



TOP UP SWIMMING CASE STUDY PACK

Ensuring all children in Scotland can swim.

FOREWORD

Scottish Swimming's vision is to ensure that Everyone can swim. Swimming is the sport for all - the sport for life. Participation in the pool provides a fun social environment for leading a fit and healthy lifestyle.

Ensuring more children in Scotland can swim is very important. Learning to swim at an early age sets a positive foundation towards a lifetime of participation and enjoyment in a variety of water sports and aquatic activities.

Approximately 25 - 30% of children are unable to swim before they leave primary school. The Scottish Government funded National Top Up Swimming programme assists local authorities to increase the number of children who can swim, giving them new skills for safety, fitness, health and fun. sportscotland and Scottish Swimming lead the programme together in partnership with the Scottish Government, local authorities, leisure trusts, and education directors. As we work in collaboration to deliver our National Top Up Programme, we also improve the quality of the current teaching of learn to swim. As we review our practice, we bring new innovations and adopt more efficient approaches to the teaching process.

All 32 local authority swimming partners across Scotland supported the Top Up programme last year, endorsing the importance of our collective vision to ensure that every child can swim. The success of the programme is testament to the hard work and commitment of the contributing partners.

From last year's platform, we have highlighted several models of good practice for consideration and evolution. We hope you enjoy the lessons we are building on as we teach more children than ever to learn to swim. We look forward to working with you on the National Top Up Programme during 2012 and 2013.



Ashley Howard
Chief Executive


MINISTERIAL FOREWORD

This Government is committed to provide all children with the opportunity to learn to swim.

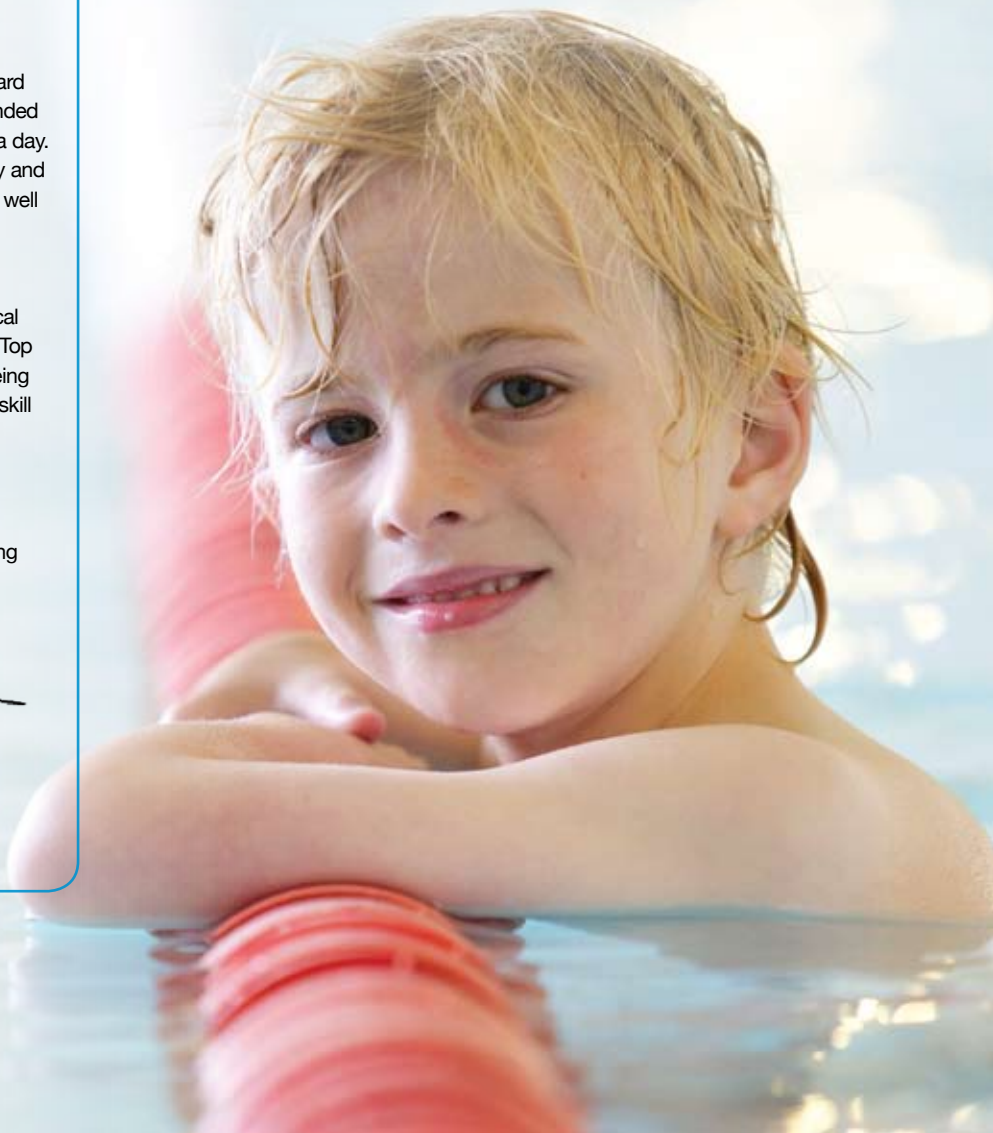
To give children the healthiest start in life and help guard against the risk of problems later in life, it's recommended that youngsters participate in 60 minutes of exercise a day. Swimming is one of the best forms of physical activity and it also gives young people confidence in the water as well as being a fun way of keeping active.

