put on the floor so others could play a game on the table and a younger person was standing on it. When pointing this out to the young man I had asked to look after it, they shrugged their shoulders and walked off stating it wasn't their fault. The job was then allocated to another person who did show a lot more responsibility , but the first person lost their free time – not because they didn't do the task but because the attitude in relation to talking to me was not acceptable. No apology just a shrug of the shoulders, with a flippant not my fault.

Swimmers not being responsible for own belongings. Whilst I am not expecting younger ones to care for everything, teenagers have no excuse. We had towels in lost property for days, and then eventually claimed, only for them to be back in lost property again. We had trunks in lost property that still have not been claimed. We had other items returning to lost property over and over to the point especially drinks bottles. Teenagers were told if they could not look after their belongings, then they could not be responsible to look after themselves during freetime, so they lost it.

One swimmer was caught trying to take something out of another person's pocket. That is not acceptable. He thought it was funny. He was told off and it was explained that it is not funny to take something that does not belong to him.

Romilly, Emily and Clara – told off by cleaners who could not get into the room due to the amount of clothing, towels, bags, books, toys, etc. on the floor.

Arguments amongst swimmers – we had a few. Emily not being tolerant of other people's needs and not getting own way, Fernella and Romilly sibling rivalry, Samuel M bad tempered in the morning especially during the morning walk to the pool, Michael not getting his own way, Paul just arguing with everyone or anyone, Iona arguing over drinking and eating.

#### Personal care/Hygiene/ Illness/ Headaches/ Sore Throats

What fun we had.

I have thought about naming and shaming and decided yes I will, mainly so that parents are aware that it wasn't for the lack of nagging that it occurred but also so that the older swimmers are now aware that we know

Sam B – wore the same clothes all week until the nagging got too much for him and he agreed to change. Did not shower or wash his hair all week, again not for the lack of nagging

Paul – did not shower or wash his hair all week. He stank of chlorine, so did his bedroom. He even tried the old dunk hair under the shower and make out I have washed trick to try and persuade us.

Lewis – refused point blank to change clothes although he did shower and wash

Matthew – stripped naked and could not find clothes

Clara – we had the issues the other way round – refused to get out of the shower and washed her hair that many times she ran out of shampoo and her hair became knotty

Anji – wouldn't get out of the shower :)

Anna – wiped her own nose and Lily's nose and then left the tissues on the side and did not wash hands. Was sent to wash several times

Lily – not putting hand over mouth when coughing

Amarah – wiped her nose on her sleeve and hands and then moaned when we sent her to wash it off

Clara – stripped naked and then wandered around

Michael – did not clean his teeth

Clara – did not clean teeth

Paul – no shirt on

Sam B – left clothes on poolside went to change – stripped off and then used towel to retrieve his clothes

Iona – wore same sweatshirt all week

Markus – longest shower ever without actually using any soap, shampoo, shower gel.

Dave – lost his voice

Karen – had no voice before I even left, so very croaky throughout

Umr – was told to stop moaning about headache, sore throat etc – every 5 seconds there was something, my head hurts, my leg hurts, my throat is dry, my chest is aching, my little toe has cramp, my knee is aching, I have leg cramp, my arm is sore. You name it – it ached or was sore at some point.

Ruth – headache ( but did not moan) paracetamol solved the problem

Iona – I am dizzy, light headed, - through being dehydrated. Made her sit at the table until she had drank half her drinks bottle. That solved the problem. She had to eat at least half of her food too

Lex – my skin is dry – apply your moisture cream – problem solved

Matthew – my heart is beating fast – time to worry is when it is not beating at all.

