

MEETING:	CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	1 OCTOBER 2010
TITLE OF REPORT:	THE FINDINGS OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW INTO PUPIL ACHIEVEMENT IN SWIMMING AT KEY STAGE 2
REPORT BY:	Councillor WLS Bowen, Chairman of the Scrutiny Review Group

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Purpose

To consider the findings of the Scrutiny Review into Pupil Achievement in Swimming at Key Stage 2.

Recommendations

THAT:

- (a) **The Committee considers the recommendations of the review as set out below and determines whether it wishes to agree the findings for submission to the Cabinet Member (ICT, Education and Achievement) for consideration.**
- (b) **Subject to the review being approved, the Cabinet Member's response to the review be reported to the first available meeting after the Cabinet Member has approved their response.**

Key Points Summary

- In accordance with the Committee's request a Scrutiny Review has been undertaken into pupil achievement in swimming at Key Stage 2.

Introduction and Background

- 1 Arising from previous discussion and concern about the closure of the LEA Pool, the Committee requested further information on swimming requirements forming part of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 2. This was provided to the Committee at its meeting on 6 July 2009. Arising from that meeting the Committee decided to undertake a Scrutiny Review and set the terms of reference for the review as "A Scrutiny Review be undertaken into pupil achievement for swimming at Key Stage 2 to establish base line data against which any future trend can be compared". The Committee also appointed Councillors: WLS Bowen (Chairman); MD Lloyd-Hayes; SJ Robertson and AM Toon to undertake the review.
- 2 At its meeting on 10 December 2009 further concern was expressed by the Committee that if savings were being made from the LEA Pool then assurances should be obtained that adequate

provision, particularly in Key Stage 2 was being provided through Halo. The Committee received a presentation from the Chief Executive of HALO on this point on 14 June 2010.

Key Considerations

- 3 The Scrutiny Review Group (Cllrs: Bowen; Robertson; Toon) met on 20 August 2010, and took into consideration information previously supplied or considered by the Committee. The Review Group were also informed about the DfES publication "Swimming Charter" which provided school, sports and recreation departments within local authorities on how to work and plan effectively, with guidance on how to encourage more children to take part in swimming.
- 4 The Review Group also considered a report by the Assistant Director: Improvement and Inclusion dated 20 August 2010 a copy of which is appended for information. The report sets out the background; the responsibilities and expectations under the curriculum; Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) child swimming accident statistics; swimming provision in Herefordshire provided through HALO and the HALO pool school swimming times. The report also collates the responses by Herefordshire schools to the question "How many children last year left school being able to swim unaided for a sustained period of time over a distance of at least 25m?"
- 5 In undertaking the review the Review Group considered a range of issues. Some of the principal points taken into consideration during the course of the review were:
 - a. School governors and heads are responsible for the delivery of the curriculum. Swimming is part of the National Curriculum Programme of Studies for KS2 Physical Education. Pupils must be taught swimming activities and are expected to be able to swim 25m by the end of KS2. (end of year 6).
 - b. Whilst swimming is part of the National Curriculum there is no duty on schools to report their KS2 swimming attainment results. Similarly there is no duty on the local authority to collect the results.
 - c. OfSTED inspections would only consider swimming as part of their judgement of curriculum provision at Key Stage 2 in the school.
 - d. The results from the question indicated that 69 schools had provided the requested data. Of the 1404 pupils that had left school, 1241 had achieved the 25m target. This represented 88% of pupils.
 - e. For a number of reasons e.g. the data hadn't been collected or it had been lost, 13 schools had been unable to provide data. From the information available the Review Group concluded that County schools were complying with the curriculum requirements to provide swimming lessons.
 - f. Asking schools for swimming data on an annual basis may help raise the profile of the KS2 swimming target. The Review Group did not wish to significantly increase the volume of data already collected by schools. It was suggested to the Review Group that a relatively quick and easy means to collect the data could be that a data entry box be added to the school information management system (SIMS). The results could then be included in the Performance Monitoring report to Committee. Any anomalies identified would then be investigated.
 - g. As statistics were not required to be kept, it was difficult to get comparisons with other authorities. However, the DfES "Swimming Charter" published 2003, cited Stockport, as part of the Stockport Sports Trust, in a good practice case study as having achieved

86% of children attaining the KS2 requirement.

- h. The Review Group questioned the involvement, interaction and co-ordination between the various local sports/swimming groups in supporting children to swim. The Review Group suggested that further exploration be undertaken by officers into whether the local partnership between public, private and voluntary sectors were making the most efficient use of their resources.
- 6 The Review Group concluded that swimming was a vital part of a child's life skills. Parents and schools should make every effort to ensure that children are taught this vital skill for the child's safety and the safety of others.
- 7 Based on the limited data available the Review Group concluded that the figure of 88% be used as a local comparator for future benchmarking and trend monitoring.
- 8 The recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Review of Pupil Achievement in Swimming at Key Stage 2 are:
 - (a) that 88% be used as a local comparator for future benchmarking and trend monitoring;**
 - (b) that Officers be requested to investigate the least disruptive means for schools to submit swimming data on an annual basis;**
 - (c) results from the data collected should be included in the Performance Monitoring report to this Committee and any anomalies should then be investigated as the Committee considers appropriate;**
 - (d) officers should investigate whether the local partnerships between public, private and voluntary sectors were making the most efficient use of their swimming resources.**

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Swimming At Key Stage 2 by the Assistant Director: Improvement and Inclusion.

Background Papers

- None.