I am delighted with the progress so far and I am sure that as Scottish Swimming continues to work with local authority partners and sportscotland in delivering the Top Up programme they will enhance the work already being undertaken to help children develop this fantastic life skill and to engage with the next generation of Scottish swimming talent.

I applaud Scottish Swimming in helping deliver this Government's ambitions and I look forward to following this exciting programme as it develops and expands over the next year.



Shona Robison
Minister for Commonwealth Games and Sport



The Top Up programme has proven successful in a short period of time. Not only has it increased the number of children who can swim (as determined by the National Swimming Award criteria), children at all levels have improved their swimming ability and made progress through the levels.

Whilst local authority and leisure trusts were given a degree of flexibility and autonomy in how to deliver the Top Up programme locally, seven broad delivery methods emerged:

1. Additional teachers to current school swimming provision.
2. Additional lessons to current school provision through school programmes.
3. Additional lessons to current school provision through community Learn to Swim programmes.
4. Targeted lessons for identified children who are non/weak swimmers.
5. Intensive lesson blocks targeted at specific children for a short period of time.
6. Investment in equipment and minor infrastructure upgrades.
7. Continuous professional development (CPD) activity for swimming teachers.

The case studies highlighted aim to provide additional information on each of the different delivery methods. Each case study outlines a summary of a local authorities current school swimming programme before the Top Up intervention. There is a short explanation of the delivery method used, the challenges which had to be overcome to implement the programme, the difference the programme has made and finally a few key points on why the programme worked.

I hope you find the information informative and helpful.



Sharon MacDonald

National Top Up Programme Co-ordinator

ASSESSMENT LEVELS

A NON SWIMMER

Not confident in water and cannot swim

B BEGINNER

Happy to submerge face in water and can swim up to 5m with or without aids.

C IMPROVER

Can float on front and back, and can swim 10m unaided

D DEVELOPER

Can achieve NSA criteria

E CONFIDENT SWIMMER

Can achieve NSA Plus criteria

NATIONAL SWIMMING AWARD CRITERIA

- 1 Submersion and breath control
- 2 Floatation and movement
- 3 Propulsion and streamlining
- 4 Swimming strokes
- 5 Entries and Exits
- 6 Survival skills



CASE STUDY **Local Authority: Aberdeenshire Council**

Summary of Current Programme:

There is a limited coordinated school programme. Some facilities will offer the schools in their local area use of the pool, or the school will approach their local pool. This is the only way schools currently access lessons. Often this may be just for a one off session rather than a term. The only coordinated programme is based in Inverurie and each school in the area are offered a minimum of 6 x 45 minute sessions. The school funds the pool time, instructors and transport.

The aim was to reduce the number of children leaving P7 unable to swim 25metres. The last recorded figure sat at 29% for the whole of Aberdeenshire. Networks were selected due to their high percentage of weak or non swimmers. According to the initial surveys up to 60% were in the non or weak swimmer category.

What we did:

We offered a block of 10 swimming lessons to the schools in the chosen networks. The smaller schools were offered to primaries 4 up and the larger schools were offered to primary 4s only.

The challenges we had to overcome:

The main challenge was the cost of transport and the time it takes to travel to the closest or first available pool. This was overcome by seeking funding from elsewhere i.e. parent council groups or external sources. In addition to this, schools were paired up to share transport and this helped reduce overall cost. In some instances this challenge could not be overcome and those schools chose not to participate. Had there been funding for transport there would have been a much higher take up rate.

Lack of pool time was a challenge but not as big as the transport issue. Lack of pool time was overcome with pupils travelling to a different pool and sharing pool time with other schools.

The initial timescales set was another challenge. In the central area where pool time is more limited it made it harder to find suitable times within the initial timescale. Also with the time of year communication was delayed as schools were busy preparing for Christmas etc and there were a lot of snow closures! This meant that it was not straight forward to just offer a certain pool time and for this to be accepted first time round.

The intended plan had been to offer a second block of lessons within the council LTS scheme. Due to the predicted problems with reporting of the participants progress this stage has not been completed with the majority of schools. Two schools were offered a second block as the majority of swimmers were in groups A or B.

The difference it has made:

In order to make a direct comparison between before and after the swimming session only the schools that had a full record of data were used.

