

Merton Schools Swimming Strategy 2012 - 2015



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1. Introduction

1.1. Merton School Sport Partnership (MSSP) recognises that the ability to swim is a vital life skill which all children should learn as early on in their development as possible. The current levels of children who can swim 25m unaided in Merton's primary schools are estimated to be at around 30%. National Curriculum requirements state that children should be able to swim 25m unaided by the end of Key Stage 2 and Ofsted recommend this figure to be around 80%. This concern was highlighted at the October 2011 MSSP Steering Group forum and the MSSP is delighted to have been tasked with writing a strategy to ensure more of our school children are able to swim in the future.

2. Aims

2.1 Our strategy seeks to formally assess swimming ability at year 5 across Merton schools and to increase the number of children at Key Stage 2 who can swim 25m unaided to meet the national average by July 2014. Questionnaires completed by teachers from Merton primary schools suggest that the number of children able to swim 25m is low. At this stage many schools either do not know their ability levels or have not submitted their data to us.

2.2 The strategy also aims to ensure these figures then increase year on year. At the present time we feel it is important to focus on Key Stage 2 which will in turn improve figures for Key Stage 3 / 4. If new funding or increased resources at secondary schools become available to support the development of Key Stage 3/4 pupils this will be added to the strategy.

2.3 The recommendations provide a borough wide solution but we understand that each school may have its own specific barriers and will therefore gladly support individual schools to find additional solutions. The strategy should be seen as a starting block upon which to build and improve school swimming in Merton

3. Audit of Key Stage 2 Provision

3.1 MSSP and Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) audited the current provision for swimming lessons in Merton's Pools. Consultation took place with GLL's strategic leads for school and top up swimming and Merton's primary schools to uncover the potential reasons for lower than average swimming ability. Questionnaires were completed by 27 of the 43 primary school PE link teachers at the MSSP conference in October 2011.

3.2 Feedback and results from consultation and questionnaires determined the following.

- a) Many teachers were unsure of the no. of pupils who could swim 25m unaided
- b) Those schools which offered a short period of swimming (12 weeks or less at 30 mins per week) in order to try and provide for more year groups had a higher approximate percentage of non-swimmers than those who focused on one or two year groups for a longer period of time
- c) Travel options / logistics and cost were sometimes a barrier to participation at local pools
- d) Parental support out of school hours through lessons and family pool time appears to have a significantly positive impact on ability to swim

- e) GLL pools were generally regarded as good with one or two issues around upkeep / cleanliness of the facility (namely around Morden Park Pool and changing facilities at Canons Leisure Centre) and timetabling to suit schools needs
- f) GLL staff ratio of 1 to 8 pupils is regarded as good from the national governing body Amateur Swimming Association (ASA)
- g) Few of Merton's primary school teachers are trained and qualified to support swimming lessons through the Level 1 Teachers Swimming Award
- h) GLL's current commitment to booking lessons for schools is on a first come first served basis and GLL are suggesting that this is a fundamental issue to ensuring children have an equal opportunity and entitlement to learn how to swim whilst in school.

3.3 Statistics & Guidance

- a) GLL have advised that although they can provide some regional comparisons, they have little faith in our national statistics being wholly robust. 80% of children being able to swim 25m unaided is generally accepted as acceptable by Ofsted.
- b) GLL captured data for year 5 and 6 pupils learning to swim in their pools across London and around 48% were able to swim 25m in 2011.
- c) In Merton's GLL pools, assessments show that at the end of the summer term 2011 out of 1781 tested pupils (predominantly KS 1/2) 537 pupils could swim 25m+ equating to 30%.**

This included:

- 76 pupils attaining 200m+
- 63 pupils attaining 100m
- 118 pupils attaining 50m
- 280 pupils attaining 25m

Out of the 1781 pupils:

- 39 are from SEN schools; 6 of these pupils attained 25m
- 31 are from High schools; 14 of these pupils attained 25m

- d) GLL worked with the London Borough of Greenwich to provide a guidance document for school swimming. In this document they highlight that key factors which impact on swimming training include class size, frequency and lesson time. Further details are shown on the diagram (a) below taken from this document.