Problem solved

Matthew – My ears are pink – time to worry is when they are purple – problem solved

Matthew – my tummy is wrong – time to worry is when your tummy is missing – problem solved

Matthew – I am cold – put on your jumper – problem solved

Matthew – I am too hot – take off your jumper – problem solved

Lily – wet trousers – change clothes – problem solved

Lily – ran out of jumpers – then wear long sleeved shirt with T Shirt underneath or wear jumper inside out – problem solved

Lily – ran out of trousers – how many did you bring? 10 sets. No way have you worn 10 sets of trousers it is only Weds, 8 sets found in suitcase not unpacked. Problem solved

Anna – take Lily to the toilet please – Oh yes



We did have some signs of colds on camp. I had laryngitis before we left and was still very croaky on Weds but I was not ill. Dave picked up a cold, Lily and Amarah picked up a cold. If people are not over the top with personal hygiene on a camp like this, then germs spread really quickly. Hopefully, they will all recover soon. Anna has since picked up a cold once she got home but probably through not washing hands sufficiently when dealing with Lily.

### Good/Great Behaviours

Whilst we did have to deal with some and on one day a lot of negative behaviours there were a lot of outstanding great behaviours that I acknowledge below

Marijka / Amelie/ Ruth/ Jamie /Thomas/ Esme/ Daniel/ Sam B/ John/ Joshua – carried out all allocated tasks, were very helpful as well as great positive attitudes. Thank you.

I would like to thank everyone who helped with the organising of this camp. The organising started way back in middle of last year. To ensure the bookings are correct, the transport is correct, the accommodation is correct and that the staffing levels are correct, it has taken many months of preparation and several lost weekends of chasing down paperwork, checking finances and ordering resources. Staff have to complete mandatory training before they can attend, giving up their free time over and above the half term week time (with the majority having to book annual leave to attend). All staff have to hold DBS so thank you to Alison for organising this. We all had to hold current safeguarding qualifications. Again, thank you Alison for organising. Lot of paperwork including the risk assessments for each person/swimmer/session/activity/travel etc was completed, taking away my own free time for 2 weeks prior to leaving. Don't mention the session planning, as this was the biggest time consuming bit with risk assessments coming in second. My house has looked like T.K. Maxx for months, with bits hanging up here, boxes there, crates in the corner. But it all came together, with nothing left behind.

I would like to thank Heather. We actually had some very complicated medications this year compared to other years but it was all organised and all sorted without any issues. With some swimmers having to have meds morning and night, creams applied and other meds, it needs organisation and implementing effectively and the routines were completed very efficiently. Well-done Heather as it's not easy. Heather also supported Alex with personal care. Alex requires a lot of care support ( I am sure he won't mind me saying that here) and Heather provided most of that support.

Thank you to all the helpers who supported individual swimmers both in and out of the pool. Thank you in particular to Anji and Violet.

Thank you to Anji for teaching, coaching, helping with Alex, Managing behaviours to the best of ability, and just generally helping me out. Hoping you will agree to come again

A huge thank you to Sarah, who watched all the swimmers with personal care (mainly hair washing or toileting and ensuring they were dressed appropriately, had the right

footwear on, etc. Sarah walked to and from the pool and became traffic warden, and chaperone to most of our younger swimmers. It was Sarah first time on camp, and hopefully she enjoyed herself and will want to come again.

Thank you to Joshua for helping with transporting Alex J and for organising the quiz.

Thank you to Martin for running the web site page to keep parents up to date with events and reports from the day. He also put up the photos ongoing, so parents could see what we had been up to. We are not allowed to take photos on poolside.

A very special thank you to Dave for his coaching skills that allowed swimmers to achieve the main aims.

Dave also drove his car there and back and helped with transporting a lot of the luggage and required items, and giving us the much needed car.

### Highs and Lows of the week

I know this list won't mean a lot to some people and only those who were there at the time will appreciate some of this, but it's worth a read and hopefully will bring back some fond memories for all who attended and a smile to those who did not. I have to say the list seems to get longer and longer every year.

I got last minute texts and emails from parents with new information, new meds, cancelled meds and other things all of which had to be put into preparations.

Last minute swimmer attending – welcome Aran

Last minute swimmer dropping outstanding

I was awake at 3am Monday night writing out a list of things I still needed to do.

Hi vis vests being allocated on the coach.