- Group A decreased by 48% (n 42)
- Group B decreased by 7.6% (n 9)
- Group C increased by 6% (n 6)
- Group D increased by 16% (n 11)
- Group E increased by 300% (n 39)

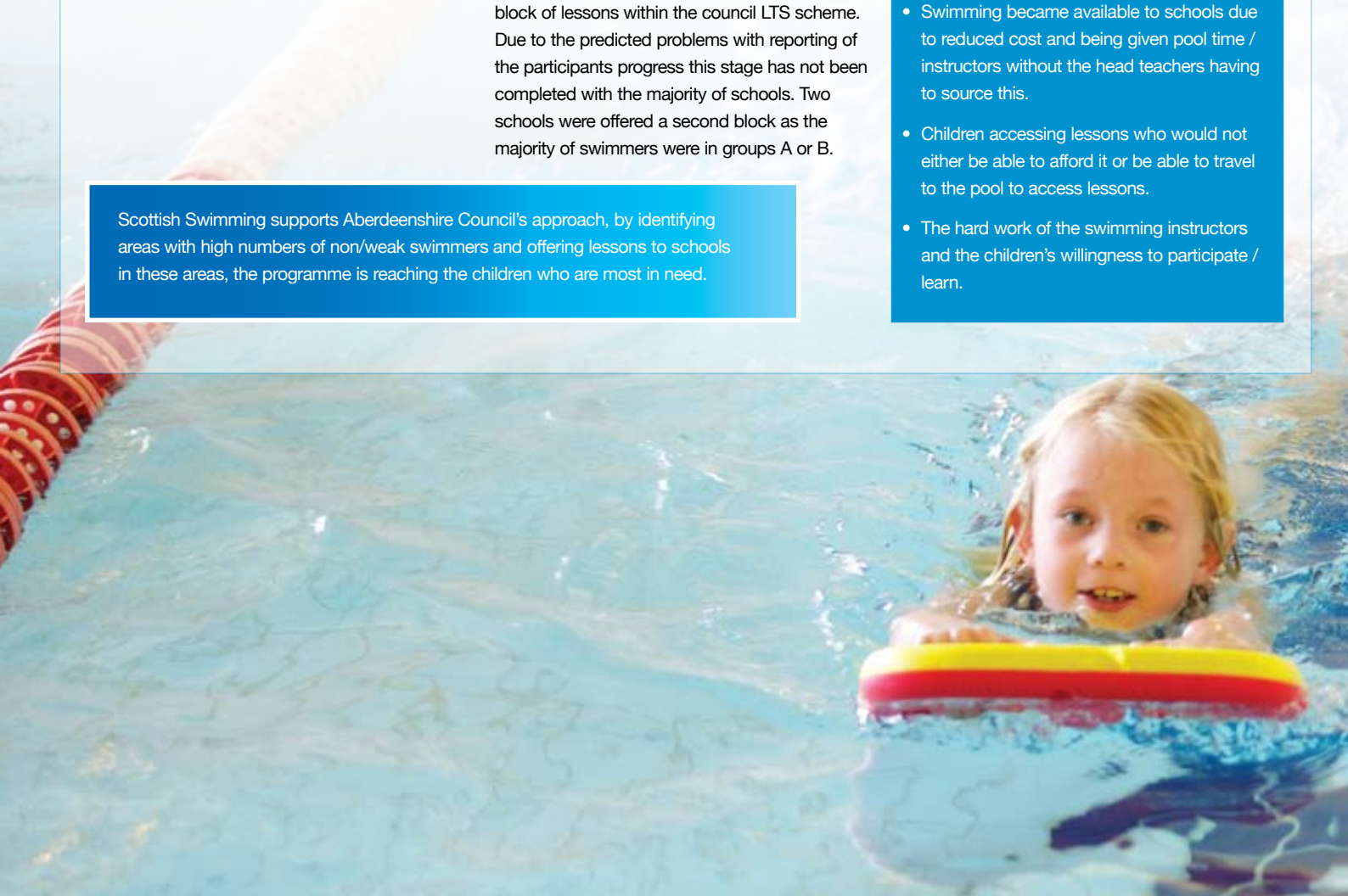
The number of participants able to swim 25m has increased by 60% (n 50).

An unexpected outcome, which at the moment can't be measured, is the future interest in swimming that this has created. The programme may have removed some barriers, for example in head teacher's opinions that swimming was not accessible for them. There have been more requests from schools for pool time and for future funding opportunities.

It worked because of:

- The ability to work with active schools to aid the communication with head teachers, source external funding for transport and assist with the organisation.
- Swimming became available to schools due to reduced cost and being given pool time / instructors without the head teachers having to source this.
- Children accessing lessons who would not either be able to afford it or be able to travel to the pool to access lessons.
- The hard work of the swimming instructors and the children's willingness to participate / learn.

Scottish Swimming supports Aberdeenshire Council's approach, by identifying areas with high numbers of non/weak swimmers and offering lessons to schools in these areas, the programme is reaching the children who are most in need.



CASE STUDY Local Authority: Angus Council

Summary of Current Programme:

Our programme was based on providing additional lessons throughout the school holidays and additional swim teachers to support P5, 6 and 7 identified at Standard 'A' through an audit carried out by Active School Staff.

Our Top Up programme was held within the school term time and weekend Easter and Summer Holidays

The aim of the Top Up was to provide additional school term support to reduce the teacher/child ratio and provide additional lessons outwith the school timetable to targeted pupils.

Our main aim was to provide the opportunity for all children identified in category 'A' the support to improve their skills and have fun.

The challenge will be the teacher/class ratio and continuing to support for the children who did not achieve the 25m.