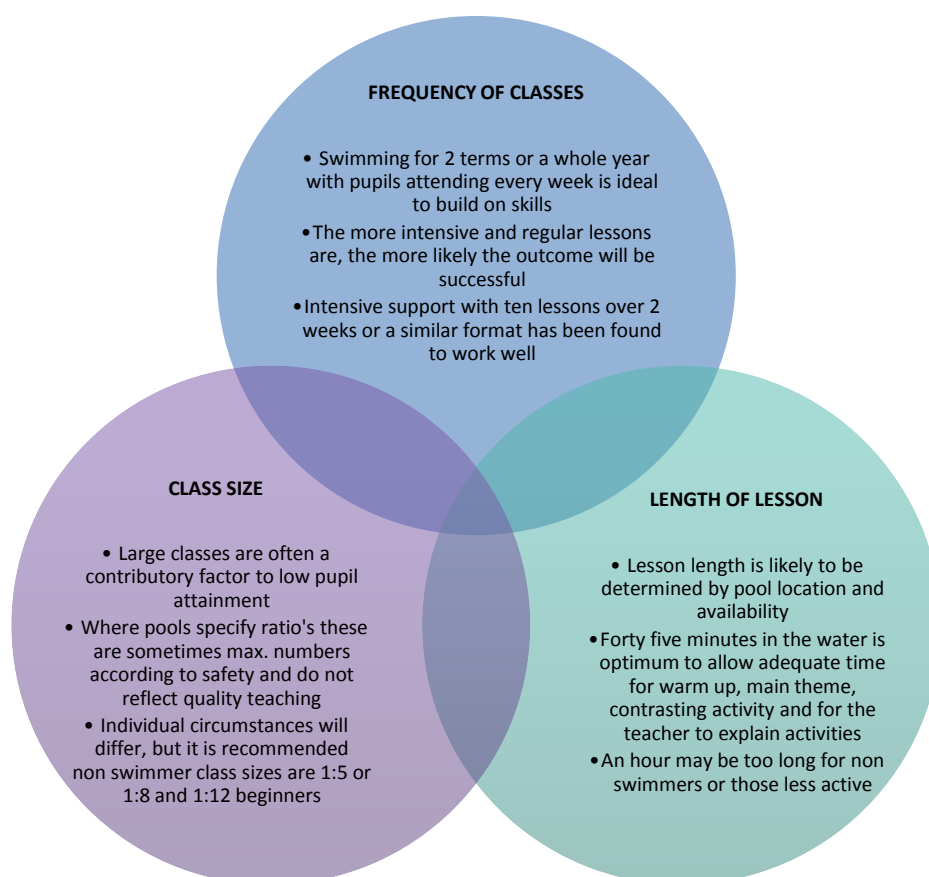


Diagram a.

4. Considerations

4.1 There were additional considerations to be taken into account when planning the strategy to improve the level of swimming ability within Merton. These included:

4.2 Financial Constraints

- a) The schools and the MSSP are facing cuts each year so no additional funding has so far been secured to support this strategy. Instead we will have to find different ways of working to achieve our goals.
- b) The Partnership will continue to seek external funding where possible and will work with Pro-Active South London, GLL and the ASA to keep up to date with any new initiatives which may link to the strategy. GLL and MSSP feel school budgets for swimming need to be transparent and fit for purpose in order for us to work better together around this strategy.

4.3 Logistics and Transport for Schools

- a) Schools start to plan their lesson timetable and budget for transport and support staff at least 6 months ahead.
- b) It is imperative that this strategy is agreed in principal by Easter 2012 if it is expected to incur any changes to schools timetables, staffing or budgets in September 2012.

4.4 Academic Priorities

- a) Year 6 students may not be the best to focus on. By the time pupils are in year 6 their focus tends to be on academic attainment. Schools are therefore unlikely to want to focus on swimming as a major part of the lesson timetable. It is also important for children to learn to swim as early as possible for their own safety around water.

