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AN INVESTIGATION INTO SWIMMING IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

by

DIANA BASS


A Master's Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of

Degree of Master of Philosophy of Loughborough University

May 1996

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ABSTRACT

An investigation into swimming in primary schools

The research grew out of the author's interest in swimming in primary schools. With the Education Reform Act, 1988 (ERA) swimming became a required element of the National Curriculum for Physical Education. In addition, the ERA also established local management of schools (LMS), giving budgetary control to school governing bodies. These two elements of the ERA were likely to have an impact on the swimming provision in primary schools.

Initial research problem: A questionnaire survey was sent to forty-seven primary schools in one borough, and forty-five (96%) schools replied. Results indicated that, although there was a large variation in the provision of swimming amongst the schools in the survey borough, swimming had been established in the majority of the primary schools for a number of years. It also became clear that swimming in primary schools was very complex with different provision arrangements being made, not only between schools, but also between classes within the same school, and sometimes between children within the same class. As most schools had to travel to a suitable pool, swimming provision required a large allocation of curriculum time. This, and the resulting costs were of concern to some headteachers.

Second phase of research: As access to a swimming pool would impact on both the amount of curriculum time required and the costs of swimming lessons, two schools which differed in respect to this were chosen for case studies. Results of the case studies showed that the schools' swimming programmes had not changed to any large extent because of the requirements of the National Curriculum. The only changes that had been made were as a result of the changes to the county swimming grades used by the schools to assess their pupils. The swimming programme in both schools fulfilled many of the requirements of the National Curriculum, but the programme fell down as a result of lack of expertise of many of the those teaching swimming. Other problems facing the schools were access to a suitable pool, allocation of curriculum time and costs. As a result of these problems, one school was considering reducing its swimming provision. Although those teaching swimming felt that it was beneficial, some teachers felt that physical education, including swimming lacked the status afforded to some other foundation subjects.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The present study examines the National Curriculum activity of swimming in the primary school. This interest has arisen from the author's own experience, both as a swimming teacher and as a parent-helper during swimming lessons at a local primary school. Before the start of this study, discussions with pupils and teachers about swimming lessons had led the author to believe that, although there was some benefit in school swimming lessons for the weak or non-swimmer, better swimmers often found them boring. In general, teachers had a positive view of the value of swimming lessons yet many teachers were concerned about their own lack of swimming teaching experience and qualifications.

Several authors (Newman, 1967; Prudden, 1974; Murray, 1980) have encouraged the teaching of children to swim at an early age and, although there was no legal obligation for schools to provide it, swimming has been part of the curriculum for many primary school children. The legal obligation to include swimming in the curriculum came with the passing of the Education Reform Act, 1988 (ERA) which introduced several changes that affected the management and organisation of schools. The two recommendations of the ERA which were likely to have major implications for the school swimming programme were the introduction of a National Curriculum and the changes in financing arrangements of schools brought about by local management of schools (LMS).

Although Hardy (1992) has looked in detail at the process of swimming in secondary schools, little research has been carried out on swimming in primary schools. Because of the ERA and its possible implications with regard to swimming, it seemed an ideal time to investigate the primary school swimming programme.

1.2 INITIAL RESEARCH PROBLEM

At the commencement of this study it was not clear what the final focus of the research would be. It had been anticipated that the research would employ both quantitative, in the form of a questionnaire survey, and qualitative methods, but it was not clear exactly what form the qualitative research would take. It was hoped that the results of the questionnaire survey would help to guide this decision. Therefore, the first priority was to obtain a broad picture of swimming provision in primary schools. In order to achieve this, a questionnaire was sent to forty-seven primary schools in one borough and forty-five (96%) schools responded. A single borough was chosen because it was felt desirable to compare schools within the same borough. Moreover, should schools need to be visited in the future it would be more viable in terms of time and cost if they were relatively accessible.

The questions were framed to collect the following information:

- i) *The length of time swimming had been in the curriculum of the surveyed schools.*
- ii) *The accessibility of the schools to a swimming pool.*
- iii) *The amount of time being allocated to the swimming lesson, including travel and changing time.*
- iv) *The number of swimming lessons given to the pupils.*
- v) *The number of children who were in the pool at the same time.*
- vi) *Who was responsible for teaching the children to swim and who helped them.*
- vii) *Whether life-saving/survival skills were taught to all children.*
- viii) *The qualifications held by those teaching swimming.*
- ix) *The equipment available at the swimming pool for use by the schools during their swimming lessons.*

1.3 SECOND PHASE OF RESEARCH

As a result of this first investigation it became clear that swimming provision varied tremendously between schools, and that provision of swimming lessons required a large amount of curriculum time. Although there were very few schools with their own pool, data revealed that pupils from these schools had a higher frequency of swimming lessons than those schools whose pupils had to travel to a swimming pool. Also, comments on the questionnaire from headteachers revealed that the time and costs of providing a swimming lesson meant that some headteachers either had or were considering revising their swimming programme. If pupils have to travel to a pool it is likely that headteachers would have to allocate more curriculum time, and incur more costs. Therefore, access to a suitable pool appeared to be one of the main constraints shaping swimming provision in the schools.

In order to explore this further, two primary schools, which differed with regard to access to a swimming pool, were chosen for investigation through case studies. This phase of the research was further divided into observation and interviews. The objective of the observation was, not only to examine the swimming programme to discover if it fulfilled the requirements of the of the National Curriculum, but also to be involved in the whole process of the lesson in an attempt to understand the issues that helped to shape the programme.

It was evident from observing the swimming lessons that many skills were being incorrectly demonstrated. Informal discussions with those teaching swimming revealed that this lack of expertise was a concern for some of the teachers. Other concerns were the time and costs involved in providing a swimming programme. Continued documentary research also highlighted time and costs, along with access to a suitable pool and lack of expertise amongst those teaching swimming as major constraints in providing a swimming programme. In order to understand these concerns more fully, semi-structured interviews were held with those people involved in swimming lessons at the two case study schools. A summary of the research design is shown in Table 1.1.

1.4 THESIS STRUCTURE

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. The first two chapters are the introduction and review of literature respectively. Chapter 3 reports on the methodology used during the investigations and Chapters 4 to 7 comprise the

results, discussion and conclusions of the questionnaire and the case study investigations.

Table 1.1: Research Design

| Reason for selecting area of study | Review of Literature | First Investigation | Findings of first Investigation | Continued Review of Literature | Second Investigation | Findings of Observation |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Review of literature indicated that: | | | Review of literature indicated that: | | |
| i) Author's experience as a swimming teacher and parent-helper. | i) Learning to swim is a complex process: no one factor determinant. What is taught is important as well as how it is taught. | Method: Questionnaire Survey to 45 primary schools. | i) Varied provision both within and between schools. Swimming in schools is a complex issue. | With ERA (1988) came competition for resources both within schools and between schools. | Method : Case Study 2 schools selected on their proximity to a swimming pool. | Factors affecting adequate swimming instruction and thus delivery of a NC for swimming: |
| ii) Little information about swimming in primary schools. | ii) Since the beginning of this century people and organisations have urged that swimming be a compulsory part of the curriculum. The legal obligation for primary schools to provide swimming came with the ERA (1988). | | ii) Swimming lessons demand a large amount of curriculum time. Time and costs of providing a swimming lesson of concern to some headteachers. Leading some to review provision. | Major issues for schools in providing a swimming programme were: | a) Observation of the process of swimming lessons in case study schools. | i) Lack of knowledge of requirements. |
| iii) Implications of the Education Reform Act on the provision of swimming in primary schools. | iii) Few primary schools have swimming pools on site. | | iii) Access to a swimming pool would impinge on both time spent on and costs of swimming lessons. | i) Access to a suitable swimming pool. (Time) | b) Semi-structured interviews with those teaching swimming. | ii) Lack of expertise in teaching swimming. |
| | iv) Swimming teaching in the primary school would appear to be very important as there was some evidence to suggest that swimming performance did not improve to any great extent at secondary school. Also, not all children would continue to have swimming lessons at secondary school. | | | ii) Expertise of those teaching swimming. | | iii) Lack of adequate lesson time. |
| | | | | iii) Costs relating to both the above. | | Concerns of those teaching swimming: |
| | | | | | | i) Curriculum time. |
| | | | | | | ii) Lack of expertise in teaching swimming. |
| | | | | | | iii) Cost of providing swimming lessons. |
| | | | | | | These issues to be explored further through interviews. |

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The review of literature is divided into two main areas: the first section examines the research related to the teaching of swimming and the second section deals with documentary data regarding swimming in schools.

RESEARCH INVESTIGATING THE TEACHING OF SWIMMING

In an attempt to understand the various methods that can be used to teach children to swim, research was undertaken to review the various teaching methodologies. In addition, because the National Curriculum states that swimming should be taught in Key Stage 2¹ (DES, 1992a), investigations were carried out on documentation relating to age and sex, as well as other physical and mental characteristics which may affect primary school children's readiness to learn swimming.

2.2 METHODS RESEARCH

"The most successful method of learning many skills has proved to be the approach known as Whole-Part-Whole and this is particularly appropriate for the acquisition of swimming skills" (Lee, 1991 p.23). Although this approach is the one recommended by Elkington (1980) and the Amateur Swimming Association (1991), little research has been done with regards to testing this method in relation to learning to swim. Research that has been done has tended to compare the teaching of a whole skill with that of breaking it down into constituent parts. Legg (1971) tested college male beginning swimmers over two twenty-five yards swim tests, three fifty yards swim tests and three distance endurance swim tests. After four weeks of continuous frontcrawl instruction, those taught by the whole method performed significantly better than those taught by the part method on the second twenty-five

¹The structure of the National Curriculum is organised on the basis of four key stages, which are broadly as follows;

| | Pupils' ages | Year groups |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| Key Stage 1 | 5 - 7 | 1 - 2 |
| Key Stage 2 | 7 - 11 | 3 - 6 |
| Key Stage 3 | 11 - 14 | 7 - 9 |
| Key Stage 4 | 14 - 16 | 10 - 11 |

yards swim test, but there were no significant differences between the two groups on the other tests. Spedding (1974) found no significant difference in swimming ability between four groups of nine year old non-swimmers when two groups were taught by the whole method and two by the part method.