Amarah no lunch or drink on Tuesday – had to have mine. Phoned mum to check, mum said she forgot and to use her spending money to buy her a sandwich and drink – problem was spending money was under the coach. She ate mine instead

Paul and Emily having a fight on the coach on the way there – physical fight with magazines being rolled up to hit each other with. Just the start of things to come

Clara very slow eating lunch

John left his bag behind at Truckstop

Large group photo in front of coach – took a bit of organising

Sam M scarf – dropped on floor, wrapped around head, wrapped around back instead of face

Rule of register – no talking and no answering for anyone else. Lily shouted here every time. Violet, Michael, Paul, Matthew, Esme told several times to stop talking during register time

Lily on car seat on coach

Lily took shoes off on coach and then forgot to put them back on. Put onto wrong feet

My storage cupboard car

Following a toilet trip - Have you washed your hands? Back they went, have you ashed now – no someone else in the toilet and they won't let me in. Are you surprised they won't let you in? Yes I only want to wash my hand not sit on the toilet so they could have let me, I don't want to share the seat, just use the sink. Well use the hand gel instead. (was beginning to lose the will during that conversation)

Michael was sick on the coach – yuck, but we were prepared, with towels and sick bags, wipes, gloves etc.

Lily using the toilet on the coach.

Rubbish in the bin – the bin overflowed at the Truckstop

We had a great and fast getaway – no holding back this year, coach was packed and people counted and then we were off.

Stones and rocks on the beach – they stay on the beach. Disagreement about stones not being allowed in hotel rooms, so compromised and agreed they could be put in the hotel garden. I did notice that they had been moved the next day.

Very wet feet – Lewis after paddling

Michael – I am hungry

Animal slippers – penguins this year

Vegetarian diets, gluten free diets, dairy free diets, lactose free diets, what a juggle but well done chef and waiters who got it right

First swim session

Fernella no hat

Esme no water bottle

Thomas no bag to carry clothes in

Clara – no costume or towel

Sam got the sack – he was supposed to be checking bags

Amarah wearing wet costume back to hotel as she forgot her underwear

Amarah wearing dry costume all day as she did not swim first session

Noah and Matthew locked out of room

Have you unpacked – no why? Well that's what you are supposed to be doing?

Markus – warning given after being caught knocking on other people's doors and running away to hide.

Markus being told by Marijka to stop banging on her door

Violet being told to stop going into other people's rooms

Emily being told several times to stop wandering around the hotel

Paul being told by Josh to stop being rude and misbehaving

Samuel M told to stop running around the hotel

Paul – being told to just stop

Anna and Lily's room – what a mess

Took 20 minutes to get Alex out of the car

Fernella found a massive pretty shell on the beach

Lex stored her collection of stones on the patio at the hotel

Lily's drink bottle – never where it should be

Anna seeing to her own needs before Lily's – told off

Constantly telling swimmers not to run – Oliver in Particular

Arcade fun – winning lots of tickets and collecting prizes

No swim wear – sack Sam

Had a very slow walk back to the hotel in the drizzly rain. Had to stop whilst swimmers did up their coats. Jamie got very 'snappy' as he had to stop, take off his bags and do up his coat. Michael, Matthew, John, all had to stop and do up coats

Swimmers being told not to run off too far ahead – did they take any notice – no. They had to walk back, so added at least 400m onto their walking journey.

No shampoo at the pool for some swimmers – had to use shower gel instead

Awards to Noah and Romilly for great listening

Esme tried to push the wheelchair with the brakes on – she didn't get very far

Oliver – where has my mum gone – she is doing a job for me, well she has to stay here and watch me, no Oliver she is helping me, Oliver then got very cross.

Lovely walk on the pier – right to the end

Josh had quiet time in the bar

Lily – no daytime naps – she was grumpy though. She was given the opportunity for nap time, but played on phone instead. Only used her pushchair once.

Michael – wanted a nap but when I checked he was watching TV

Anna sent to find Lily water bottle with Jamie

Lewis – I want my mum at midnight – settled eventually and no further issues at night time

Alex drove into the bench and nearly knocked over old lady with walking stick

Emily was reminded she was not in charge and to stop being bossy

Threatened to send one child back on the train to Birmingham due to challenging behaviours.