4.5 Timetables

- a) Although it might be preferable for children to receive an intensive course of swimming lessons it is not always possible for schools to alter their timetables in this way for shorter periods of time. It would therefore be more accommodating for schools to look at regular lesson over a longer period for the individual child with the potential for more intensive top up swimming during school holidays where possible. This would be dependent upon parental support.

4.6 Enjoyment

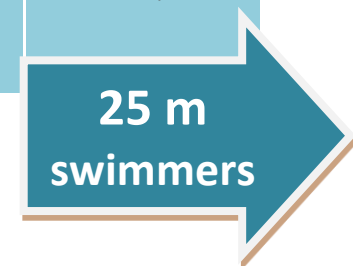
- a) GLL have noted that when the fun element is taken out of swimming some children lose interest and have less enthusiasm to learn. This may be the case when assessments at the start of lessons are formal and rigid. GLL have highlighted that new ways of assessing ability could be looked into as well as more preparation in the classroom so more time is spent actually swimming in the pool. This can be done via PowerPoint presentations given to the school before attendance or a pre visit.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 In light of the financial constraints and other considerations as detailed above we believe that the key factor which will help us increase the number of children that can swim 25m unaided is to increase the consistency and time spent in the pool for the individual swimmer.
- 5.2 GLL recommend that by changing the timetabling structure to ensure that a child has regular weekly lessons over a period of 1 year there will be a significant positive outcome in terms of their swimming ability.
- 5.3 We propose that the following recommendations for KS 2 provision from September 2012.
- 5.4 All Merton primary schools focus entirely on **year 4&5** together with an element of water confidence included for year 3 for a period of 6 weeks.

5.7 Recommended Schedule

	Summer Half Term 1 Apr - May	Summer Half Term 2 Jun - Jul	Summer Holidays 6 weeks	Autumn Half Term 1 Sep - Oct	Autumn Half Term 2 Nov - Dec	Spring Half Term 1 Jan - Feb	Spring Half Term 2 Feb - Mar
Yr 3	<p>Water Confidence</p> <p>Fun Taster Sessions In place of 1 x PE lesson p/w</p> <p>GLL to provide discounted swim lessons and fun time family sessions</p>						
Yr 4	<p>Classroom Based Swim Preparation during lesson time</p>	<p>Swimming Lessons In place of 1x PE lesson p/w</p> <p>Plus 1x regular PE lesson p/w as per NC directive</p>	<p>GLL Summer Swim Schools</p> <p>GLL to provide discounted learn to swim lessons and fun time family sessions for OSH</p>				
Yr 5				<p>Swimming Lessons In place of 1x PE lesson p/w</p> <p>Plus 1x regular PE lesson p/w as per NC directive</p>	<p>Swimming Lessons In place of 1x PE lesson p/w</p> <p>Plus 1x regular PE lesson p/w as per NC directive</p>	<p>Swimming Lessons In place of 1x PE lesson p/w</p> <p>Plus 1x regular PE lesson p/w as per NC directive</p>	<p>Swimming Lessons In place of 1x PE lesson p/w</p>



5.8 In order to achieve this timetable GLL have mapped their current pool provision with Merton Schools and drafted a new timetable which ensures all current Merton Schools are guaranteed a place in the timetable. Where possible this has been kept in line with previous time slot allocations.

5.9 Please see proposed timetables in appendix (1,2 & 3) for each of the 3 GLL pools. Any queries around pool scheduling should be directed to GLL.

5.10 Class Sizes

- a) Where schools have 60 or more pupils who are beginners or non-swimmers attending one time slot it becomes more challenging to programme an effective lesson as the shallow end and teaching pool become overcrowded. Schools are therefore offered more than one slot to ensure pupils can still access high quality teaching and facilities.
- b) As Merton schools continue to expand in response to the number of children living within the borough we will seek to maximise the number of schools and pupils who can utilise the pool at any one time. GLL are currently looking into purchasing mobile platforms which reduce the depth of the pool in any given area allowing more of the pool space to be useable by beginners and non-swimmers.