Other methods of teaching swimming have also been researched. Holt, Thorpe and Holt (1970) tested the Red Cross and Silvia (drownproof) methods of teaching swimming. With the former, the learner experiences water orientation before being exposed to the formal stroke. In addition, with this method the learners were encouraged to put their heads in the water early on in their learning. In contrast, with the Silvia method the flutter kick is practised in the initial lesson, and many practices were carried out with the head out of the water. Subjects taught by the Silvia method required significantly fewer days to pass the Red Cross Combined Skill test than those taught by the Red Cross method. The investigators noted that the subjects were not randomly selected so no generalisation could be made beyond the findings of this experiment. Patterson (1972) also compared the Red Cross and the Silvia methods but, this time, the swimmers were two groups of black male and female students. Factors tested were the frontcrawl stroke, backcrawl stroke and survival time². After ten lessons of thirty-five minutes each there was no significant difference between the two groups on frontcrawl; the Silvia sample, though, was superior on the backcrawl stroke and on survival time. Bentham (1970) also compared the Red Cross and the drownproof methods. Subjects were divided into two classes and one class was taught by the Red Cross method and the other by the drownproof method. Subjects received swimming instruction for thirty minutes each day for a period of eleven days. On day twelve they were tested to see how far they could swim using the techniques taught. Results showed that the drownproof method was better for pupils aged six to eleven years, but there was no significant difference between the groups for twelve year olds. Sevier (1969) looked at two groups of seventeen, eight to ten year old beginning swimmers; one group used the Red Cross method and the other used Styrofoam bubbles and kick boards. After ten lessons of forty-five minutes there was no significant difference between the two groups on swimming performance.

Whatever method of teaching swimming is used, it would appear that demonstration of correct technique is essential. Barclay (1968) asked 1,594 beginning swimming students and 1,092 college swimming teachers to describe incidents in college swimming classes in which the behaviour of the teacher either helped or interfered

²There was no indication in the report on this research what was meant by 'survival time'.

with a student's progress in learning to swim. Results indicated that correct demonstration both in and out of the water were needed for effective teaching to take place. Barclay concluded that, amongst other things, teachers should:

- provide a model from which a student can develop his or her original concept of what is to be done;
- demonstrate skills both in the water and on dry land;
- demonstrate before bad habits have been formed;
- provide demonstration to correct the student after he has performed inadequately;
- provide a demonstration of the student's incorrect performance;
- utilise the skill of an assistant or a student if the teacher is unable to demonstrate and use student demonstrations to motivate students.

Several authors (Brain, 1976; Tonn and Brüns 1976; Hardy, 1993) advise that strokes should not be taught until pupils are adjusted to the water. Cernusak (1966) taught two groups of twenty pupils aged eleven to twelve years. The group that had two weeks of water familiarising exercises progressed more rapidly and obtained superior results over the group that did not.

When children are 'ready' to learn a formal stroke, teachers have to address the problem of which stroke to teach first. Weckel (1966) divided twelve classes of school children aged eight to nine years into four groups. Each group was taught one stroke for the first seven to nine lessons and then an additional stroke was taught as follows:

- (1) frontcrawl followed by breaststroke;
- (2) breaststroke followed by frontcrawl;
- (3) backcrawl followed by breaststroke and
- (4) breaststroke followed by backcrawl.

On average, the children had thirty-five periods of twenty-five to thirty-five minutes, and the distance the children covered was tested after lessons 9, 18 and 33. It was concluded that non-swimmers can successfully be instructed in two swimming styles at the same time, and breaststroke should be one of these styles.

Breaststroke was learnt faster than the other styles, and the results also indicated that, although the experiment did not reveal which of the two crawl-styles is preferred by beginners, it is not advisable to teach backcrawl first.

Several studies have looked at the effect of flotation and other swimming aids on learning to swim. Welsch (1974) advocated the use of a hoop and pole in helping to give confidence and enjoyment to children learning to swim. McCatty (1968) failed to find evidence to support the hypothesis that the use of a flotation device would accelerate the learning process of non-swimmers. Kaye (1965), on the other hand, found that a flotation device not only helped the user to swim further within a given time, but it also enabled the user to learn to swim in a shorter time. Kaye divided thirty male students into two groups. After two aquatic orientation sessions both groups were taught to swim. At the conclusion of the second lesson a flotation device was introduced to one group. At the end of the eighth session there was significant difference between the two groups with the group using the flotation device swimming further. This significance was maintained throughout the remainder of the sixteen weeks of instruction. Hodapp (1966) found that flotation devices produced better results with two skill progressions when looking at beginning girl swimmers aged eight to eleven years. Diaper (1956) found that the ability to glide was learned more rapidly with the use of flotation aids. Spedding (1974) found no significant difference in swimming ability between groups taught using flotation aids and those taught without over a period of eight lessons. He concluded that in early lessons (one to three) the progressive part method of teaching with flotation aids should be used, but in later practices (lessons four to eight) floats may have some value with the whole method.

Research has also been carried out to look at a more individual-centred means of teaching (Templin and Kollen, 1981; Scott, 1981). According to Heitman and Kneer (1976), with this teaching style, the "teacher serves as a facilitator, resource consultant, and reinforcer as the student initiates, accepts responsibility for, and evaluates his or her own learning" (cited in Templin and Kollen, 1981 p. 15). When comparing this method with a traditional approach Templin and Kollen (1977) found that there was no significant difference, in respect of swimming achievement, swimming anxiety and student satisfaction. However, in most cases, data revealed that the individual-centred approach, although not superior to the traditional approach, resulted in improvements in the aforementioned factors over the period of study within the 'aquatics lab'. Scott (1981) looked at four different lesson forms - orthodox, stroke schedule, time-distance and recreational - for thirteen fourth year students, during a life saving/ survival class. Results showed that even in the recreation lesson performance of some students increased, and it was concluded that pupils can play a part in shaping their own education. Research into this

individualised approach to the teaching-learning process has tended to be done with older pupils, but with the emphasis in the National Curriculum for self-evaluation and a move away from a didactic style of teaching (Section 2 of this Chapter), this approach may have some relevance for primary school children.

In the past a great deal of emphasis has been given to land drills (Sinclair and Henry, 1893; Gibson, 1951; Jarvis, 1956). Jarvis (1956) believed that it should be "the foundation on which all swimming teaching is based" (p.15) and described many positions for supporting the 'swimmer' as he/she practised an aspect of a stroke. Hentzschel (1965) described a method of teaching the leg movements of breaststroke on dry land. According to Hentzschel, this method proved effective with children beginning to learn these strokes and with correcting faults in competitive swimmers. However, Oliver (1953), when teaching breaststroke to primary school children, found that land drill made no significant contribution either to learning to swim or to increasing the speed of learning of the beginner swimmer.

Not only may the method of teaching children to swim be important, but so may the frequency of practices. Scott (1954) found that, in an eight week term of fifteen to sixteen lessons, most of her subjects could be taught sufficient swimming skills to pass a fifteen minute test. However, she concluded that lessons occurring four times a week were more effective than those occurring less frequently. Spedding (1974) concluded that the duration of swimming period should be longer than eight lessons and he suggested twelve to fifteen lessons of no longer than thirty to forty minutes. Atha, Kinnear and Sawbridge (1967) concluded that daily lessons were superior to weekly ones when judged on such swimming tests as the ability to swim one width. When a test of a five minute swim was adopted the daily lessons were slightly inferior to weekly ones.

The effectiveness of blocked lessons has long been a debating point in swimming. Howell, Moncrieff and Morford (1962) studied two groups of five to eleven year old beginning swimmers. One group was taught for three days a week for two weeks, and the other had two lessons a week for three weeks. Little difference was found between the two groups in their acquisition of elementary swimming skills. Stull (1961) also found no difference between six practices a week for three weeks and three practices a week for six weeks.

Various methods have been used to teach children swimming, but the results of research into which is the best is inconclusive. One of the reasons for this may be

that children coming to swimming lessons vary in both physical and mental characteristics. As Thomsen (1973) has suggested, the "truly good instructor is one who is able to fit the teaching method to the situation and to the individual student" (p. 113). Therefore, the next section looks at research on the varying characteristics of children and how these differences may affect the speed with which they learn to swim.

2.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SWIMMER

2.3.1 Age

One of the most important considerations for a swimming teacher is the age at which a child is ready to learn to swim. Howell et al (1962) divided learner swimmers into two groups. In the first group the ages ranged from five to seven years, and in the second group the ages ranged from eight to ten years. There was no significant difference between the two groups when looking at a variety of swimming skills except on the skill that consisted of a five yard swim. This was achieved by only 16% of the younger group as compared to 68% of the older group. As a result of these findings, Howell et al recommended that 'Learn to Swim' classes for children in the younger age group should be renamed 'Adjustment to Water' classes. Weckel (1966) recommended swimming lessons for eight year old children and Dallam (1976) believed that the 'sooner the better' is a good guideline for beginning aquatic instruction. She described the success of a swimming programme given to first grade (six to seven year old) students. Rousch and Leeper (1981) also described the success of a swim programme in Iowa for Kindergarten (five to six year olds), grade one and grade two (seven to eight year old) children. They stated that there were a number of reasons why children should be taught during the elementary school years. At this age, girls are

less conscious about hair problems and about personal appearance in a bathing suit. The children dress and undress rapidly, and exhibit little need for primping before they return to their other school classes (p.17).

Bentham (1970) found, when looking at beginning swimming students aged six to twelve years, that the drownproof method of teaching was superior over the Red Cross method for ages six to eleven years. There was no difference for students aged twelve years. Cooke (1989) stated that it is relatively easy to get a child to learn to swim in early childhood because as the child gets older, heavier and more fearful the process becomes more difficult. Other investigators have had more

success with older children. Gray (1958) found that older children had more success in learning to swim than younger children. Atha et al (1967) when looking at children aged nine years to twelve years, also found that older swimmers performed better than younger ones, and they concluded that success at learning to swim was very much a function of age. However, the greatest increase in percentage learning was between the two youngest age groups (nine years and ten years) and the lowest increase between the two oldest groups (eleven years and twelve years).