What we did:

- Additional teaching staff in all sites (1 teacher per site)
- Offered up to 2 x 30 minute private lessons at no cost to the school children were identified at standard 'A'
- Supplied training opportunities to leisure staff to allow lessons there to become 'self-sufficient' Level 1 and Level 2. Link also remains for staff to take part in any further training and CPD sessions in-house training

The challenges we had to overcome:

Through an audit carried out 822 children within P5, 6 and 7 were identified as standard 'A' under the Scottish Swimming Learn to Swim. From the funding we were able to supply additional teaching support in order to give the children who were identified the best possible opportunity to learn.

We experienced a challenge with rural schools transport issues with children identified in category 'A' - as a result we ran the extra lessons within the school curriculum with Level 2 instructors.

Timing of some sessions: Easter and Summer sessions poorly attended due to holidays - relied on parents getting pupils to the lessons and low number of pupils offered the extra swimming lessons took up the offer

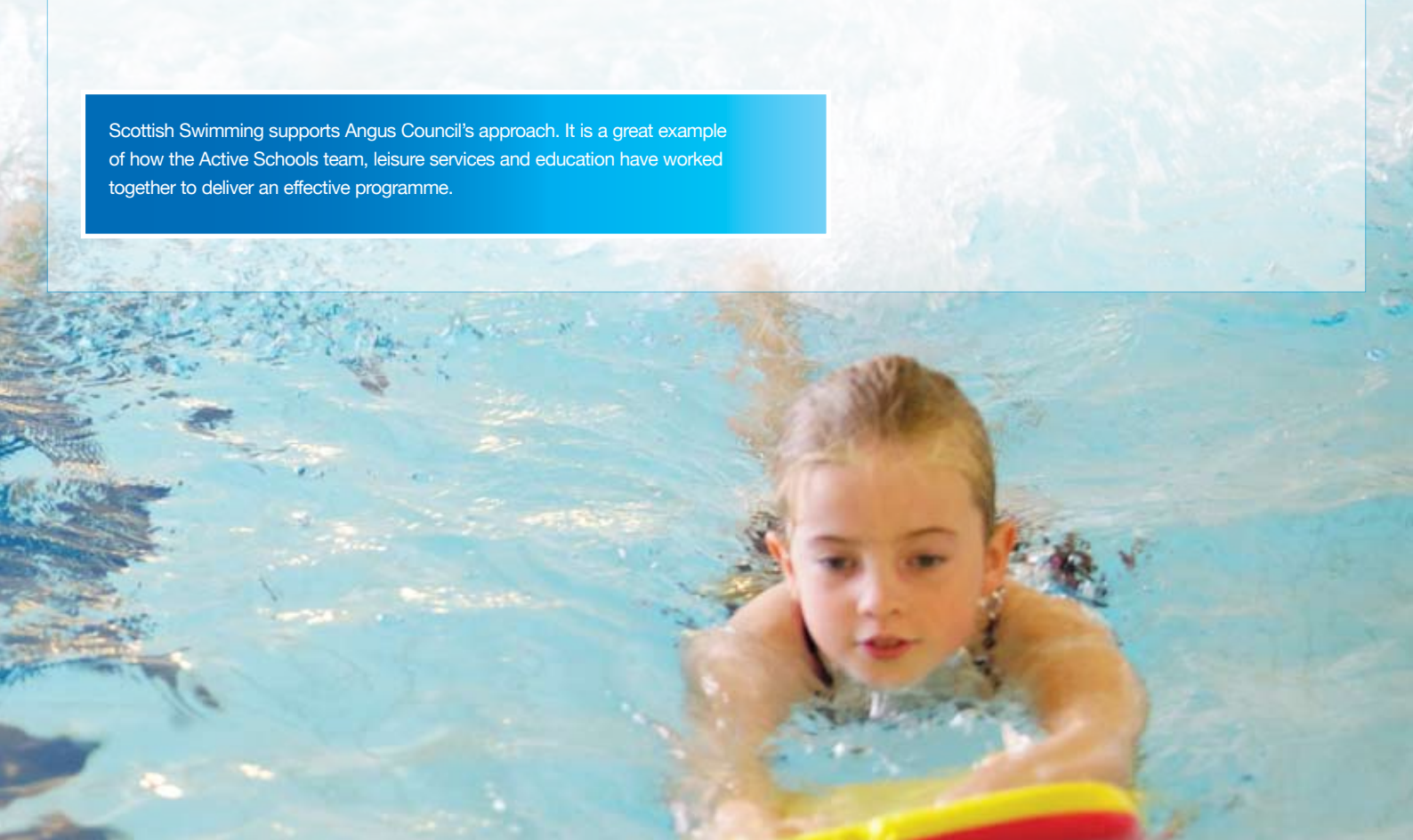
The difference it has made:

Provisional figures given show an increase of 34% of children starting at category 'A' have improved to be 'B' and 'C' level. However children at all levels have had the opportunity to improve which would have not been the case if Top Up was not available. Many of the other children have moved onto the Community Programme or are now attending the LTS programme within Leisure but cost may be an issue. Some of the progress has not been measurable for example some children would not put their face in the water and lacked confidence, since the Top Up these children are confident to go into the water and happy to get their face wet.