Lego shop on Pier – we had this a few years ago and it was still open – Daniel went to investigate

Snakes and ladders game – some pieces went missing by the end of the week due to not being put away after use

Fire alarm drill – persuaded hotel to wait until we were all outside

Paul had a major sulk when didn't get own way, so left him standing on street corner with arms folded. He soon followed us when he realised we were going without him

Iona – complained of headache but when checked she has not drunk anything from water bottle.

Sam – homework time but then found him trying to work in day room with all others – no Sam – you do homework in your room.

Sam – I need more homework time.

Sam – why are doing homework whilst also playing chess. I want to play chess. But Sam this is your homework time.

Sam you have homework time now – Oh I really want to go out, no Sam homework.

Violet – laptop in lounge – no laptop in room only. But its for my homework – yes exactly – in your room where it is quiet and you will not get disturbed. Your room mate is downstairs with us, so plenty of quiet time

Fernella – missed register as too busy chatting, so could not go out as she was marked as absent

Glasses game – too complicated for Lily

Lots of small shops on the pier – Fernella and Clara please do not touch anything unless you are going to pay for it. Fernella had a small glass gem stone in her hand after leaving the shop– had to take it back.

Aran – I am not your bag lady, please carry your own bags into the storage area and do not just leave them sitting on the floor or on the side expecting someone else to pick them up and move them. Twice Aran left his belongings on the side of the pool

Anji gave in – went to bed at 8pm

Hotel forgot the yoghurts at Breakfast, Rectified the following day

Bailey in the bar.

Lex's dad brought staff a drink at the bar (gave me the money) – thank you

Iona brought all the staff a present

Breakfast by torchlight – could not find light switch so used torch on my phone

Thomas and Samuel oversleeping

Lily chasing the seagulls on the pier

Very pretty lights along with prom and pier

Anna forgot white cane so had to have support to walk in the dark

Anna forgetting Lily's blanket when out in the pushchair

Meds round in the mornings – all done and completed

Fernella had the job of opening the doors – completed with style well done and rewarded

Anji had rice cakes

Karen's cups of tea

Sarah – very helpful

Dave – so tired

Helen and Brenda – bright and breezy

Matthew – have you put on your cream? no. can you put on your cream no? Creams given to Meds officer in the end to apply so he didn't forget

Esme – why are you not eating – sweets will be removed if you do not eat. She ate

Samuel M – lost free time for using swear words – had to remain with younger children when others had 'grown up' time. He really moaned about that and then sulked. didn't learn though as swear words were repeated the next day, so again lost free time.

pre pool sessions by the side of the pool. Took some nagging to get everyone going but in the end everyone was moving

Oliver and Michael – worked out maths questions using chocolate examples

Clara – left bag behind (again)

Amarah – playing music too loud – had phone removed

Aran – being rude to staff, and using phone whilst on activities – phone removed

Matthew – using phone downstairs – phone removed

Violet – using phone to call parents when upset, making them upset and causing me to be upset, then causing Dave to be upset because I was upset. Too many upsets here due to use of phone.

Lex – pretending to eat but crumbling up her bread and putting into pockets – we are not daft we know what you doing

Daniel – ate too many yoghurts in one go

Lewis – great land training exercises and great swimming afterwards

Matthew – have you packed no – why not? I do not do packing. Well you do now, where is your bag. don't know, spent 10 minutes searching. Found in room next door. Helped him Pack. Matthew cried – why are you crying? I do not do packing. Well

what do you think will happen when coach arrives ( already here) to your clothes if they are not in your bag? Don't know, well they will stay in the room whilst you get on the coach. Oh, so you need to help me put your clothes in the bag. Cried again.

There is water in the tap – err yes

There is warm water in the tap and cold water in the other – erm yes.

2am – there is water in the tap

3am – my heart is beating and there is water in the tap

4am – there is water in the tap

4.30am – there is water in the tap – can I get dressed now?