More recently there has been a growing tendency to encourage very young infants and babies to swim (Prudden, 1974; Murray, 1981). Hicks-Hughes and Langendorfer (1986) noted that the teaching of infants to swim moved from a controversial novelty in the 1960s to a "well-accepted fad" (p.36) in the 1980s. Langendorfer (1989), who estimated that in the USA five to ten million children under the age of six years participated annually in structured aquatic programmes, warned about the care needed in planning such a programme and the need for basic and applied research in the area. Murphy (1983), commenting on a letter from a reader concerned with the obsession of parents for their child to achieve, reiterated the need for caution when teaching very young children to swim. Murphy emphasised that, when promoting swimming classes for children under the age of three years, terms such as 'swimming', 'drownproofing', or 'waterproofing' should not be used because

...their common meanings are misleading and inaccurate when applied to an under three program. Terms such as 'water adjustment' or 'water familiarization' or 'fun' are appropriate and accurate (p. C-17).

2.3.2 Buoyancy

Research has shown that buoyancy is a significant factor in learning to swim (Brace, 1941). It would seem that the

ability to float horizontally obviates the struggle (and resulting exhaustion) to maintain the body in a horizontal position - a difficulty encountered by a large number of learner swimmers (Whiting , 1963 p.89).

This has been supported by Cadman (1975) who found a high negative correlation between buoyancy and length of time taken to learn to swim in a group of primary school children, and Robins (1978) who found that the ability to float was a significant factor in learning the elementary backstroke. However, Gray and

Wheeler (1960), in their study carried out in 1956 in Australia, failed to find any correlation between physical buoyancy and the speed of learning to swim for girls and boys aged six to ten years. However, Page (1975) noted that there are methodological deficiencies with Gray and Wheeler's investigations that weaken the reliability and validity of their findings. Page (1974) studied forty-two boys aged nine to eleven years from one secondary school, and he concluded that as far as boys are concerned, extraversion plays a major role while buoyancy plays a separate, but much more subsidiary role. Moreover, the influence of buoyancy increases considerably for the introverted learner, while for the extraverted learner it becomes insignificant.

There is evidence that buoyancy decreases with age and that, in general, the younger the person the lower the specific gravity (Watkins, 1982). Research into buoyancy and learning to swim would tend to support the view that children should be taught to swim during primary school years, particularly in the case of boys. Whiting (1963, 1965) looked at 1,040 boys and 877 girls in an attempt to discover variations in floating ability with age. The boys displayed a decrease in the percentage of floaters from thirteen years onwards. The peak time for horizontal and tuck floating was between the ages of ten years and thirteen years, and there was an almost complete incapacity to perform a horizontal float from about fifteen years onwards. A few 'sinkers' (persons unable to float with lungs fully inflated) were found in the age range fourteen years to eighteen years. With the girls there was an almost 100% ability to float in the tuck position with lungs both inflated and normal. Only one female (fourteen years old) was a sinker when there was maximal exhalation in the tuck position. There was a decrease in the ability to float horizontally between ages thirteen and fifteen years, and seventeen years and older, with a corresponding increase between the ages of ten and thirteen years and fifteen and seventeen years.

2.3.3 Sex

Another aspect that may need to be taken into consideration when teaching swimming is the sex of the swimmer. Atha et al (1967) found that success in learning to swim was largely independent of sex. Boys and girls learnt to swim at very much the same rate when success was judged over a short distance. However in the Five Minute Swim Test the boys were more successful. Gray (1968), when looking at 235 boys and girls, found that boys were quicker at learning to swim than girls and this was also found by Hardy and Nias (1971) investigating a much smaller

group of just twenty-nine boys and girls. When looking at competitive swimming in primary schools, Hunter and Denham (1986) found that there was no significant difference in the time over fifty metre swims between boys and girls in the age group eight to eleven years in all four strokes. However, there was a significant difference in times between the boys and the girls over a 200 metre relay for all age groups, with the boys being faster. There was also a significant difference between girls and boys, aged twelve to thirteen years, when looking at times over fifty metre swims for each of the four individual strokes. Once again, the boys were faster.

2.3.4 Physical characteristics

Other physical and mental characteristics of the beginner swimmer may also affect their ability to learn to swim. Brace (1941) found there was some relationship between a height-weight ratio and the learning scores based on ten swimming learning tests. Gray and Wheeler (1960) reported correlation between learning to swim with weight and with two estimates of body size (Boothby and Sandiford's formula for body surface area and McCloy's Classification Index) in a group of 235 boys and girls aged six years to twelve years with the correlation tending to be higher for the boys. Nias and Hardy (1971) found correlations between learning to swim and sitting height, height and weight in boys aged ten to eleven years. With the girls of the same age in the study a correlation was found between mesomorphic physique and learning to swim, but this was lower than with the boys.

2.3.5 Psychological factors

Psychological Factors may also play an important part in learning to swim. Eysenck (1968),

has related the ease with which conditioning takes place to the personality dimension of introversion/extraversion³ and the autonomic lability of a person to the dimension of neuroticism (cited in Whiting 1970, p.27).

Whiting explains that Eysenck's theory suggests that the introverted person will both condition more easily than the extraverted person, and that once these conditioned responses have been formed they will last longer. Therefore, an introverted person is more likely to have a more severe conditioned fear response following a number of unpleasant water experiences than an extraverted person who

³Introversion-extraversion refers to the extent that one's orientation is towards oneself or towards the external world. (Hilgard, Atkinson and Atkinson, 1979).

had had similar experiences. Whiting concludes that "in as far as our culture presents similar water situations to individuals, it is more *probable* that the more introverted person will develop conditioned fear of water" (p.31. sic.). To determine if there was a relationship between personality dimensions, as described by Eysenck, and persistent non-swimmers, Whiting and Stenbridge (1965) divided a group of eleven and twelve year old boys into swimmers and non-swimmers, and then compared their scores on the Junior Maudsley Personality Inventory. They found that non-swimmers scored significantly on both introversion and neuroticism. Following a review of research literature, Hardy and Nias (1971) concluded that there was significant evidence to suggest that, although both physical and psychological factors play a large part in learning to swim, the role of personality may be the most important. In a study of twenty-nine non-swimmers aged ten to eleven years, Hardy and Nias found that, in spite of the small numbers involved, there was a significant correlation between extraversion and learning to swim in boys and girls, but the correlation was lower in girls. Williams (1970), when looking at 100 swimmers and 100 non-swimmers, found that there was a significant relationship between extraversion and how quickly non-swimmers responded to swimming lessons, but Sevier (1969) found no significant correlation between watermanship and anxiety as measured by the Child Personality Questionnaire, when looking at 34 boys and girls aged between eight and ten years.

Fear is often seen as a psychological barrier to learning to swim and many articles have been written on ways to reduce people's fear of the water (Fleming, 1971; Patrick, 1976; Fisher, 1981; Shank, 1984; Ingham, 1993). Hardy (1988c) observed forty-seven five to seven year old non-swimmers and noted the reaction of non-swimmers to the water environment during their early swimming lessons. He found that a child's confidence could be ascertained by observing the head position, head and hand movement when in contact with the water and facial expression, and suggested that by recognising these reactions, teachers could assess the progress of non-swimmers in their early stages of learning. Hardy and Lawton (1989) also investigated why some children who had learnt to swim failed to make progress. They carried out semi-structured interviews with fifteen eleven to fourteen year olds who had been targeted as having difficulty in improving their swimming performance. Two of these were non-swimmers and thirteen could swim between five and fifteen metres. The results indicated that a fear of deep water, along with other factors such as cold water, chlorine stinging the eyes, not enough emphasis on fun and little practical help, were all factors which prevented progress.

Several studies have looked at the change in confidence and self image after subjects have learnt to swim. Hopkins and Fleming (1981) found that success in swimming is associated with significant gains in the level of self-esteem. Koocher (1971) found, when looking at sixty-five boys between the ages of seven and fifteen years attending a camp, that increased self-esteem attained in learning to swim, while significant, did not have a generalised or long lasting effect. The self-concept of youngsters who already knew how to swim was no different from those who could not swim at the beginning of the camp. Roush and Leeper (1981) reported on the introduction of a swimming programme in Iowa and stated that, although it was difficult to evaluate the improved self-image, self-confidence, trust and meaningful relationships that occur during the learn to swim process, progress in these areas was often mentioned by the class teachers, parents and volunteers.

2.4 CONCLUSION

Results from research investigating the teaching of swimming appear to be inconclusive. The process of learning to swim is an immensely complex situation with presage, context and process variables coming into play. As Hardy (1994b) notes, the

teacher's knowledge of swimming (presage variable) will influence the planning of a lesson, the learner's skill level (context variable) will affect that planning, and instructional cues and feedback (process variable) will influence the outcomes (product variable) of teaching (p. 23).

No one factor will be a determinant of a person's ability to learn to swim and teachers must be aware of the large number of influences involved.

SWIMMING IN THE SCHOOL

2.5 INTRODUCTION

To understand more fully the position of swimming in schools and to obtain greater insight into the problems of providing a comprehensive swimming programme, it is necessary to understand how swimming became a part of the school programme. The first part of this section takes an historical perspective. It traces the early growth in the popularity of swimming and the perceived need by various organisations for it to be part of the school curriculum. The rest of the chapter deals

with the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) and its implications for schools trying to implement swimming as part of the National Curriculum.

2.6 HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

For over a hundred years there has been pressure to include swimming in the school curriculum. Initially, the pressure came from those people who saw swimming as a way of preventing drownings. Britain, surrounded by sea and with numerous rivers provided many opportunities for "aquatic enjoyment" and "the love of water - to be near it, upon it, in it - seems one of our most natural or instinctive tastes" (Nichols, 1870. p.3). According to Nichols, there had been 23,000 deaths over a five year period, and the obvious answer was, "that every person, male and female, should learn to swim. Every school should have its swimming bath with male and female teachers" (p. 9). The Swimming Association founded in 1869 also expressed concern about the "annual drain of over two thousand valuable lives by drowning", and urged that the government adopt an "enlightened legislative fostering of the art of swimming" (The Swimmer, 1886 p. 1). According to the Swimming Association, it was "gross national stupidity" to spend seven million pounds a year on primary education, yet allow "our boys and girls to grow into men and women in ignorance of this necessary and easily acquired accomplishment" (ibid., p.1).