It worked because of:

- Partnership working between Leisure Services, Education and Active School to support such an important programme.
- Partnership working with teaching staff in the assessment of all children
- Schools Support Session: the lower teacher/pupil ratio, allowing more attention and support for weak swimmers
- Children getting the opportunity to come to lessons every week and learning through enjoyment

Scottish Swimming supports Angus Council's approach. It is a great example of how the Active Schools team, leisure services and education have worked together to deliver an effective programme.



CASE STUDY

Local Authority: City of Edinburgh Council

Summary of Current Programme:

Currently primary children receive twenty 40 minute sessions throughout their primary career. The number of slots a school receives is calculated according to the size of its P6 intake. The aim is for children to reach level C5 (which approximates to the NSSA) by the time they leave primary school. The aim of the Top Up programme is to increase the numbers reaching level C5 (currently 55%) by reducing the teacher:child ratios.

What we did:

The programme has been delivered in three phases:

Curriculum Assisted - A swimming instructor (or instructors) works alongside the swimming specialist to support swimming delivered in curriculum PE;

Intensive - Children still needing to reach level C5 are offered an intensive programme of lessons over a 2 or 3 week period;

UKCC courses - free places for children still not attaining C5 and who wish to attend voluntarily outside school time.

The challenges we had to overcome:

- Transport
- Shortage of some teachers/instructors for the intensive phase
- Schools not turning up or cancelling at short notice
- Demands on staff time in terms of admin. Extra admin in future will be essential.

The difference it has made:

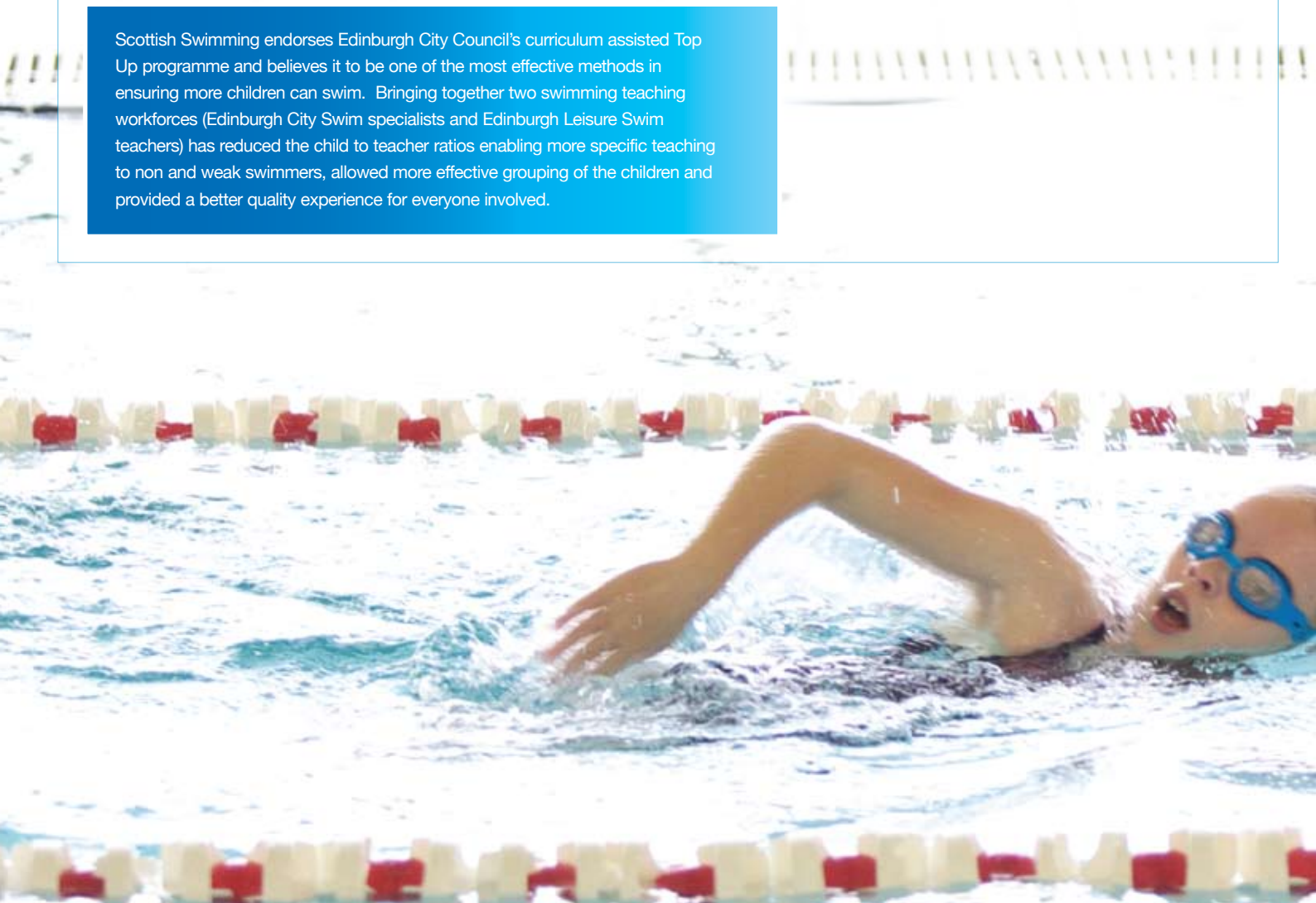
2932 children took part in the Top Up programme. Of these, 1789 (61%) achieved level C5. However, children at all levels improved and made more progress than would have been the case without the Top Up programme.

