

# School Swimming News



The ASA newsletter for those involved in school swimming  
Issue 1: January 2008

## WELCOME

Welcome to the first Edition of the School Swimming newsletter. This newsletter will be produced every school term & we will share good news stories, examples of good practice, Top Up Swimming updates and much more.

We welcome articles being contributed to this newsletter, anyone wishing to do so please email Jon Keating – [jon.keating@swimming.org](mailto:jon.keating@swimming.org)

## MEET THE TOP UP TEAM

The Top Up Team is made up of 5 Co-ordinators and led by Jon Glenn, ASA PESSCL Manager and can be reached using the contact details below:

Jon Keating  
North West & North East  
Tel: 07810022921  
Email: [jon.keating@swimming.org](mailto:jon.keating@swimming.org)

Susan Barlow  
Yorkshire & East Midlands  
Tel: 07810014613  
Email: [susan.Barlow@swimming.org](mailto:susan.Barlow@swimming.org)

Frank Stoney  
West Midlands & South West  
Tel: 07810014498  
Email: [frank.stoney@swimming.org](mailto:frank.stoney@swimming.org)

Suzanne Philpot  
London & South East  
Tel: 07810014098  
Email: [suzanne.philpot@swimming.org](mailto:suzanne.philpot@swimming.org)

Sarah Tamone  
East & Central South  
Tel: 07810013739  
Email: [sarah.tamone@swimming.org](mailto:sarah.tamone@swimming.org)

## WHAT DOES THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM ACTUALLY SAY ABOUT SWIMMING?

There is a well-held myth that the National Curriculum in swimming is about 25 metres!

But that's not all, the National Curriculum actually consists of:

- Pace themselves in floating and swimming challenges related to speed, distance and personal survival
- Swim unaided for a sustained period of time over a distance of at least 25 metres
- Use recognised arm and leg actions, lying on back and front
- Use a range of recognised strokes and personal survival skills. Front crawl, back crawl, breaststroke, sculling, floating, surface diving

For further information visit: [www.teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk) / teaching and learning / subjects / p.e. / national strategy / swimming

## QUALIFICATIONS & CURRICULUM AUTHORITY (QCA)

Whilst many strive to achieve KS2 Swimming standards through quality school swimming programmes. We must also consider the expectations of the QCA:

*Most children will be able to:  
Swim between 50 & 100 metres & keep swimming for 45 to 90 secs; use 3 different strokes, swimming on their front & back; control their breathing; swim confidently & fluently on the sur-*

*face & under water; work well in groups to solve specific problems and challenges, sharing out the work fairly; recognise how swimming affects their body, and pace their efforts to meet different challenges; suggest activities and practices to help improve their own performance.*

QCA also state that there are 2 core units of work for Swimming Activities and Water Safety. Each core unit takes a minimum of between 8 – 12 hours of water time. Therefore within school swimming we should be aiming to provide at least 16 – 24 hours of Swimming time within KS2.

We know that some schools fall well short of providing this amount of swimming. Some schools providing as little as 3 hours and some schools not providing swimming AT ALL despite it being a KS2 requirement!

For further information visit [www.standards.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk) and type in PE at KS1 and 2.

## NUMBERS SAY IT ALL!

Nationally 47862 (to date) children have benefited from the scheme, 29,575 of which are now able to achieve the minimum requirements of Swimming at Key Stage 2.

It is expected over 100,000 pupils will take part in the project by July 2008. Thanks to the Partnership work with all involved, the ASA are starting to amass up-to-date information on the numbers involved in school swimming and how many are achieving at least KS2 minimum standard.

Current data suggests a National



figure for KS2 attainment (pre Top Ups) of 69%. A figure significantly lower than the suggested 80% reported by OFSTED back in 2000.



### TOP UPS RING THE CHANGES

#### Methods

The most popular method used in Top Up Swimming has been the crash course method of 10 x 30 minute lessons. This method was used in the Top Up Pilot Scheme run by the ASA in Bristol and Durham (2004) to great effect. But one size does not fit all!

Other methods used:

- 5 x 45 minute/1 hour lessons
- 30 minute up to 1-hour sessions every week for 10 weeks or more (during, before or after school)
- Crash course holiday programmes. NB: often limited success due to poor attendance
- Paying for additional teachers to work with and improve the school swimming service throughout a term or academic year
- Combinations/variations of all the above

#### Target Year Group

The main focus has been Year 6 pupils as these are pupils coming to the end of primary school/KS2. However, other year groups have been targeted in order to BEST FIT the existing school swimming service i.e. School Swimming at Years 3 & 4 - Top Up Swimming may fit best at Year 5.

#### Post Top Up Activities

Whilst 100% of Top Up Swimming participants make improvements in swimming ability and confidence, around

62% of participants achieve the KS2 minimum requirement.

So...what happens to the remaining 38% still unable to achieve this standard?

Many partnerships have included some Post Top Up activity/intervention.

For example:

- After school clubs for Year 6/Year 7 & Year 8
- KS2/KS3 Aquatic Festivals
- Year 7's invited to another Top Up scheme
- Free swimming passes
- Family Swim passes, etc

#### Case Study 1: 2-week intensive during school day

Middlecott SSP, Boston, Lincolnshire

- Intensive programme – 10 x 30 min lessons over 2 weeks in July
- Participants – 138
- 25m Achievements – 117
- 25m attainment before Top Up Lessons = 77%/after Top Up lessons = 97%

#### Why did it work?

Support from the Local Council, programme planned well in advance, on going coordination, support of schools, commitment of ASA qualified swimming teachers, pupils.

#### What difference has it made

- Self-confidence shown by pupils when they reached their goal and real sense of achievement & pride
- The attitude shown throughout the initiative by all the pupils was excellent and the behaviour impeccable in and out of the pool

NB: Participants rewarded with Free swim vouchers for school summer holidays.

#### Case Study 2: After School Club

Davenant Foundation School (SSP)

- 133 children unable to swim 25 m
- After school session was established in the school pool 25m by 10m shallow to deep
- Groups of 10 children and were taught in two groups with two ASA level 2 teachers
- Lessons ran for 45 minutes three times per week for three weeks
- Pool dimensions allowed both shallow and deep end experience including diving were appropriate
- Pupils came straight after school either by walking or by volunteer parents acting as chauffeurs
- Success rate 84% achieving 25m

#### Case Study 3: Additional Teachers during School Swimming

Golden Hillocks Sports College, Small Heath, Birmingham.

- Very large BEM and socio-economic deprivation
- Large numbers of non swimmers 1500+
- Only 1 pool available
- Rolling programme of extra swimming teacher brought in to target identified slow starters in small groups (6 or less)
- During normal timetabled lessons
- Children invited to existing breakfast clubs (not solely for Top-up pupils but good take up of extra swimming opportunity)
- When successful at 25m children get Swim 4 Free card to Birmingham pools
- PDM targeted schoolteachers' who bring the pupils, places them on Tops Courses so that they join in with swimming teaching