In the late nineteenth century swimming was not only seen as a means of preventing drownings, but also as a way of saving the lives of others. Leahy (1875) stated that swimming "is first learnt to save a person's own life, it is also an amusement and a healthy exercise and it may help to save another's life" (p.82). As early as 1774 the Royal Humane Society had been formed "to collect and circulate the most approved and effectual methods for recovering the apparently drowned or dead" (Sinclair and Henry, 1893 p.205). At this time, the act of saving a drowning person carried with it various superstitious fears that some evil would befall the rescuer (ibid.), but over the next hundred years the work of the Royal Humane Society became more widespread with many local organisations being set up (Sachs, 1912). According to Sachs, little knowledge existed about the best way to revive a near-drowned person and the medical profession, as a whole, were disinterested. As a result, the number of deaths by drowning was not significantly reduced. Sachs felt that the ineffectualness of the Royal Humane Society may have "helped to instil in others the desire to establish and spread a sound and practical method" (p.105) of life saving. By the end of the 19th Century the concept of life-saving "captured the public imagination" (Hardy, 1991a p.18), and the Life-saving

Society, which laid down drills and accepted practices for rescuing drowning people, was finally formed in 1891.

During the nineteenth century the government did take steps to encourage swimming in schools. The Code of Practice of 1871, which followed the 1870 Forster Education Act, allowed for grant purposes, attendance at "drill" for boys for up to two hours a week and twenty weeks a year, so long as it was carried out by qualified drill instructors, and the Code of 1890 recognised swimming, along with gymnastics and Swedish drill, as "suitable physical exercises" for grant eligibility (Hardy, 1991a). This recognition of swimming may have been partly due to pressure from the Swimming Association who resolved in 1886 that,

every child should be taught to swim, and therefore would respectfully urge the Education Department to embody swimming in the Code, in a similar manner to the present recognition of Drill (The Swimmer, 1886 p.1).

Also, the passing of the Baths and Wash-houses Act in 1846 meant that a large number of baths were built throughout the country (Sinclair and Henry, 1893). Before this Act the old swimming baths had been filthy and according to Sinclair and Henry more suitable for "ratting expeditions" (p.2), but, with more places to bathe, swimming increased in popularity as people preferred to use these baths rather than swim in the polluted river waters of industrialised Britain (Hardy, op. cit.).

Further encouragement came in 1898 when local education authorities (LEAs) were authorised to pay the fees of children attending baths for swimming lessons (Hardy, op.cit.). Also, several education authorities came to arrangements with bath managements and, in many cases, both the teachers and the students were admitted free to public baths. In some instances the Education Committee would pay a grant or a fee towards the cost of instruction (Campbell, 1918). The 1918 Fisher Education Act empowered local authorities to establish school swimming baths along with other additional physical education facilities, but there was no legal obligation for them to do so (Hardy, op.cit.).

Although there was no legal obligation for state schools to include swimming in their curriculum, swimming was a compulsory subject in many English public schools at the end of the nineteenth century. No boy at Eton was allowed to boat until he could swim (Leahy, 1875). At Harrow, the swimming pool, commonly known as the 'Duck Puddle', was one of the finest in England, and all boys attending the school were obliged to swim (Sinclair and Henry, 1893). Sinclair and Henry urged that

swimming became part of the "national education" (p.30) and not just for the privileged few. This opinion was in agreement with Dukes (1887), Physician to Rugby School, who maintained, "every school that could possibly manage it, should have a place in which the boys could learn and practise swimming" (cited in Sinclair and Henry, 1983 p.334). During the early part of the twentieth century this enthusiasm for swimming in the public school continued to be recognised by authors like Sachs (1912) who detailed many of the schemes carried out in public schools hoping that they "will be an incentive to others to go and do likewise" (p.39).

The teaching of swimming did find support in some state schools. The London Schools' Swimming Association was formed in 1893, and by 1911 over 1,300 had affiliated (Sachs, op.cit.). Members would hold meetings where representatives from each school in an area would try to get the best possible twenty minutes of pool time to fit into their school time-table (Gibson, 1951). Some schools, though, still did not appreciate the importance of swimming, and competent instructors were often hard to come by (Austin, 1914). Because of the lack of facilities in council schools that taught swimming, a great deal of emphasis was placed on land drills. Sachs (op.cit.) noted that using land drills in the classroom was a "practice that has produced tens of thousands of swimmers throughout the country and every community would be wise to adopt it" (p.91). Newman (1915) put land drills to music for use "very extensively in Schools, Gymnasiums, and in all other institutions at which instruction in drilling is given" (p.2). The Amateur Swimming Association (1919) also supported the use of land drills which were designed "to reproduce as nearly as possible actual swimming movements..." (p.6).

The Amateur Swimming Association (ASA), formed in 1886, like the Swimming Association before it, continued to press for swimming be taught in every school. They argued that, "if conditions allowed" it might be advisable to make swimming a "compulsory part of the course of physical exercises" (ASA, 1919; 1930; 1937 Foreword). Yet, still no legal obligation to include swimming in the school curriculum was forthcoming. The Syllabus of Physical Education (1933), however, recognised that, increasingly, elementary schools were including swimming as part of the physical training scheme, and it was to be hoped, "that before long every school with available facilities will make provision for the inclusion of this subject in its curriculum" (p.61).

During the twentieth century ideas about physical education had started to broaden as the health aspect of exercise began to be recognised. This increased interest in

the benefits of exercise was also reflected in several books written during the early part of the twentieth century. These books, (Sachs, 1912.; Austin, 1914; Newman, 1915; ASA, 1937) not only advocated swimming instruction, but also encouraged people to swim to improve their health. One book by Hedges (1937) was aimed specifically at the young, and emphasised the fact that swimming could be fun and something to be enjoyed with friends. Gradually educators became more concerned for the well being of children and they too began to see swimming, not just as a disciplinary "drill" or a means of saving life, but as a beneficial exercise and something that could be fun and enjoyed. This change in focus could be seen in the Board of Education's (1933) Syllabus of Physical Training for Schools which showed concern for the child's response to exercise, recognising the need for children to be "happy, alert, eager and physically benefited", (p.8). Also, a Ministry of Education Pamphlet (1952) recognised that children enjoy playing in water, and that some children who find it difficult to achieve satisfaction in other fields of movement sometimes, "come into their own in water" (p.92).

The war years meant that local councils built very few new pools, but the 1944 Butler Education Act legally obliged local authorities to build physical education facilities. Section 53 of this act stated that,

it shall be the duty of every local authority to secure that the facilities for primary, secondary and further education provided for their area, include adequate facilities for recreation and social and physical training

and

- for that purpose a local education authority, with the approval of the Minister, may establish, maintain and manage, or assist the establishment, maintenance and management of camps, holiday classes, playing fields, play-centres, and other places (including playgrounds, gymnasiums and swimming baths not appropriated to any school or college) at which facilities for such recreation and for such training ... are available (cited in Hardy, 1991a, p.19).

In spite of the efforts made by some schools and the encouragement of the government for schools to teach swimming many people were still unable to swim and, according to Gibson (1951), only half the population could swim by the 1950s. She recognised that the "swimming that has been done in our national schools (and a great deal has been done) has been achieved entirely by individual enterprise" (p. 9). However, "there is hope that one day swimming may become a compulsory subject in our national schools, as it has been for nearly half a century in our Public Schools ..." (ibid., p. 9)

There is evidence that many teachers continue to have a positive view of swimming in the schools (Rousch and Leeper, 1981; Blucher, Townsend and Tuck, 1985), and Page (1974), in his examination of primary school teachers' attitude towards swimming, found that they ranked swimming third in winter (after ball games and gymnastics) and second in summer (after ball games).

It would also appear that swimming continues to be a popular activity amongst the people of Britain. In a survey carried out by the European Swimming Commission, swimming was ranked as Britain's most popular sport (Reeves, 1989).

2.7 EDUCATION REFORM ACT (1988) (ERA)

Despite the "almost universal acceptance of swimming as an aspect of educational provision" (Lee, 1994, p.1), there was no legal compulsion for its inclusion in the curriculum. This changed in 1988 with the passing of the Education Reform Act. In 1990 the Department of Physical Education at Southampton University set out "to investigate the Education Reform Act and its implications for the provision of Physical Education and Sport in schools" (Penney and Evans, 1991 p.38). These authors felt that the establishment of the National Curriculum and local management of schools (LMS) were "likely to have an important bearing on the provision of physical education and sport in schools..." (ibid. p.38)

The remainder of this section will look at these two initiatives in relation to swimming in schools.

2.7.1 A National Curriculum for swimming

According to Williams and Jenkins (1988) the notion of a National Curriculum dates from 1977 when it was outlined in "Education in Schools" (DES, 1977), and since then several documents have emphasised the need for a common core curriculum. The ERA placed a duty on the Secretary of State to establish the National Curriculum with physical education one of the foundation subjects⁴. Sanderson (1989) reported that, the

National Curriculum Consultation Document (DES 1987, para 14) makes it clear that in the primary school the majority of time should be devoted to the core subjects, namely English, Mathematics and Science (p.8).

⁴The foundation subjects comprise the three core and seven other foundation subjects. The three 'core' subjects in primary schools are English, maths and science (DES, 1989).

However, according to Sanderson, the inclusion of physical education, along with that of music and art, as a foundation subject is recognition "of other modes of cognition, alternative ways of thinking, learning and expressing ..." (p.8).

The aim of the National Curriculum for Physical Education is to ensure that pupils aged from five years to sixteen years should benefit from a "broad and balanced physical education curriculum" (Pascall, 1992). According to McConachie-Smith (1993), the National Curriculum moves the focus of education from the subject to the child where the "Key Stage divisions for statutory reporting on children's progress match well with their growth and development for Physical Education" (ibid., p.44), and "like other curriculum areas this physical education curriculum is concerned with what children know, do and understand" (ibid., p.44). The National Curriculum includes: attainment targets, programmes of study and end of Key Stage statements. Attainment targets are the "knowledge, skills, and understanding which pupils of different abilities and maturities are expected to have by the end of each key stage. They provide the objectives for what is to be learned in each National Curriculum subject during that key stage" (DES, 1992b p.4). Programmes of study are "the matters, skills and processes which are required to be taught to pupils of different abilities and maturities during each key stage" (ibid., p.4). End of Key Stage statements represent, "the knowledge, skills and understanding which pupils of different abilities and maturities can be expected to achieve at the end of the key stage in question" (ibid., p.5).

The six areas of activity initially included in the National Curriculum for Physical Education were athletic activities, dance, games, gymnastic activities, outdoor and adventurous activities and swimming, with the swimming requirement being fulfilled at the end of Key Stage 2. The Act did make provision for swimming to be taught in Key Stage 1 if the schools so wished, and it could also be pursued in other contexts, for example, as an athletic activity or an outdoor and adventurous activity at Key Stages 3 and 4 (DES 1992a).