5.11 2012-13 Gap in Consistent Provision

- a) With the proposal for this first year our concern is that the new Yr 5's will not have had the planned 2 summer half terms worth of preparation and lessons when they were in year 4. In this case we are working with GLL and other partners to provide some free and/or subsidised summer lessons to help bridge the 12 week gap that these pupils will encounter. In future years this should not be such a problem as year 4 would have had 6 weeks of swimming before the summer holidays. GLL will ensure that they have provision for summer lessons and fun pool sessions and promote those in particular to year 4s as they transition into year 5 over the summer holidays.

5.12 Teacher Training

- a) As part of the proposal we plan to deliver the ASA's teacher training course to our year 3/4 & 5 teachers (and AOTTs) in October 2012 and then as required annually or biannually. This will ensure that teachers observing from pool side can get more involved and encourage and enthuse their pupils whilst in the pool. The pupils tend to do better when the teacher they know and trust is there to support their learning.
- b) By up skilling our teachers they can also prepare the children during lesson times before their swimming lessons to ensure health and safety and other areas are covered where possible in the classroom to avoid wasting too much valuable pool time.

5.13 Assessments

- a) Assessments will take place at the start and end of each term and full results will be passed on to the Partnership and schools so they can monitor their pupils initial ability and improvements.
- b) GLL will work with their swimming teachers to ensure that a new and more fun approach to assessments takes place. This will enthuse the children to learn and remind them how much

fun swimming can be in the hope that they will learn more readily and want to attend the pool in their own time with their family and friends.

5.14 GLL Swim Guarantee

- a) GLL will commit to offering part funded places on their non-curriculum lessons for pupils from schools that commit to this programme. This can then act as an intervention in the event that a small number of children are not able to achieve required standards by the end of the programme.

5.15 Cost

- a) The current cost per pupil per lesson is around £1.66 and should not change This does not factor transport and staff support costs which the school may have to factor in.

5.16 Sustainability

- a) We hope that this programme once embedded will have a real impact on the number of Merton pupils who can swim 25m. If the recommendations are followed again year on year and further developed as required then this should be a financially viable structure on which to build.

5.17 Secondary Schools Key Stage 3 / 4

- a) The general feedback from our Merton Heads of PE suggests that many of our secondary school pupils are also unable to swim 25m. Although this is an area we also plan to address it is not practical to focus on this age group in the first instance. By dealing initially with the primary age group the secondary schools will soon see an improvement on the ability of the swimmers they take on board at year 7.
- b) The MSSP are however looking into opportunities to fund some top up swimming for KS3 / 4 where PE departments have identified those who are most in need of lessons. It is much harder to timetable KS 3 /4 students to come out of school during curriculum time to swim.
- c) Our first task with KS 3/ 4 will be to work with the PE departments to assess the ability of all their pupils in order for us to further this part of the strategy.

5.18 Out of School Swimming

- a) GLL will further work with us to promote their family swimming and London swim school. The GLL swim Guarantee will also provide incentives for pupils after the key stage 1/2 delivery. Free vouchers for public sessions in holiday period discount on intensive intervention courses will be provided where possible.

6. Outcomes

6.1 We are ambitious in our aims and anticipate that the no. of pupils in year 5 who can swim 25m will increase as follows.

Current approximate data for KS1&2 – 30%

July 2013 – 55%

July 2014 – 75% (*biggest rise as Yr4s started in summer 2013 this time*)

July 2015 – 80%

6.2 GLL will support our measurements through assessment data on year 5's in March / April of each year.

6.3 MSSP will provide a report on the outcomes of the strategy in April 2013 (interim), September 2013 and September 2014. We will also reassess the data for levels of 25m swimmers when more effective base assessments have taken place in September 2012.

6.4 MSSP and GLL will provide each school's PLT with support to resolve any barriers specific to their school deemed to be affecting their swimming levels.