Alex being transferred from chair to another. Wrong sling put underneath so had to transfer again, get the right sling, transfer again and then into wheelchair – what fun

Shoes on radiators after getting wet on the beach

Taking ages to get water temp right in shower in room

Marijka putting hand gel on everyone and then the tub got very low and having to tip up and tilt to get it to squirt out.

Rocks off the beach – all piled up in the garden outside the hotel

Alex whizzing down the pier and then straight into the railings

Very quiet supper time – everyone was tired

Boisterous land training session

There is a lot of orange about – talking about clothing

Dropping clothes whilst walking from changing rooms to poolside – there was a breadcrumb trail of socks, shoes, coats, underwear, etc.

Shoes left in the changing room – Clara



No socks for Clara – either she didn't wear them to the pool and we didn't notice or she lost them at the pool – unsure but they were nowhere to be found. Had to walk back in just her shoes. Not found all week

Markus moved lanes  
Daniel moved lanes  
Umr moved lanes  
Fernella moved lanes  
Anna moved lanes  
Emily moved lanes

Lane 3 – swimming wrong way round and bumping into each other. Lane was stopped and re-told the way the swim. Lane 3 swimming wrong way round again. Lane stopped and re-told the direction to swim in. Lane 3 swimming wrong way round again. – Think you get the idea. We spent more time trying to stop swimmers from bumping into each other than we did coaching.

Lily lost her fin

Lily swam so well

Lily was so well behaved all week – well done, 5 stars awarded (Lily has a star chart)

Jamie back in training – great to see he still got speed

Fernella completed some fantastic swimming

Thomas and John great swimming, really put in a lot of effort.

.

Daniel showed some great swimming- not a sign of a moan, or tummy ache or head ache or leg ache or back ache or anything other type of ache – unlike Saturday mornings.

Sam and Oliver first up most mornings

Clara, Thomas and Samuel M were usually last up

Ruth's excellent 400m swim

Noah selected to stay in the pool and continue swimming when he had the option of getting out.

Thomas and Samuel M missed breakfast as arrived downstairs too late – they had the knock on the door twice and shouted to get up twice.

John – no drink at the pool. He said he forgot to fill up his bottle but in fact, he left his bottle back at the hotel

Michael trying to get his fins out of his kit bag – the bag was upside down, so the opening was the other end, so he was trying to pull them through a closed end.

Oliver did very well on his kick set. He finds kick very hard and often does not complete kick sets, but he did this time.

Everyone wanting the toilet at the same time!

Esme pushed the wheelchair but got stuck on the kerb – had to have help from Ruth

Romilly pushed the wheelchair

Umr not drinking enough – he became very tired and dehydrated and moaned about it.

Lane 3 swimming wrong way round again

We had fun with Amarah's swim hat. Such very long hair so it was a struggle to get into the hat. We managed.

Where is your vest? I do not have one lifting up clothing – no I mean Hi Vis vest.

Quiz Night – got a little competitive and a bit shouting out but everyone enjoyed themselves. The plates of orange slices were demolished at a very fast rate. Topped up several times. (Oranges were donated by Step Up Training and Care – we were given 3 large bags of oranges)

Iona peeling the oranges – left the peel on the table

Karen poured coffee into the tea pot thinking it was water.

3 cups of tea all day – Karen got dehydrated too. Made up with very large pot in the evening and first thing in the morning

Hot chocolate – kitchen made it all lactose free – so much easier

Fernella's lovely bunny/cat mug

Really nice vanilla ice cream – it really was nice

Oliver – I don't like chocolate ice cream, so chef gave him all vanilla after first day

Karen ate Dave's ice cream

Karen ate Heather's ice cream too

Karen ate Dave's pudding

Pyjamas in the swim bag instead of swimwear

Noah's water bottle left at the pool

Paul's Iona's, Lex's, water bottles left at pool. Ended up in lost property.

I am so tired, so very tired, really tired. OK you can go to bed now then, brilliant, can I watch TV and read my book, and play cards and have a snack in bed please?

Very early risers and even earlier risers. 2am is it time to get up, 4am can I get up now, 4.30am – I am up and dressed. Well done on getting up and dressed, would you like to watch TV in your room for a bit whilst others are still getting ready.