In an attempt to make the physical education curriculum more "manageable, accessible and user-friendly for the non-specialist Primary School teacher" (The Physical Education Association of the United Kingdom, 1994 p.4), the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA) carried out a review of the National

Curriculum in 1993/4⁵. Subsequent draft proposals reduced the initial six physical education activities to three in Key Stage 1, namely games, gymnastic activities and dance. Schools who wished to do so could still teach swimming at Key Stage 1, and a separate programme for swimming for Key Stages 3 and 4 was also proposed (SCAA, 1994). However, swimming still remained an 'option' at Key Stages 3 and 4 and there was no guarantee that secondary schools would pursue this activity.

2.7.1.1 Implementation date

The implementation date for the National Curriculum for Physical Education was 1992, although the statutory requirement for swimming came into effect two years later in 1994, and the DES Circular No. 4/92 stated that it is "open to schools to follow the provisions relating to swimming immediately. The Secretary of State expects that most schools will choose to do so" (p.4). According to Reeves (1992), the delay in the implementation date of swimming allowed the Department of Education and Science to carry out two surveys: a survey of schools to assess their accessibility to swimming pools, and a survey of LEAs to obtain their comments on the timing of implementation. The responses to a school survey carried out by the Department for Education and Science showed that:

- a) there was strong support from teachers, parents LEAs and professional organisations for swimming to be a compulsory part of physical education, particularly in the primary school;
- b) a majority of schools surveyed were already providing swimming⁶, particularly at primary level (85%);
- c) a large number of LEAs followed a policy of swimming for all pupils with many of these being in rural and sparsely populated regions: and approximately one in four of surveyed schools had a pool on site or shared one with a near-by school (DES, 1991).

As a result of these findings, it was felt that it was not

⁵In April 1993 the central Government invited the Chairman of SCAA, Sir Ron Dearing, to investigate the scope for slimming down the National Curriculum (in England) and related issues. The Secretary of State for Wales invited the Curriculum Council for Wales to undertake a review in Wales. The Dearing report was issued in December 1993. Subsequently Advisory Groups were established for each of the National Curriculum subjects to reduce the existing National Curriculum orders in respect of the Dearing recommendations. The new National Curriculum Orders were due for implementation in state schools in September 1995. (Evans and Penny, 1995)

impractical or too expensive for it (swimming) to be compulsory for all pupils during Key Stages 1 or 2, or for those who had not succeeded in learning to swim at this stage to receive appropriate tuition at secondary level (*ibid.*, p. 13).

For pupils in the first year of Key Stage 2 the starting date for the commencement of the swimming requirement was set for 1st August, 1994. Even after the implementation date, the National Curriculum for Physical Education, including swimming, was not in its final form. New draft proposals were published and the revised National Curriculum Orders were sent to schools in January, 1995 for implementation in September that year. This uncertainty, together with the delay in the implementation of a National Curriculum for Physical Education, and for swimming in particular, may have devalued physical education in the eyes of some people (Penney, 1994), and, instead of "offering a secure future, the National Curriculum thus seemed set to reinforce the low status so often accorded to PE in schools" (*ibid.*, p.25). Also, the phased introduction of the National Curriculum meant that subject areas were not competing on the same terms for resources. Subjects that were implemented early had a distinct advantage over those with later implementation dates both in terms of allocation of resources and time (Evans, Penny and Bryant, 1993). According to Evans et al, teachers, already trying to cope with the demands of implementing the National Curriculum in other subject areas, "may have neither the energy nor the resource support to deal properly with those subjects such as PE that arrive last in line" (p. 335).

2.7.1.2 Assessment in the National Curriculum

The assessment of physical education is non-prescriptive in that there are no prescribed tests or assessment procedures and, although this discretion may be welcomed by many teachers, non-specialists may feel uneasy (Carroll, 1991). The primary school teacher is seldom a physical educational specialist and may need clear guidelines on assessment procedures. In spite of this non-prescription in other areas of physical education, there is a clear target for pupils to achieve in swimming at the end of Key Stage 2. By the end of this key stage, pupils should "swim unaided for at least 25 metres and demonstrate an understanding of water safety" (DES, 1992a p.6). Initially, there was no indication of how the pupils should swim this twenty-five metres other than it had to be "unaided". This meant that very weak swimmers could achieve that target. As a result of the review of the National Curriculum for Physical Education extensive pruning took place in all areas of activity with the emphasis being placed "on the Programmes of Study as the basis for

planning, teaching and everyday assessment" (Gilliver, 1995 p.7). The requirements for swimming were also amended and they now stated that pupils should be taught:

- to develop confidence in water - to rest, float and adopt support positions;
- to develop a variety of means of propulsion using either arms or legs or both, and to develop effective and efficient swimming strokes on the front and the back;
- to swim competently unaided at least 25 metres;
- to practise and understand the principles and skills of water safety and survival. (DfE, 1995 p. 4).

The change in the wording of the swimming requirement to include 'competently' and 'at least' would seem to indicate that the ability to swim twenty-five metres in any fashion is not enough. This is important, for as Elkington (1971; 1992) has pointed out, the risk to children who, able to swim a short distance, become over confident in water and put themselves in danger. This point of view is supported by earlier research. Hardy (1988a) carried out a survey of eleven and fourteen year olds to attempt to assess their knowledge of water safety. The results showed that fourteen hours per year of swimming is not enough to understand important water safety principles. Two studies carried out by Langley, Silva and Williams (1981) and Langley and Silva (1986), looking at seven and nine year olds respectively, found that several children who could swim had got into difficulties whilst swimming and required assistance. Barter and Firth (1994) have suggested that, "the ability to swim 25m is an absolute minimum and the standard aimed for should be much higher" (p.18). They carried out a survey of two schools to ascertain how many Key Stage 2 pupils reached the standard required by the National Curriculum for swimming. The tests administered were those outlined by the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) as part of their National Curriculum Swimming Skills Award. They were slightly different from the National Curriculum attainment target and consisted of a twenty-five metre swim, treading water or floating for thirty seconds and the ability to submerge in shallow water. Water safety was not tested. In the combined sample of sixty pupils only thirty-two passed all three water tests. It would appear that these results may not be atypical. In a survey of primary schools carried out in a LEA in the south of England during 1993, 70% of the schools reported that they had Year 6 pupils who were unable to swim twenty-five metres, and a further 4% stated that they were unsure whether or not there were Year 6 pupils unable to fulfil this requirement (Penny and Evans, with Hennink and Bryant, 1994). These results may have significant implications regarding assessment of swimming in the National Curriculum. With the prescribed target of the ability to

swim twenty-five metres at the end of Key Stage 2 comes the problem of what happens if pupils fail to achieve this. Swimming is not compulsory at Key Stages 3 and 4, although some schools may opt to teach swimming in these key stages. Therefore, it is possible for a pupil who has not achieved the attainment target at the end of Key Stage 2 to go to a school that has not opted for swimming. Such a pupil may never achieve the required standard.

In addition to performance targets, requirements of the National Curriculum for Physical Education also encompass "planning and evaluation of activities" (Gilliver, 1995 p.8). According to Gilliver, attention should be paid to the opening paragraph of the revised General Requirements which states that, although the greatest emphasis should be placed on the actual performance aspect of the subject, physical education should also "involve pupils in the continuous process of planning, performing and evaluating" (p.8). At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are expected to be able to "make simple judgements about their own and others' performance, and use this information effectively to improve the accuracy, quality and variety of their own performance" (DfE, 1995 p.11).

Although it was not intended that record keeping should be onerous and interfere with teaching (National Curriculum Council, 1992), systematic monitoring and collection of evidence is necessary to ensure that pupils comply with the National Curriculum. Even in primary schools where, according to Hardy (1994a), pupils are judged mainly on performance there is a need for systematic collection of data. Hardy has provided an example of a pupil's progress chart, covering the National Curriculum swimming requirements that can be used to monitor performance.

2.7.1.3 Cross-curricular issues

The ERA does not deal with just specific subject requirements but also with general principles which schools must take into account when establishing a National Curriculum (DES, 1989b). In addition the ERA entitles pupils to a curriculum which

- a) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society; and
- b) prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life (cited in DES, 1989b p.2).

In order to deliver this 'whole' curriculum there are, in addition to individual subjects, cross-curricular matters which are the responsibility of all teachers "shared by all

subjects and addressed in different ways by different schools. Each subject, too, will contribute in its own distinctive way" (DES, 1991 p.45).

The role of physical education as a source of cross-curricular work is recognised by Sanderson (1989) who noted that,

learning in children does not occur in discrete compartments, but that experiences in one area are likely to influence developments in another. The physical, social, emotional, cognitive, aesthetic and creative dimensions must be carefully nurtured, and one of the great contributions of PE, which includes games, gymnastics, swimming and dance, lies in its potential for integrated education across all these dimensions (p.8).

The importance of cross-curricular issues in schooling was also noted by Dickinson and Almond (1990) who recognised the significance they would have on schools because they affected "the whole school curriculum and staff planning as they permeate into all aspects of school life" (p.239). According to Dickinson and Almond because

of the amount of overlap and duplication within programmes of study combined with the range of cross curricular themes, dimensions and skills which have to be integrated into the curriculum (p.240)

traditional methods of organising the curriculum might "well become redundant" (p.240), particularly in the secondary phase of education. Dickinson and Almond suggested 'curriculum mapping' as a strategy for handling curriculum planning, and an example of this can be found elsewhere in the text (Appendix A -1). These authors go on to suggest that the advantages of using such a planning tool are that,

it is possible to enhance and reinforce work undertaken during core time. Also, it provides teachers with a tool for matching key experiences that ALL pupils should encounter with the qualities that particular activities e.g. games or athletics, can promote. In this way the map of the P.E. Curriculum will change as activities are replaced with more precise statements of what pupils will encounter (p.240).

To help teachers implement a programme of swimming into the school time-table, the National Curriculum Council (1992) published a non-statutory guidance which included advice on cross-curricular work. In addition, the ASA (1993) published a National Curriculum Resource Pack for Swimming and Water Safety designed to "support work which schools are currently doing in terms of teaching and water safety" (Foreword). The ASA publication also included a number of worksheets and advice on practices and key teaching points as well as detailing how swimming

could be included in topic work within schools. Hardy (1993) also suggested a structure for the school swimming programme and he outlined several cross-curricular links to help integrate swimming into the school curriculum.