The partnership between the City of Edinburgh Council and Edinburgh Leisure has been strengthened through the implementation of the Top Up programme. As a result both organisations are continuing to work together on other swimming programmes in Edinburgh.

It worked because of:

- Partnership working between CEC C&F and EL, and with the voluntary sector and clubs.
- The lower teacher:pupil ratios allowed more attention and support for weaker swimmers
- Involvement of senior pupils in supporting delivery. Senior high school pupils gained the UKCC Level 1 qualification, and will continue to assist the swimming programme.
- Cooperation of high schools in making their pools available for the intensive phase.
- Primary school cooperation with the programme.

Scottish Swimming endorses Edinburgh City Council's curriculum assisted Top Up programme and believes it to be one of the most effective methods in ensuring more children can swim. Bringing together two swimming teaching workforces (Edinburgh City Swim specialists and Edinburgh Leisure Swim teachers) has reduced the child to teacher ratios enabling more specific teaching to non and weak swimmers, allowed more effective grouping of the children and provided a better quality experience for everyone involved.



CASE STUDY

Local Authority: Scottish Borders Regional Council and Borders Sport & Leisure Trust (BSLT)

Summary of Current Programme:

School swimming in the Borders is on an adhoc basis and is at the discretion of the Head teacher and what priority each school attaches to swimming. In light of this there is no structure or pattern to school swimming as some years, a school may not book any swimming at all, whilst the next they may send a couple of whole primary year groups for 12 week blocks.

Since the school swimming programme was withdrawn, the Borders has experienced a dramatic reduction in the number of school children having access to this activity.

Due to the rural nature of the Region, any activity occurring outwith the school, means that high transport costs are incurred, and as such is one of the main, if not the key determining factor as to whether a school takes part in school swimming.

What we did:

- 2 hour initial assessment was offered to all Primary 7 children. This meant that all children were assessed against the SASA criteria. All initial assessments were conducted in school time. These sessions were agreed and arranged with each individual primary school.
- All children failing to meet any element of the criteria were identified.
- Any child failing to meet the criteria were then issued with a letter inviting them to attend their local pool for 10 free swimming lessons to help them work towards meeting the criteria.
- The 10 weeks of free lessons were arranged at times outwith school hours so the emphasis was on the parents getting their child to these sessions.
- At the end of the 10 weeks each child was assessed against the criteria.

The challenges we had to overcome:

- Take up of the free lessons varied dramatically throughout the region.
- Galashiels – take up on offer was 80%. Selkirk 27%, TLC 45%, Kelso 45%, Peebles 40%, Duns 6% & Eyemouth 48%
- Take up rates for the 10 week block clearly related to where people lived and their closeness to their local pool.
- Another contributing factor to poor take up, could be “stigma” attached to attending “swimming lessons” for this age group.

Things we would do differently:

- Target a different primary year group e.g. P4/5 as this would involve children who were, due to them being of a lower age, and thus less likely to be able to meet the criteria and therefore would benefit more from the Top Up programme.
- Undertake more planning and preparation prior to starting this programme. All schools would have their time slots booked, start and finish dates would be provided for the 10 week blocks and letters would be issued to the schools and parents explaining exactly what Top Up was and how we were running it.
- All children who “passed” their initial assessment would receive a certificate etc, rather than just offering something to those who did not.
- Have the whole programme running through school term times and during school times (actual funding would have to be used to meet transport costs for future programmes rather than relying on “good will”)
- Have criteria appropriate to every primary year group, ie the same criteria would not be appropriate/achievable over a 10 week period. What would be used for P7s should not be the same as that used for P2 etc.

The difference it has made:

- All Primary 7 children within the region were assessed against the same criteria so it provided a total overview of swimming ability.
- Improved communication between schools and leisure providers.
- Improved communication between BSLT and Active Schools. This was partly due to the fact that the finance was allocated to Active Schools/Education who could not deliver any part of the project or had any say/influence over pooltime/swimming teachers etc. This ensured for this program to take place partnership working was necessary.

It worked because of:

- All schools were in favour of participating in the Top Up programme and securing free swimming for their pupils.
- Schools bought into this as BSLT paid all transport costs.
- It was free to the schools, thereby not using any of their resources.
- All transport costs were picked up by BSLT, amounting to over £3,000 in “good will”. Active Schools picked up additional transport costs for schools attending facilities other than those managed by BSLT.
- Partnership working between Active Schools, Head teachers and BSLT.

Scottish Swimming supports the Scottish Borders Regional Council and Borders Sports and Leisure Trust (BSLT) approach. This delivery method targeted all primary 7 children and provided additional lessons for identified children. Whilst take up of the free swimming lessons varied across the Borders, the programme reduced the number of children leaving primary school unable to swim and improved communication between schools, BSLT and the Active Schools Team.