11pm risers. We had several swimmers that decided they could not sleep and needed to get back up at 11pm - Matthew, Lewis, Michael, Romilly, in particular

Late night showers – only opportunity for me except for one lunch time when I sneaked one in

Boiling hot tea pot handles

Teenage girls – not the most friendly at 6am

John also very tired but refused to give in and go to bed before the others.

Hotel dried out the towels and anything else overnight. Next morning another pile of wet towel appeared before we went to the pool. Why had they not been put out the night before I do not know. Hotel were just brilliant with the towels and other clothings. They even offered to do the laundry this year for those who had 'wet themselves'

Pants in the wet towels – also tumble dried

Swim suits in the wet towels – also tumble dried

T shirt in the wet towels – also tumble dried

Wet towel and dry towels all mixed up so hotel dried them all again.

Amarah's black T shirt – found over and over

Mesh bag found but had no name on it. Turned out to be Clara's

Missing goggles – found, lost again, found again. We had one pair on poolside for 3 days before it was claimed. Michael did not ever find his lost goggles. Emily's also vanished.

Coco pop faces – had to go and wash several times.

Over filled breakfast bowl – Paul was reminded that he had to share and not take all the Coco pops in the morning. Matthew was also reminded.

Tomato sauce faces – again had to go and wash. Fernella, Michael, Markus, Oliver were the worse culprits.

Reminded everyone that salt is bad for swimmers – removed the salt pots. Jamie covered his chips in salt.

Non moaners – the following swimmers did not moan once at least not to me. Clara, Anna, John, Ruth, Amelie, Marijka, Thomas, Alex, Noah, Oliver (although he did talk an awful lot)

Biggest moaners – Paul, Umr, Iona, Lex, Michael, Matthew, Samuel M, Emily

What you rather be a cloud, the sky, the sea or the sand?

Would you rather go to prison or be dead?

Names were written on the board as to what lane everyone was swimming in. At least one swimmer every session ended up in the wrong group or wrong lane. I can only have a max of 10 swimmers per lane and that includes teachers in the water, with a max of 36 in the water at any one time. It has to be managed and therefore, not everyone can swim at the same time, hence the board listing the information. Takes a bit of planning.

Thursday morning session – everyone in the right lane first time and swimming the right way round

Esme – great streamlining demonstrated but got team disqualified twice in the relay. Had to change places with Emily in the end.

Lost shoes – left in the changing room

Lost coat – in room

Lost Hi Vis Jacket – good job we keep record of the numbers. It was found on some else's back, John – lost his completely not found.

Sam where is your coat. Oh that's in my bag. Why is it in your bag and not on your bag. I forgot to put it on. Second day Sam – no coat at all I am warm enough – then complained he was cold.

Has everyone got coats on? Yes Karen. Has everyone got suitable shoes on? Yes Karen, Has anyone got poolside shoes on? No Karen. Start to go out of the hotel door, and walking down the road. John where is your coat? In my room Karen. Esme where are you shoes? in my room Karen

Esme persuading Amelie to carry her bags.

Markus locked himself in the toilet and couldn't get out (turning the lock the wrong way)

Clara drifted off in the changing room – just sat there not doing anything

Plaits and hairstyles – thank you Amelie – the girls looked lovely

Split groups – I want to be in that group, I want to go in that one etc

Group photo organisation – what chaos. Not everyone had got orange shirts so had to borrow. Some people had to miss out on the group photos.

Matthew's first experience of 2 hour sets. He worked very hard but it was a challenge for him

Michael bruise on knee – no idea

Esme bruise on arm – no idea

Markus bruise on elbow – no idea

Karen – bruise on legs – from Alex's chair

Umr cramp in leg caused by not drinking enough

Paul – just a bag – nothing in it just a bag. It was supposed to hold his swimming kit.

Thomas – wet swimming stuff left in bag so had wet trunks to put back on

Thomas no handles left on his bag

John's shoe laces. How many times did we ask him to do them up? He eventually tripped up and fell down and after that he managed to remember to tie them up

Emily Well organised sort of– Emily finds being organised very difficult so this is being recognised. Just do not mentioned the untidy bedroom.