2.7.2 Local management of schools (LMS)

In addition to the National Curriculum, a second recommendation of the ERA which was likely to have a profound affect on schools was LMS⁶. With LMS schools became accountable for their budget and were thus encouraged to use resources effectively and efficiently (Penny and Evans, 1991). The two main features of this policy are formula funding and delegation of management. With formula funding local education authorities (LEAs) allocate a budget (with discretionary and mandatory exceptions) to each school based on the number and age of pupils. Delegation of management shifts the responsibility of managing the school budgets away from the LEAs to the school governing bodies, thus reducing the control of the LEAs over school finances and expenditure (Penny and Evans, op.cit). Prior to LMS, many LEAs managed a school budget which helped to ensure that things such as school swimming programmes could be sustained. Now that control of the finances is in the hands of headteachers and school governors there is no guarantee that they can or will give equal support to swimming in the curriculum (Evans, Penny and Bryant, 1993). No longer can schools obtain advice from LEAs free of charge but instead they have to buy in the services they require. In the competition for resources the status of a particular subject will have a bearing on whether or not the governors of the school decide to spend money on it. Evans and Penny (1994), reporting on a case study carried out on a LEA, quoted an inspector who stated:

Everything's gone to school, we have got no money to deliver in-service at all... If the schools don't buy it in, it won't run. I've been picking up the need from teachers who say we don't know what to do when we're teaching swimming, yet they don't think it's sufficiently important to buy it (in service support) (p.530).

The Schools Act 1992⁷ further eroded the powers of the LEAs to "effectively manage and provide a service of inspection, advice and in service support" (Ibid).

⁶"The ERA demanded that 85% of the General Schools Budget (GSB) (covering all expenditure by a county council on schools, including those with nursery classes and units for educational needs) be devolved to schools via a formula based largely on pupil numbers. As the GSB contained money which paid for services normally provided centrally for schools, this clearly signalled the beginning of the end of a LEA managed service of 'inspection and advice' " (Evans and Penney, 1994 p.533).

⁷The Schools Act (1992) abolished Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI), and replaced it with a Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED), a non-ministerial government department whose purpose was to improve standards and achievements by regular independent inspection. This resulted in LEAs having

p.520). The passing of this Act has also meant that LEAs have now effectively separated advice from inspection. Evans and Penny found that, in their case study, LEA inspectors would not inspect schools in the same regions they serviced with in-service support and advice. The special relationship between the many schools and their LEA advisers would appear to have been lost.

It would seem then that the National Curriculum and LMS have serious implications on the provision of swimming in our schools. Some of these will be discussed in the following section.

2.8 PROBLEMS OF PROVIDING SWIMMING IN SCHOOLS

With the changes arising from ERA education entered the market place (Ball, 1994), and there is now competition for resources, not only between schools, but within the schools (Evans and Penny, 1991). Swimming is a subject that relies on the availability of resources and it is relatively expensive in terms of time and money. Lee (1994), on behalf of the Institute of Swimming Teachers and Coaches (ISTC), carried out a survey of 741 schools to establish the schools' state of readiness for delivery of a National Curriculum for swimming. The survey, was supplemented by interviews and

established that widespread concern exists in schools about their ability to provide the required breadth of experience. Time allocation and financial costs have proved to be significant constraints which have an adverse effect on the quantity and quality of swimming teaching (ibid., Abstract).

Research before and after the ERA appears to confirm Lee's finding that the main reasons for the non-delivery of an effective swimming programme in schools are: 1) access to suitable swimming pools (which is a contributing factor to the amount of curriculum time allocated to the swimming lesson); 2) the expertise of those teaching swimming and 3) the costs arising from both of these.

2.8.1 Access to a suitable swimming pool

Page and Nash (1977) found that primary schools, particularly those in rural areas, had poor access to swimming pools, compared to secondary schools. Schools near a pool had a greater time allocated to swimming. They found that accessibility and time allocation correlated significantly with the percentage of primary school leavers

to 'bid' for contracts from OFSTED to carry out inspections in its system schools (Evans and Penney, 1994).

who could swim twenty-five yards, with accessibility having the larger influence of the two. Barter (1992) found that, in some cases, there was substantial use of secondary school pools by feeder primary schools. However, the National Curriculum does not make swimming at secondary schools compulsory, and Barter and Firth (1994) reported that a number of these schools were actively considering closure because of the expense of running and maintaining the pool. Despite the new Orders issued to schools in January, 1995 outlining a separate programme for swimming for Key Stage 3 and 4, schools can still opt to do sports other than swimming. Therefore, some secondary school pools may still be at risk of closure.

The lack of school pools means that many schools have to hire a nearby pool. As Hardy (1988b) pointed out many of the old 'slipper baths' based in centres of population have closed down to be replaced by modern leisure centres which are not always easy to get to. Also, many of the swimming pools that have not closed down are old-fashioned and in need of repair (Reeves, 1993). Over the last few years a number of leisure centres have been privatised. This should have meant that they would become more competitive in the market place (Swimming Times, 1988) leading to a reduction in hire prices. However, with the necessity to turn losses into profits (Bland 1986), privatisation may instead have led some to increase their charges. In order to provide swimming, several schools are forced to use leisure centre pools which can be expensive both in terms of hire costs and transport costs (Barter, 1992). The policy of privatisation may have put more pressure on schools trying to provide a swimming programme.

With competition for resources there is no guarantee that headteachers and governors will continue to make contributions towards the costs of swimming provision (Evans, Penney and Bryant, 1993). To help cover hire and travel costs schools can request "voluntary contributions" from parents towards these costs, though in effect "...the activity would not take place if parents were reluctant to support it" (DES, 1989a p.12). The Swimming Times (1989) reported on a school which wrote to its parents stating:

Recent Government legislation no longer allows compulsory charging for educational visits. However, we hope that you will continue to support school activities by voluntary contributions as unfortunately visits still have to be paid for. Should not enough voluntary contributions come in visits would have to be cancelled. Of course the school's policy of assisting in cases of hardship will continue. We are asking for voluntary contributions of £2.40 for swimming this term. (p.5)

Penney (1994) found that travel costs were influential in shaping swimming provision, because, although the allocation of money from the LEA in her survey was sufficient to cover pool hire costs, schools that needed to travel to the pools reported that they could not afford to do so. Forty-one of the three hundred primary schools in a southern local authority that responded to her survey, reported that they did not offer swimming. It would appear that this situation is not confined to the schools in Penney's survey. The ASA Development Plan (1993/96) stated that "there are currently 21,000 Primary Schools in England and Wales and 20% (4,200) of these do not provide swimming as part of their curriculum" (cited in Barter and Firth, 1994 p.19).

Penney (op.cit.) also found that the cost in terms of time was a key factor for schools travelling to pools, and that continued "provision for swimming and off-site activities required support for PE being reflected in both budget allocations and time tabling arrangements in schools" (ibid., p.190). The large amount of curriculum time needed for swimming lessons is confirmed by Lee (1994). The results of his survey of 741 schools revealed that an average of twenty-seven minutes in the water required between one and two hours of travelling time.

For those schools that do have a swimming pool on site the implications of LMS could also be significant. Penney (op.cit.) found that the LEA in her study had passed on the cost of swimming pool maintenance to the schools. She also found that pupils' extra curricular activities may be threatened as schools hire out their facilities after school hours in order to generate more income.

Even if swimming pools are available to schools, they may not be suitable. Many authors have advocated the need for shallow learner pools (Ministry of Education, 1953; Brain, 1976; Elkington 1976). In Fife an increase in the number of instructional pools from two to sixteen, plus the introduction of an in-service training programme for primary teachers and regular swimming lessons in the school term, halved the number of non-swimmers (Wilson, 1968).

2.8.2 Expertise of those teaching swimming

"Skill learning is an invisible process by which performance originates or is changed as a result of practice" (Christina and Corcos, 1988). If skill acquisition is to occur the correct movement must be practised and there must be, amongst other things, adequate feedback about what is a correct movement and what is an incorrect one.

Although, there is not a consensus of opinion as to the benefits of augmented⁸ feedback in all types of skill acquisition (Magill, 1993), some authors feel that feedback, both internal or sensory and external, are vital. Ezell (1976) stated that, "..... learning will not occur in the absence of feedback and ... problems in learning may arise due to conditions in which feedback is either inadequate or difficult to interpret" (p. 117). Also, when looking specifically at swimming Lee (1991) pointed out that if this feedback is lacking, bad habits will develop resulting in incorrect responses being habitualised in the very early stages of learning.

Those teaching swimming should, therefore, be competent to do so if progress is to be made. Yet, in primary schools there is seldom a physical education specialist and, in spite of a positive attitude towards swimming, many teachers feel inadequately prepared to teach swimming (Blucher et al, 1985). This situation is made worse by the fact that in swimming lessons teachers are often faced with a large number of pupils (Dallam, 1976), and because of this schools may seek parental help, free of charge (Hardy, 1991b). When dealing with large numbers of children, teachers have to be aware of safety considerations and the teacher/pupil ratio. Donlan (1993) recommends a ratio of one qualified teacher to ten pupils for young children who are beginning to learn to swim. If this recommendation is to be met, it would mean that in the normal primary school class two or three qualified staff would be required (Barter and Firth, 1994). Yet, Lee (1994) found that in his survey of 741 schools only 20% of teachers and parent-helpers who taught swimming had a recognised teaching qualification. Lee also noted that this problem is likely to become worse as more and more institutions of higher education remove the swimming component from physical education courses for trainee primary teachers. This may change in the future with the Government policy statement on the future of British sport which, as reported by the National Coaching Foundation, recognised that,

to improve sport in schools there needs to be enough qualified and competent teachers. The Government is therefore taking action on two fronts. First there will be a significant improvement in the quality of teacher training. Second there will be a programme of action on coaching which will help to raise standards of sports performance. Every trainee teacher not just those with PE as their first subject should have the opportunity to gain coaching qualifications and will be strongly encouraged to take them (National Coaching Foundation, 1995 p.1).

⁸Augmented feedback refers to "any form of augmented external feedback that is provided to an individual or group of individuals" (Magill, 1995 p.193).

