

ITEM No ...4.....

REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES COMMITTEE – 29 OCTOBER 2018
REPORT ON: PROVISION OF SWIMMING IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS
REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE
REPORT NO: 341-2018

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to evaluate the effectiveness of the current Primary Six swimming programme.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that committee members:

- i note and approve the contents of the report;
- ii instruct the Executive Director to implement the proposals in Appendix 1 and report back on progress in six months.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no financial implications attached to this report.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Primary swimming has been provided for P6 pupils on a rotational basis, each school receiving one school term per year (approximately 10 weeks of swimming). Pupils have a maximum of 30 minutes in the pool. In reality because of travel and any hold ups the time can be as little as 20 minutes. The whole procedure and transport though is a window of 1.5 to 2 hours. Head Teachers have been clear for a number of years that this is a very inefficient way to teach young people to swim. They have highlighted the following issues:

- in terms of swimming pedagogy, P6 is quite late. Children should ideally learn at a much younger age.
- due to the use in the main of secondary school swimming pools, timetabling is a difficulty for secondary schools, where these pools are used heavily during the school day. Some secondary schools are not able to accommodate their local primary schools for this reason during the day causing the need for longer journeys than might be necessary.
- the length of time and period of school swimming is not always enough to provide pupils with the confidence or skill to swim. Many young people who do acquire the basics need to be retaught when arriving at secondary
- the (up to) two hour window causes real discontinuity with other learning programmes in the school
- some clusters have up to 90-95% of pupils who already swim, and the limited additional experience that the current model brings is disproportionate in terms of the curricular disruption for the school to what is gained through the activity. The programme is not targeted in any way towards non-swimmers, or pupils who may not have the parental support, or finance to swim on a regular basis, even where pupils can swim or learn to swim through the process.

Following feedback from Head Teachers the current Primary swimming programme was reported to be ineffective. It was requested that the programme be evaluated to find a better method of delivery for Primary swimming.

4.2 A short life working party was established consisting of officers from Children and Families Service and Leisure and Culture, Head Teachers representatives and parent representatives. The group was tasked with investigating alternative methods of delivery of primary swimming to better meet the needs of children in Dundee.

4.3 Having fully discussed this with all Primary HTs there was clear agreement that another model be found to deliver swimming support at Primary School.

The principles agreed were:

- the programme should be targeted at non swimmers and provide a level of support that would allow pupils to continue swimming after learning, to build their skill and further utilise this when reaching secondary and outside of school.
- a range of approaches should be taken, where possible working with younger children.
- these approaches should include a greater attempt to involve parents and other family members in the learning process.

4.4 The group proposed a number of tests of change be implemented alongside the current P6 provision to find a better, more effective method of delivery. This would result in a transition to any new arrangements and the traditional P6 swimming programme will continue alongside the trials of new models. See Appendix 1. The group note the value of a Learn to Swim programme and see learning to swim as a life skill. The possibility of a more targeted approach to meet the needs of children who most need support was discussed with a wider water safety programme to support all learners desirable.

4.5 A number of tests of change are in place with feedback due in six months.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainable Development, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

6.1 The Council Management Team have been consulted in preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

PAUL CLANCY
Executive Director of Children and Families Service
2018

Primary Swimming Action Plan

| Action | Timescale | Lead |
|--|---|--|
| Form short life working party to review current and future Primary Swimming Programme | 29 th May 2018 | Sarah Anderson |
| Initial tests of change programmes agreed. * P5 non-swimmers taken to the nearest pool during curricular time. 45 minute lesson for 7 week block. St Francis, St Andrew's. * P6 non-swimmers taken to nearest pool at the end of the school day (Thursday/Friday) part curricular time, part after school club. 30 minute lesson for 10 week block. St Mary's, Downfield and Sidlaw View. * Nursery vouchers for a family pool experience. Vouchers available to targeted families at a nursery to be decided, number of visits TBC. | 15 th June 2018 December 2018 | Primary Swimming Review group Head Teachers |
| Continue current P6 programme in remaining Dundee schools. | October 2018 – May 2019 | HTs/Schools/Leisure and Culture |
| Initial test of change will be evaluated on an on-going basis and more tests developed throughout the session in other schools. | October 2018 – May 2019 | Primary Swimming Review group Head Teachers |
| Commence test of change programmes | Implementation term 2 - October 2018 | Sarah Anderson/Lesley Dorward/Lesley Hendry |
| Review current test of change, possible development of further tests of change. | November 2018 | Primary Swimming review group/Head Teachers |
| Feedback on tests of change | March 2019 | Sarah Anderson |
| Final report and recommendations for future provision. | May 2019 | Sarah Anderson |