Noah – can I go in the car please?

Umr – no shampoo in the bag – did not shower

Untidy room award – Romilly and Emily and Clara by a clear margin. That was even after they had spent 20 minutes tidying up.

Alex room – organised chaos

Markus and Paul arguing who goes first – and just arguing full stop

Markus kit bag left on poolside

Goggle gate – just missing goggles at every session, and arguments, meltdowns and temper tantrums left right and centre. I told everyone in the end that if goggles were missing then they could not swim. Emily – major meltdown as goggles went missing. Michael – no goggles. Lewis – drove everyone bonkers over goggles, Alex – no goggles,

Paul – I cannot find my float. Found at hotel no idea how it got from the pool to the hotel.

Rock shop – shopkeeper remembered us from last year, gave us lollipops for everyone. She particularly remembered Fernella.

Staff hiding in the dining room with lights off so swimmers could not find us. Didn't work for long.

My aching feet. Need to remember not to spend all day in trainers or bare feet on poolside

Heather's aching legs

Anji aching knees

Oliver was far too cheerful at 6am according to Sam

Clara hair brushing antics.

Swimmers using phones at the dining table – warned and then removed. This is no mobile phone camp

Playing board games and chess in the day room – so nice to see people playing games with no sign of an X Box or any electronic devices at all. Snakes and Ladders was very popular, along with card games.

Leek and potato soup – very popular and everyone tried it. Most people liked it and some went back for seconds. Emily had thirds.

Salt and pepper pots removed from tables and put on staff table. We ended up with a lot of pots on my table

Suitcases appearing in the lift

Alex hoist appearing in the lift

Mesh bag from the car to the pool – shuttle runs

Sandwiches at lunch time -soon disappeared. Can I have another one? What's the little word? Sandwich Karen. Jam sandwiches – chef had to make more.

Mountains of toast on every table at every breakfast

One little boy standing in his pyjamas on the morning of going home. Where are your clothes – in my suitcase, you told me to pack them. My fault I suppose for not being specific enough about getting dressed first.

Very well-behaved young people on the coach journey

Very well-behaved swimmers at the pool

How many mesh bags with no names on? How much kit was unnamed? Too many

The walk to and from the pool – The walk in the morning took just over 10 minutes. The walk got slower and slower and by Friday it was taking nearly half an hour.

50 plates of chips at the Truckstop, with lots of squash and cups of tea. (We had swimmers who did not travel back with us as Alex had to go a different route)

Lanyards for the keys – works really well, certainly stopped the majority of lost keys. Swimmers just forgot to put them around their neck.

Markus had a sanction of room key removed – so he had to wait to be let into his room

Clara, Emily and Romilly had same sanction for locking themselves out too many times

Sam B – locked myself out of the room – twice once more and key would have been removed

Marijka – locked myself out of the room

Keys are not to be taken out of the hotel, OK where shall I put them, give them to reception, what's reception? keys in large pile on desk at reception. Then Dave took his key out of the hotel – oops.

Hotel towels are not to be taken to the pool – Sam M why have you got hotel towel at the pool , because mine are all wet. Why have not given in the wet towels for drying – forgot.

Anji' s extra-long, extra hot shower

Early mornings – everyone was up and ready on time – easy peasy. Don't know what parents are on about when they say their children will not get out of bed to go to school, everyone was up and ready to go on time. (No! I am not coming round next week to get them up for school)

Daniel, Emily and Fernella all trying to get each other's attention

Daniel and Emily becoming just that little bit too familiar with each other. Young love.

Dave lost his voice

Thursday dives – real effort made by Michael, Ruth, Umr. John, Emily

Esme eating sweets but not eating dinner - nonononono

Walking in the sheep/goat poo – that was funny.

Bubble play in the garden – great time and Clara, Lily and Amarah in particular enjoyed this.

Everyone waiting to go out and I realised I had not taken the register.