Research would tend to confirm that it is vital that there is good instruction at primary school. Page (1974) found that on average 60% to 70% of primary school leavers could swim at least twenty-five yards, yet this was not significantly different from the number of swimmers among secondary school leavers. These findings were confirmed by an Inner London Education Authority survey (1988) that found that 83% of primary school pupils swam one length or more, and that the figure was the same for secondary school leavers. Page (op.cit.) argued that more importance should be given to swimming in the secondary school curriculum, whilst Hardy (1987) argued that greater emphasis should be placed on increasing the number of swimmers in the primary schools, so that other water-based activities such as synchronised swimming, water polo, life-saving and survival skills, could be developed in the secondary school. This view was supported by Reeves (1992) who suggested that, although the teaching of technique is important, it is not the be all and end all of swimming lessons and swimming teachers should also spend time developing a variety of water skills.

2.9 CONCLUSION

For many years individuals and organisations have fought for swimming to become a compulsory subject within the school curriculum. Initially, the pressure came from those who wished to prevent the large number of deaths caused by drowning, but, gradually, the health benefits of swimming began to be recognised. The government's concern for the nation's health led to the introduction of "drill" in schools. At first, the emphasis was on physical training rather than education, but gradually other "suitable exercises" such as 'Swedish Drill' and swimming were included in the curriculum. During the early part of the twentieth century several books were written on the subject of swimming, some being aimed specifically at the young. At about this time educators, too, began to see swimming, not just as a disciplinary "drill" or a means of saving life, but as a beneficial exercise that could be fun and enjoyed.

Some public schools had a long tradition of 'compulsory' swimming, but some state schools also began to see swimming as an important aspect of physical education. The London Schools Swimming Association was formed in 1893 and teachers met to try to allocate pool time. Lack of facilities meant that, in many schools, a great deal of emphasis was placed on land drills for the teaching of swimming.

In spite of this support for swimming within the schools, no legal obligation to include it as a subject in the curriculum was forthcoming until the ERA (1988). This Act recognised physical education, including swimming, as a foundation subject within a National Curriculum. It might have been hoped, therefore, that the ERA would help secure the status of swimming and increase provision in schools. In fact, the delay in the implementation of physical education and, in particular of swimming, may have reduced the status of swimming in the eyes of teachers. A second initiative of the ERA which may have serious implications for swimming in schools is LMS. With LMS, the ERA has reduced the powers of the LEAs and turned budgetary control over to the school management. This has led to competition for resources, not just between schools, but within the school. Those subjects coming late into the National Curriculum implementation process, particularly if they are already of a low status, like physical education, are clearly disadvantaged in the contest for time, staffing and resources (Evans, Penney and Bryant, 1993). Swimming is a subject that relies heavily on resources and, as Penney and Evans (1991) have pointed out, "resources and opportunities for staff training will clearly have a powerful bearing on whether this happens in reality" (p.39). The ERA has effectively meant that schools have entered the market place (Evans, Penney and Bryant, 1993; Ball, 1994), and this could mean that the legal right for children to be taught how to swim by their primary schools "is at risk if the schools themselves are forced to compromise the curriculum in the name of affordability" (Lee 1994, p.9).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY: QUESTIONNAIRE AND CASE STUDIES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The term *methodology* "refers to the process, principles and procedures by which we approach problems and seek answers" (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975 p.1). In the first part of this chapter the research issues faced in carrying out this study are highlighted and the reasons for adopting the chosen methodology explained. The research design is then described and finally the procedures used in carrying out this research are discussed.

3.2 A QUALITATIVE APPROACH

At the commencement of this study the implementation date for swimming in the National Curriculum was nearly a year away⁹ and, although it was certain that the research would be aimed at swimming in the primary school, it was not clear at the initial design stage of the research what sites or persons would be the focus of my research. It was essential, therefore, that the research process was flexible enough to handle issues as they arose to enable each stage to progress naturally from the previous one. It was felt that there was a need to look, not just at the swimming lesson within the schools, but to attempt to explain the present provision for swimming in the schools and how it came about.

This perceived need for flexibility and the desire to look beyond simply 'what' was happening in the school swimming lesson, to the questions of 'how and 'why', led to the adoption of a qualitative research method approach. This decision is in line with recent developments in educational research which have seen a shift from an emphasis on quantitative to one focusing on qualitative techniques (Hammersley, 1993). Yet, as Hammersley stated this, "is not simply a matter of change in technique,.... It has also involved change at a deeper level, in terms of ideas about the nature and purpose of research" (p. ix). Penney (1994) drawing on Finch's (1988) work, argued that quantitative research,

⁹The starting dates for the commencement of the swimming requirement are as follows:

1. on 1st August 1994 in respect of pupils in the first year of the second key stage
2. on 1st August 1995 in respect of pupils in the second year of that key stage;
3. on 1st August 1996 in respect of pupils in the third year of that key stage; and
4. on 1st August 1997 in respect of all other pupils in that key stage (DES, 1992).

can and indeed has generated data that provides a valuable framework for raising questions about the nature of schooling and of PE within it. However, it can offer little in terms of answers as to how and why the nature of provision is as it is; how and why particular patterns arise (p.71).

In contrast, qualitative research, "directs itself at settings and the individuals within those settings holistically" (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975 p.4). In an attempt to adopt a 'holistic' approach, and to understand the 'how' and 'why', it was necessary to look beyond the process of swimming in the primary school to issues arising from the Education Reform Act (ERA) and the policies of the local education authority (LEA), and to understand the impact these may have had on swimming provision.

Although the methodology employed was mainly qualitative, both quantitative methods in the form of a questionnaire survey, and qualitative methods, in the form of observation and interview techniques, were used and seen as complementary (Burgess, 1984). An attempt was made to incorporate ethnographic principles into this research, but this study is not an ethnography which, according to Lutz's (1986) definition,

is a holistic, thick description of the interactive processes involving the discovery of important and recurring variables in the society as they relate to one another, under specified conditions, and as they affect or produce certain results and outcomes in the society. It is not a case study, which narrowly focuses on a single issue, or a field survey that seeks previously specified data Those types of research are ethnographic but *not ethnography!* (p.108).

In qualitative research, the researcher becomes part of the research process. Indeed the researcher may be seen as the research "instrument" (Brown, 1988 p.85) and the data becomes

a product of the skills and imagination of the researcher and of the interface between the researcher and the researched.... The research process will generate meaning as part of the social life it aims to describe and to analyse" (Ball, 1993 p. 45).

The emphasis on the researcher as a tool of the research raises one of the main issues in qualitative research, that of objectivity. "For many authors ...qualitative inquiry can only be objective insofar as it approximates to quantitative inquiry" (Phillips, 1993 p.70). However, the qualitative researcher will bring his or her own values to the research situation and, as Popper (1976) has pointed out it "is a mistake to assume that the objectivity of the science depends on the objectivity of

the scientist" (p.96). Evans and Penney (1992) maintained that not only was it impossible to separate the values of the researcher from the research act it was not desirable to do so. According to Evans and Penney objectivity in research "cannot be secured by claiming allegiance to positivism" (p.2), nor could it be "avoided by an open and partisan allegiance to the values, sentiments, actions and interests of a particular interest group." (ibid., pp. 2 - 3). Rather, objectivity in qualitative research came from the ability of the researcher to recognise and to critically examine the values and key assumptions he or she brought to any research situation.

It must, therefore, be acknowledged and should be stated that the author came to this research with a commitment to swimming in the primary schools. Also, because of previous experience as a swimming teacher and as a parent-helper at a local primary school, the author had definite views on how a swimming lesson should be constructed and organised. Stephenson and Greer (1981) believe that people working in their own culture should adopt an 'artificial naiveté' in order not to overlook familiar situations and take things for granted. By the use of a note book the strategies for handling familiar situations, similar to those recommended by Burgess(1984), were adopted. These included: continually posing questions about the research situation, writing down as much detail as possible about what was being observed, and reviewing and cross referencing to other activities and observed events.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The underlying principle of the research design was that of flexibility and progression. The first phase of the research was a review of literature to increase the author's knowledge of the area of study and to highlight problems and issues that needed investigation. Documentary research continued throughout the length of this investigation. The second phase of the research involved establishing what was happening in primary schools with regard to swimming; for example, the amount of swimming being done in the schools, and details of the swimmers and teachers. The research tool used for this part of the research was a questionnaire, and the data received was then examined to establish the next phase of the research design. The questionnaire provided a picture of how much swimming was being done in the surveyed schools and also highlighted the issues of accessibility to a swimming pool, the large amount of curriculum time that was allocated to swimming lessons and costs relating to these. In addition to these issues, documentary research had also highlighted the fact that many pupils were being

taught to swim by people without any recognised swimming teaching qualification. In order to explore all these issues further, it was decided to pursue the enquiry by using case studies. Factors underlying the selection of these schools are explained in the section on Research Procedures (3.5).

Table 3.1: Research time-table

AUTUMN 1993

Documentary research :

- Research into the teaching of swimming.
- Research into the history of swimming in schools.
- Identification of issues surrounding ERA.

Informal discussions with the school teachers and the swimming teachers.
Formulation of the questionnaire.

DECEMBER 1993

Identification of the questionnaire survey sample.
Identification of the pilot questionnaire survey sample.
ADMINISTRATION OF PILOT QUESTIONNAIRE.

JANUARY 1994

Questionnaire amended as a result of the pilot.
ADMINISTRATION OF QUESTIONNAIRE: questionnaire sent out to forty-seven primary schools in a single borough.

FEBRUARY TO MARCH 1994

Follow up letters sent out to those schools who had not returned the forms. Forty-five forms were returned.
Initial analysis of the forms to ascertain areas suitable for investigating in the next phase of research.

APRIL TO JUNE 1994

Design of the observation sheet.
OBSERVATION PILOT STUDY.

JULY TO AUGUST 1994

Amendment of the observation sheet.
Identification of the case study schools.
Negotiation of access into the case study schools.

SEPTEMBER 1994 TO JANUARY 1995

CASE STUDIES.
Participant observation and interviews.
Data analysis.

FEBRUARY 1995 TO APRIL 1995

Data analysis and transcription of data

MAY 1995 TO May 1996

Analysis and writing up.

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

3.4 QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

The questionnaire is the instrument of a broad survey and is commonly used "for quickly obtaining information from a large number of persons concerning factual matters" (French, 1949 p.100). Clarke and Clarke (1970) state that with respect to health and physical education investigations this has "often meant the status of the curriculum, the facilities, or some other aspect of operation" (p.103). The main advantage of the questionnaire is that a large number of individuals or organisations can be contacted in a relatively short time and with little expense.