7. Contact Details

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8. Appendix

1) Morden Park Pool Draft Timetable 2012-13

	9.00-9.30	9.30-10.00	10.00-10.30	10.30-11.00	11.00-11.30	11.30-12.00	12.00-1.30	1.30-2.00	2.00-2.30	2.30-3.00
MON	Greenshaw			MALMESBURY	TREETOPS	PERSEID	OPEN	WIM CHASE	HOLLYMOUNT	WIM CHASE
TUE	Greenshaw	St Cecillas	JOESPH HOOD	St Cecillas	MORDEN	HATFEILD	OPEN	ARAGON	ARAGON	ARAGON
WED	J HOOD	MORDEN	ST JOHN FISHER	HOLLYMOUNT	ABBOTSBURY	POPLAR	OPEN		50+	
THU	Greenshaw	POPLAR	ST MATTS	MALMSBURY	ST MATTS	Greenlane	OPEN	HILLCROSS	Abbey	WIM CHASE
FRI	Greenshaw	St Cecillas	St Cecillas	HATFEILD	HATFEILD	Greenlane	OPEN	ST JOHN FISHER	HILLCROSS	ABBOTSBURY
	MOVED FROM REGULAR SLOT									
	TEACHING POOL NOT AVAILABLE									
	BOTH POOLS NOT AVAILABLE									
	BASED IN MERTON BUT NOT LA									
	NON MERTON SCHOOLS									
	ADULTS ONLY									

2) Wimbledon Leisure Centre Pool Draft Timetable 2012-13

	9.00 - 9.30	9.30 - 10.00	10.00 - 10.30	10.30 - 11.00	11.00-11.30	11.30-12.00	12.00-1.30	1.30 - 2.00	2.00 - 2.30	2.30 - 3.00
Mon							PUBLIC SWIM	PRIORY	PRIORY	LIBERTY
Tues		Building Blocks	Building Blocks	Building Blocks	Building Blocks	Building Blocks	PUBLIC SWIM	ST MARYS	ALL SAINTS	MERTON ABBEY
Wed	ALL SAINTS	SINGLEGATE	DUNDONALD	Prospect	Ursuline	Ursuline	PUBLIC SWIM	HOLY TRIN	HOLY TRIN	LIBERTY
Thur	PELHAM	Willington	Willington	Willington	Willington	DUNDONALD	PUBLIC SWIM		Willington	Willington
Fri	PELHAM	MERTON PARK	WIM PARK	B GILPIN	WIM PARK	B GILPIN	PUBLIC SWIM	ST MARYS	GARFIELD	GARFIELD
		MOVED FROM REGULAR SLOT								
		TEACHING POOL NOT AVAILABLE								
		BOTH POOLS NOT AVAILABLE								
		BASED IN MERTON BUT NOT LA								
		NON MERTON SCHOOLS								
		ADULTS ONLY								

3) Canons Leisure Centre Pool Draft Timetable 2012-13

	9.00-9.30	9.30-10.00	10.00-10.30	10.30-11.00	11.00-11.30	11.30-12.00	12.00-12.30	12.30-1.00	1.00-1.30	1.30-2.00	2.00-2.30	2.30-3.00	3.00-3.40
MON	DATE VALLEY	BENEDICT	GRANTON	LINKS	St ANDREWS	LONESOME				GORRINGE	ST MARKS P	EAGLE HSE	RICARDS
TUE	BOND	ST THOMAS	GREENWRYTHE	NORBURY	LONESOME	IMMANUEL							
WED	EAGLE HSE	CRICKET GREEN	BEECHOLME	GORRINGE	SHERWOOD	CRANMER				LINKS	CULVERS	DATE V	
THU	ST THOMAS	CRICKET GREEN	W THORNTON	W THORNTON	W THORNTON	SHERWOOD				ST PETER	ST PETER	ST MARKS A	
FRI	ST MARKS A	St LEONARDS	HASLEMERE	St LEONARDS	HASLEMERE	HASLEMERE				BOND	CRANMER	CRANMER	
		MOVED FROM REGULAR SLOT											
		TEACHING POOL NOT AVAILABLE											
		BOTH POOLS NOT AVAILABLE											
		BASED IN MERTON BUT NOT LA											
		NON MERTON SCHOOLS											
		ADULTS ONLY											