Large waves crashing onto the beach

Lewis could not find his bag of sweets

Josh walked with Alex – he had to go a different way due to needing drop down kerbs, so they boys all walked together.

Markus could not find swimming trunks



Kit bags left in heaps at the pool – needed to be left in a tidy manner. Spent many minutes tidying the corner.

Thomas and Samuel walked in front of the group to stop everyone before crossing the road

Grumpy and moaning teenage girls – Anji needed rescuing .

I gained two children not with our group, when crossing the road with our swimmers – they just tagged along, so ended up with their parents one side of the road and their children the other. I crossed them back.

I gained a cook, cleaner and washer on Saturday when 3 children were not picked up.

There were 6 left over bags after the coach had left including suitcase, mesh bags, carrier bags, kit bags, swim bags, and one coat- no room in my car for anything not already allocated, so had to sent off left overs with other people. Hopefully they will be returned to the pool. Please do not email/text/ phone me about missing property , everyone on the camp had the opportunity to collect their belongings. I am sure if it is has been named correctly it will be returned eventually. Several people can vouch that my car was full to the brim and no room for anything else. I am away for the next two weeks so if it is in my car, it will be staying in my car until March.

Heather told a swimmer to hurry up in the shower who was not part of our party – she got confused. No idea who the swimmer was but they hurried out of the shower.

Anji also told a swimmer off in reception that did not belong to our party – oops.

Paul, Thomas and Samuel M, Clara, Emily and Romilly, Matthew, Violet not packed to go home when the coach had arrived

Markus, Noah told several times to leave the vending machines alone at the pool.

Suitcase shuffle –Thank you for your help swimmers Amelie, Sam M, Paul, Umr, Markus, Thomas, Fernella, Esme, Emily, Daniel, Marijka, Violet, John

Babysitters whilst coach was packed/unpacked – thank you Ruth, Oliver, Iona.

Toilet run before getting on the coach – even I got sent.

Markus had trousers on back to front

Alex ran me over in this wheelchair – toes flattened, bruise on hip and top of leg, and on tummy. It was an accident

Staff enjoyed a drink the bar every night, in the quiet. Alex, Jamie and Anna joined us.

Paul got stuck in his coat when the zip jammed. Took a while to get him out of it

Jamie wiped his hands on his trousers

Alex swam 30 lengths without stopping

Lollipops from rock shop – very sticky

Fernella and Romilly arguing

Esme fell asleep on the coach first, closely followed by Jamie and Lewis.

Lots of iced water from the bar. Noah had several glasses.

Very quiet coach journey home – most fell asleep and I dozed off too

Amelie carrying someone else's bag

Lots of boxes to pack onto the coach.

Hot coach – had to ask driver to turn down the heating

I forgot to say thank you to Dave, Heather and Sarah at the end of the camp. Said thank you to everyone else.

Ran a book on how many times one person name would be mentioned throughout the camp

Paul was the top of the list

The following people also made the list

Markus

Oliver

Lewis

Fernella

Michael

Jamie

Violet

Lily

Umr

Romilly

Amarah

I have been puked on, run over by a wheelchair, got wet in the rain, spoken to inappropriately, hit by a child, dealt with arguments, got soaked from head to foot on poolside, got cold from wind blast, coped with temper tantrum, my legs ache, my feet ache, I am tired but not as tired as I have been in the past. But I have had a great time and enjoyed the week. I could have lived without the arguing and dealing with challenging behaviours and the moaning teenagers, and then the week would have probably been just perfect.

Great Swim camp and this is our thirteenth year. Team working and social skills have developed and friendships have formed that will hopefully remain for many years. Michael and Oliver became firm friends. John and Aran became friends. Matthew and Noah became friends. Emily and Daniel probably became too friendly. We have promoted life skills and independence, that requires us all to be very patient and calm, even when swimmers are getting frustrated and cross. We encourage people to be tolerant of other people's needs and that sometimes means we have stop and think before we act. We support and guide and where the impairment will not allow for the full independence, we will assist. Fantastic swimming by all, fantastic coaching and teaching by all staff and hopefully a good experience for most if not all.

Karen.