

SWIMMING AT KEY STAGE 2

Report By: Primary School Improvement Manager

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To provide information on the swimming requirements as part of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 2.

Financial Implications

2. Maintained schools are not permitted to charge parents for the cost of providing swimming lessons that take place wholly or mainly during school hours, or for the cost of transport to and from the lesson. No charge can be made for lessons or transport outside school hours where the lesson is part of the National Curriculum. There is nothing to stop schools asking for voluntary contributions to cover the cost of school activities, but it must be made clear that no child will be treated differently, or left out of the activity, because their parent is unable or unwilling to make the contribution.
3. The cost of hiring swimming pools can be a major problem for schools where there is an uncoordinated approach. In the DCSF Swimming Charter it is suggested that Local authorities can help schools to overcome this burden at little cost by providing an authority-wide service that schools can buy back from them. In doing so local authorities should:
 - where possible, buy pool access during off-peak time when costs are reduced, or negotiate reduced rates;
 - buy pool access at end of term for top-up programmes in order to cut costs; and
 - seek partnerships with pool management companies to provide summer programmes.

Background

4. At its meeting on 30 March 2009 (minute 50 – Capital Budget Monitoring) the Committee requested further information on Key Stage 2 attainment in swimming.
5. Swimming is not only a healthy activity, but also acts as an essential life-skill. Swimming and water safety are statutory activities at Key Stage 2, designed to ensure children are able to swim unaided over a distance of at least 25 metres. Swimming is also one of nine workstrands within the national PE, School Sport and Club Links strategy.
6. The National Curriculum Programme of Studies for Key Stage 2 Physical Education states that pupils should be taught the knowledge, skills and understanding through a

range of physical activities, including swimming activities. Swimming activities and water safety must be taught unless pupils have completed the full key stage 2 teaching requirements in relation to swimming activities and water safety during key stage 1.

7. For swimming and water safety, pupils should be taught to:
 - a) Pace themselves in floating and swimming challenges related to speed, distance and personal survival
 - b) Swim unaided for a sustained period of time over a distance of at least 25 m
 - c) Use recognised arm and leg actions, lying on their front and back
 - d) Use a range of recognised strokes and personal survival skills (for example, front crawl, back crawl, breaststroke, sculling, floating and surface diving).
8. If schools choose to teach swimming at key stage 1, the following non-statutory guidelines may be used.
9. Pupils should be taught to:
 - Move in water (for example, jump, walk, hop, and spin),
 - Use swimming aids and support;
 - Float and move with and without swimming aids; and
 - Propel themselves in water using different swimming aids, arms and leg actions and basic strokes.
10. Pupils with Special Educational Needs should have the opportunity to engage in the swimming curriculum, whilst those with particular gifts in this area should receive appropriately differentiated provision.
11. In Herefordshire there is a variety of practice in terms of delivery, with some schools offering swimming from Key Stage 1 and others at Key Stage 2 only. The Local Authority does not keep records of pupil achievement for Swimming at Key Stage 2. Neither does OFSTED report on this area of a school's provision although very occasionally an inspector will accompany a school swimming lesson. Schools will, however, usually report on pupil's achievements in swimming as part of the child's individual annual report to parents.
12. In terms of facility provision and access The Swimming Charter states that an effective local authority should consider:
 - the location of any new pools to ensure that the pools available to schools meet the access needs (including disabled access) of all pupils;
 - which elements of the curriculum can be delivered away from the pool to achieve economies of scale; and
 - supplying help with teaching, training, changing supervision, life guarding etc.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT The report be noted.

Background Information

- None identified.