



Case Study

Mill Lodge Primary School Solihull

Our children made excellent progress in swimming as a direct result of the Swim:ED programme, the dedication of skilful staff, and the intensive approach of having a swimming pool on site.

Joanne Challender

Headteacher

Mill Lodge wanted an on-site solution that could genuinely work for all pupils, including those supported by the Rainbows ARC*, where off-site swimming was not feasible due to the level of supervision, transport needs, and sensory barriers of public pools. Since opening the ARC in 2022, the school has been **unable to offer swimming in the curriculum until now**.

Swim:ED stood out for its comprehensive programme, clear safety requirements, and professionalism. Crucially, **having the pool on site meant ARC pupils could access swimming safely and inclusively**, while the intensive approach helped address weaker year group outcomes more effectively than weekly lessons.

Across the programme, **progress accelerated against the national curriculum targets**, with Year 5 making more progress in two weeks than they had over two terms of weekly traditional swimming. Group size, frequency, and instructors getting to know pupils' needs helped unlock confidence and capability quickly. For ARC pupils, **every child progressed from their individual starting points**, with notable improvements in confidence and independence in the water.

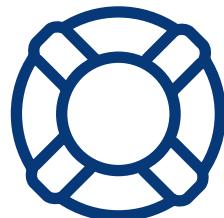
Other pupil and community highlights included:

- Teachers spent more time teaching, not travelling to pools.
- Attendance increased while the pool was on site, reaching the highest of the academic year.
- ARC pupils were more regulated in school, especially in the afternoons after swimming.
- Families valued access that they could not always provide outside of school.

A parent of an ARC pupil shared the wider impact beyond the pool, including confidence, reduced anxiety around water, improved regulation, and improved sleep during the programme.

Pupil voice captured the shift best:

Amazing! I could not swim, but as we went for longer and longer, I swam!



Water safety up 137%

Water safety knowledge rose from 38% to 90%



25m up 131%

Children able to swim 25 metres climbed from 36% to 83%

* Rainbows ARC serves pupils with complex needs, mainly autism, often with co-occurring issues like learning delays, communication difficulties, and sensory processing differences. Each has an Education, Health and Care Plan. The ARC provides extensive support, a small tailored environment, and a personalised multi-tiered curriculum for those below or near the start of the National Curriculum.