CASE STUDY Local Authority: Falkirk Council

Summary of Current Programme:

- All P5 pupils receive 2x10 weeks (40mins)
- Reduce the number of non-swimmers
- Reduce the pupil / instructor ratio
- Offer follow-up for those still can't swim after the block

What we did:

This is what we have done so far:

We will support our existing school's programme by deploying an SVQ to support the class and the present swimming instructor. This means that the non-swimmers can receive direct support from the qualified instructor and the SVQ can work with those already competent swimmers should this situation arise. If the class is all non-swimmers the instructor would plan and determine the work of the SVQ to support the lessons but there is the flexibility for the SVQ to be in the water to provide support. This programme will support all the P5 population in Falkirk Council.

The challenges we had to overcome:

- Recruitment SVQ / Modern apprentices in partnership with Education & Training Unit (ETU -Council Service working with young people who are unemployed or in danger of being unemployed)
- Supervision of the SVQ / MA – procedures have been put in place

The difference it has made:

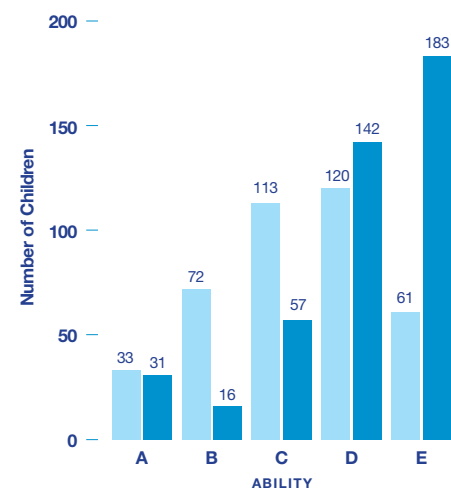
- It has become apparent that we have made a considerable impact on swimmers with a limited ability to swim short distance and have progressed them well into moving to the next level or to an ability to be able to save themselves if found in difficulty. See graphs alongside.
- We have also trained up 3 Modern apprentices – who are now qualified level 1 teachers and are actively looking for work, creating a sustainable programme
- We have trained 6 High School pupils to level 1 teachers and they now volunteer their hours back through Active Schools

It worked because of:

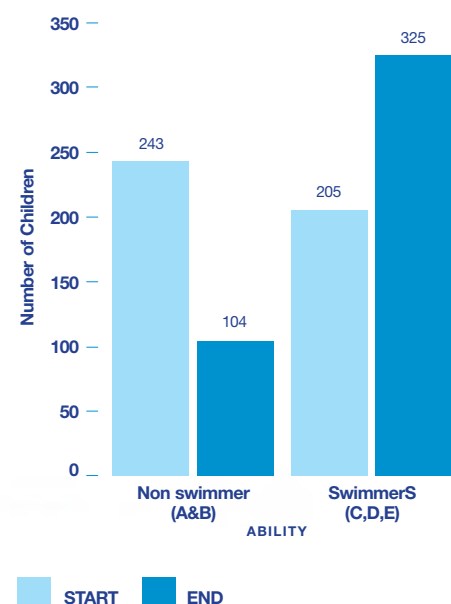
- Partnership working with community Services – sports development & leisure services
- Partnership working with ETU
- Provide young people in Falkirk with a greater range of skills & qualifications which we hope will make them more employable
- Reducing the pupil / instructor ratio which enable the existing instructors to work with smaller groups and support their learn to swim programme by receiving more contact time with these staff

Scottish Swimming supports Falkirk Council's innovative approach to enhancing its current school swimming programme. The training of three modern apprentices has enabled the programme to be sustainable in the longer term enabling the continuation of lower child to teacher ratios.

Falkirk Schools Swimming - Lessons



Falkirk Schools Swimming - Progression



CASE STUDY Local Authority: West Dunbartonshire Council

Summary of Current Programme:

West Dunbartonshire is one of the most socially deprived local authorities in Scotland and as such the programme has presented many challenges.

We currently operate school lessons in 2 pools (Vale of Leven & Clydebank) and in total have 32 schools attending lessons with children ranging from P5-P7 ages. WDC arrange transport for schools to and from the venues.

We also supply teacher support to Kilpartick school for the disabled to deliver lessons in their on-site pool.

During analysis of the children before and after the 10 week swimming session we hope to see a considerable drop in the swimmers identified as standards A&B

What we did:

- Additional teaching staff in both sites (1 teacher per site)
- Offered up to 2 x 30minute private lessons at no cost to the school or parent for children at the end of the session that were identified at standard 'A'
- Supplied equipment & training opportunities to staff in Kilpatrick pool to allow lessons there to become 'self-sufficient' Link also remains for staff to take part in any CPD or in-house training run by WDC

The challenges we had to overcome:

As WDC is shown to be one of the most socially deprived LA's in Scotland a lot of the children have never been swimming before and as such were challenging at the beginning of the session through no fault of their own. Through our statistical analysis over 21% of children attending the Playdrome alone were identified as standard 'A' under the Sportscotland criteria. From the funding we were able to supply additional teaching staff in order to give the children who were identified the best possible opportunity to learn. We experienced a challenge with schools & parents able to take the children identified in category 'A' outwith schools – as a result we ran the private lessons with the children attending their lesson as normal with our Level 2 instructors. This allowed us to meet our objectives as set out without any inconvenience to school or parent.

The difference it has made:

The changes have been quite dramatic. At the start children in categories A & B totalled 234 and at the end of the programme this had reduced to 66. This has been a resounding success for West Dunbartonshire. We are attempting to move children towards community programmes but the costs remain an issue for some parents. The majority of those identified in the highest categories already attend swimming clubs or have been involved in the West Dunbartonshire Council LTS Programme

It worked because of:

- Partnership working between Leisure Services, Education & Sports Development to support such an important programme.
- Dedication and attention to detail of all teaching staff in the assessment of all children
- Schools and Support staff for embracing what we wished to achieve for the children.
- The children coming to lessons every week and learning through enjoyment

Scottish Swimming supports West Dunbartonshire's Top Up programme. By putting in additional teaching support and offering free 1 to 1 lessons to identified children, the number of non swimmers has reduced significantly.



CASE STUDY **Local Authority: South Lanarkshire Leisure**

Summary of Current Programme:

Our programme was based on a standard school swim block of 12 weeks with additional support for children who did not achieve 25m thereafter. Our Top Up programme is aimed at earlier intervention for the children by decreasing the teacher pupil ratio considerably and where required teaching children on a 1-1 basis. One of our other aims is to allow children to learn with their peers outwith the school day and avoid the embarrassment of learning with much younger children.

What we did:

We recruited additional teachers to work during the day on our schools programme to provide continuity of teacher. In the past we provided the opportunity for children to join in the group lessons at beginner or improver level. In some facilities we are now piloting specific classes for children who have been offered support following their school swimming sessions. These classes allow the children to take part with children of a similar age and not with children who could be 4 – 7 years younger than them. We have also provided additional equipment to increase the fun and enjoyment for timid children in the learning environment

The challenges we had to overcome:

One of the biggest challenges is transport. We have set aside ample pool time for school swimming. We have even offered additional sessions to schools with large numbers of non swimmers en masse. The answer is usually the same that transport costs are prohibitive. We have trained our own teachers we have qualified UKCC tutors on staff. We have a massive group lesson learn to swim programme and slotting in support programme children before large waiting lists has been challenging.

The difference it has made:

- Provisional figures are showing an increase of approximately 10% of the children assessed as non swimmers achieving the 25m distance.
- We are seeing more children learning to swim and progressing further albeit not achieving 25m.
- We know from anecdotal evidence that some children are staying in group lessons once they have achieved the 25m distance and are working on a report to take the data from our booking systems.

It worked because of:

- The Swim Officers in each facility are embracing the programme and allocating the children to classes as quickly as possible.
- The Swimming Development Admin Assistant has developed and manages a system to collect the data and provide the info to Swim Officers re who is eligible for and wishes support.
- The Senior Management are fully behind the programme and there is a culture of wanting to succeed and be the best among the staff.
- Most schools are fully committed to supporting the programme. One or two still cite central funding or the lack of it as an issue.
- Scottish swimming have been very helpful in helping to formulate the appropriate and relevant programme in South Lanarkshire.

Scottish Swimming supports South Lanarkshire Leisure's Top Up programme. By enabling children who require additional lessons to learn with their peers out with the school day, avoids the embarrassment of learning with much younger children.



CASE STUDY **Local Authority: Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (The Western Isles Council)**

Summary of Current Programme:

The school swimming programme has been reduced to provide all pupils with an entitlement of 16 lessons targeted at P4/5 stage during their primary education. The lessons are predominantly delivered by sports facility staff with the exception of some areas of Lewis and Harris. The PE teachers fulfil the swim teaching role for pupils in these areas. In addition to these lessons sports centre staff deliver swimming lessons in term and holiday time. These lessons target beginners and improvers.

The aim of the Top Up programme is to improve the standard of teaching by providing a Level 1 for relief staff and a CPD event for those responsible for assessment and management of swimming lessons. The purpose of the CPD event is to discuss assessment procedures and obtain a consensus on a consistent approach to implementing the National Swim Award.

What we did:

We engaged with Scottish Swimming to deliver the Level 1 course and the CPD event. We had 18 candidates complete the Level 1 award. The CPD event addressed the issue of assessment, provided the forum to discuss general issues and obtain some refresher training in teaching and stroke techniques.

Scottish Swimming supports Comhairle nan Eilean Siar programme. By bringing the swimming teaching workforce together it has enabled an up skilling of staff and a level of consistency to be developed across the Western Isles.

The challenges we had to overcome:

The cost of providing relief staff has prohibited offering this opportunity in the past. The reduction in the school swimming programme has resulted in the need to ensure that all delivery is of the highest standard possible. Bringing the staff together for a CPD event is very costly due to the time, travel and back-fill implications. The Top Up funding helped alleviate these costs and provide a focus for refreshing our teaching staff and gaining a consensus on assessment.

The difference it has made:

- We have 18 more staff with a qualification in swimming.
- We have provided the forum for those teaching swimming to discuss programming, teaching styles and agree on assessment procedures
- We have fostered closer links with Scottish Swimming and opened up the debate regarding the way forward for swimming in the Western Isles.
- We will monitor the progress being made to increase pass rates of the swim award to review the impact on the pupil performance

It worked because of:

- Scottish swimming were flexible and supportive
- The funding off-set the substantial costs
- The need for the CPD event came from the staff, thus there was commitment to the event



SCOTTISH *swimming*
everyone can swim!
www.scottishswimming.com