The primary purpose of the questionnaire was to obtain a broad picture of swimming in the primary school. The design was kept simple to ensure the highest possible response and the questions were structured to try and find out as much as possible about the actual provision of swimming in the schools (Chapter 1). It was felt necessary to obtain this information before deciding upon the focus of the next phase of the investigation.

3.4.1 The questionnaire sample

Consideration was given to surveying a sample of a large population, but, because of the constraints of time and access, it was decided to restrict the survey to one borough and to study all forty-seven state primary schools in that area (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Schools used in the study.

| Local Education Authority | Research Method Used |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Pilot borough: | |
| Ten primary schools | Pilot questionnaire |
| Target borough: | |
| Total of forty-seven primary schools | Questionnaire survey |
| One school | Observation sheet piloted and pilot interview with peripatetic swimming teacher |
| Two other schools | Pilot interviews with one class teacher from each school |
| Two target schools | Detailed case study |

A pilot questionnaire (Appendix B-1) was prepared and sent to ten schools in a different borough to the targeted one (Table 3.2). Each school was telephoned and an explanation was given as to the purpose of the survey. In spite of each school agreeing to take part, only seven questionnaires were returned. Follow-up telephone calls made to each of the schools that had not returned the questionnaire failed to increase this return.

The main criteria in designing the original questionnaire was that it should be user-friendly. However, after the return of the pilot questionnaires, it became clear that the swimming programme in many primary schools was very complex, with different arrangements being made for different classes. Therefore, the final questionnaire was altered in an attempt to take these factors into account (Appendix B-2).

3.4.2 Questionnaire survey procedures

Questionnaires were sent out to the forty-seven primary schools in the chosen borough. Initially, thirty-four (72%) questionnaires were returned, and a follow-up letter (Appendix B-3) was sent, four weeks later, to those schools which had failed to return their questionnaire. Another six schools replied, and a final follow-up letter (Appendix B-4) sent after another four weeks, resulted in a total response of forty-five (96%) completed forms. Those schools that had failed to answer all the questions, or had given additional comments that were not always clear, were contacted by telephone in an attempt to clarify the responses.

The final high response to the questionnaire can be attributed to a number of factors. Firstly, the questionnaire had been kept very simple for ease and speed of completion. This meant that only limited information could be collected, but it was felt that with the time pressures on the primary school teacher brevity was a prime concern. Secondly, a rigorous follow-up procedure was enforced and, finally, the high response may reflect the concerns and intensity of feeling that primary schools have, in relation to swimming.

3.4.3 Limitations of the questionnaire survey

The main disadvantage of a questionnaire survey as a research tool is that the information obtained may lack depth, and that details, particularly relating to context, may be lost. This was particularly true of this questionnaire, because tick boxes were used. However, it was hoped that the comments section at the end of

the questionnaire, plus the follow up observations and interviews would help to overcome these problems.

3.5 THE CASE STUDIES

Investigation of schools' swimming lessons was needed to discover what was being taught in the swimming lessons, how it was being taught and whether or not it fulfilled the requirements of the National Curriculum. Because of the limitations of a questionnaire survey and the need to keep the questionnaire as brief as possible, it was felt that this line of enquiry could best be handled by case study.

As can be seen from the questionnaire data (Chapter 4) responses to the questionnaire indicated that one of the main problems relating to the provision of swimming in primary schools is the time that it takes out of the school day. In addition, comments from headteachers had indicated that costs of swimming provision were also a concern. As the proximity to a swimming pool was likely to be an important factor in the amount of time required for the swimming lesson and the cost of that lesson, it was decided to focus subsequent enquiry on two randomly chosen schools in apparently contrasting conditions in relation to this issue; one having travel and changing time of less than twenty minutes and one having travel and changing time in excess of forty-five minutes. The specific schools were randomly selected following categorisation of the sample by travel and changing times. Only two schools were chosen because of the practical limitations of time and money, and the depth of investigation required.

Although the two schools chosen for further study were in the same borough, it was felt that their problems in providing an effective swimming programme were likely to be different because of their varying situations in relation to access to a suitable swimming pool. The main aim of the first part of the case studies was to examine the process of the swimming lesson, and observation was the main research tool used. The second part of the case studies involved semi-structured interviews with the headteachers, teachers, parent-helpers and children, where issues raised by the review of literature, the questionnaire and the observation were examined further.

Access to the schools was obtained through discussions with the headteacher of one school and a teacher/deputy warden at the second. Both schools were helpful and willing for their swimming lessons to be observed, although one requested some feedback on how their swimming programme might be improved.

3.5.1 Observation

Through observation it was hoped to obtain a clearer picture of the process of the swimming lessons and, through informal discussions with those concerned, start to understand the major issues and problems in providing a comprehensive swimming programme. According to McIntyre and Macleod (1986), systematic observation procedures are,

those procedures in which the observer, deliberately refraining from participation in classroom activities, analyses aspects of these activities through the use of a predetermined set of categories or signs (p.10).

The use of systematic observation has been much debated by authors such as Hamilton and Delamont (1974); Delamont and Hamilton, (1986); Hammersley, (1986); McIntyre and Macleod, (1986) and Walker and Adelman (1986). Most of the criticism stems from the use of observation as the sole method of research and from the sole use of such systems as the Flanders' (1970) version of 'interaction analysis'. In this study, observation was only one of the tools employed to gather data. Also, no established observation system was used and there was no attempt to quantify data. However, it was felt necessary to devise some sort of observation sheet so that events could be recorded effectively.

The observation sheet used in this study attempted to gather information about all aspects of the swimming lesson. This included information about the pool used by the school, preparations for the lesson, details of the journey and what happened after the lesson, as well as details of the lesson content. The observation sheet was designed so that completion would be quick and consisted primarily of tick boxes, with space for additional comments where appropriate. This additional space added flexibility to the form and it meant that issues and events not predicted or expected could also be recorded.

The observation sheet (Appendix B-5) was first piloted at a local primary school for three weeks. This school was one of the forty-seven schools targeted for the questionnaire survey but not one used as a case study (Table 3.2). As a result of this pilot, alterations were made to the observation sheet, primarily in relation to the lesson content, as it was felt that this needed to be broken down further if recording was to be effective. The final version of the observation sheet (Appendix B-6) attempted to reflect what might happen in a swimming lesson, based on the

author's own experiences of helping with school swimming, suggestions from literature (Hardy, 1993; ASA, 1993) about how lessons may be structured in order to fulfil the criteria of the National Curriculum, and what had been learnt from piloting the observation sheet.

During the piloting process the author attempted to stand 'outside' the research and, in line with the McIntyre and Macleod (1986) definition of systematic observation, deliberately refrain from any form of participation in the activities. However, after the pilot study and discussion with teachers, this appeared to be somewhat intimidating to those teaching swimming and it may have affected how the swimming lesson was taught. Therefore, it was felt that it may be more beneficial to adopt the approach of participant observation which, according to Burgess (1984), could be seen as a continuum along which the researcher could move from that of complete observer to that of complete participant. In order, therefore, to be better involved in the process of the swimming lesson and thus appear less threatening to those being observed, the author decided to move a short way along the continuum, towards that of participant, but essentially remaining an observer.

3.5.1.1 The observation sample

School A was a large school with approximately 500 pupils arranged in nineteen mixed-ability classes and two special units. The size of the school meant that a cross-section of the primary classes had to be selected for case study within the constraints of the author's time-table. These included two Year 1 classes, two Year 3 classes and two Year 6 classes. Year 1 was chosen in order to observe the type of swimming work being done with children in Key Stage 1. Year 3 and Year 6 were chosen because these are the first and last school years of Key Stage 2, respectively. Pupils in Years 1 and 3 swam in the school pool, but Year 6 pupils travelled to the local leisure centre each week for their swimming lessons. It had been hoped that swimming lessons could be observed for a period of at least eight weeks but, because of time-table restrictions, Year 3 could only be observed for four weeks. During this time, the pool was closed on one occasion so observation was only for three weeks. Year 1 was only observed for six weeks because of pool closure one week and school photographs another week, and Year 6 was observed for a total of nine weeks.

School B school was much smaller than School A and consisted of four classes with approximately twenty children in each. Because this was a small school and the

majority of the children went swimming at the same time, it was possible to observe all the children in the school during their swimming lessons. Reception pupils, however, did not start swimming until after the first half-term when Class 2 stopped going swimming. Therefore, both these classes were observed for half a term each. The remainder of the school was observed during the whole of the Autumn Term. However, because both pools at the leisure centre were used, observation in each pool could only take place on alternate weeks. Therefore, sessions in the small pool were observed over a period of five weeks, although on one of these weeks the author took a group because of the absence of a teacher, and in the main pool sessions were observed for a period of six weeks.

Every attempt was made to be involved in the entire process of the swimming lessons. That is, where the School A pupils swam at the school pool, the author arrived early to help dress and undress the children. When the children travelled to the leisure centre pool (School B pupils and Year 6 of School A), the author joined the school on the coach and, again, helped the younger children to change and, at times, assisted with discipline. At one school the headteacher also asked if the author could come to the school early to help a child with learning difficulties during the lesson prior to swimming. The intention had been to observe and play no part in teaching any of the swimming lessons, but, on two occasions when staff were taken ill, the author did take a lesson or part of a lesson. This opened the way for informal discussions, and often both teachers and helpers would express their concerns or ask advice on teaching methods. Limited advice was given as it was felt that it was important not to influence the research situation unduly, yet at the same time it was equally important not to alienate those people being observed. This would appear to be in line with Burgess's (1984) view who, during his investigations, was asked about his experiences and views on school and schooling; he stated that to have avoided these issues would have provided the 'sanitised' process demanded by textbook writers, but would have ruined his relationships with the teachers and pupils.

At the end of each lesson an observation sheet was completed, including details of any comments and discussions held with the teachers and pupils. Other points of interest for possible consideration later were noted in the research note-book.

3.5.1.2 Limitations of the observation

The research was limited temporally in that the observations only took place over a number of weeks and, as both schools swam throughout the year, the full swimming programme could not be observed. Also, because School B swam in both pools at the leisure centre, it was only possible to observe each pool on alternate weeks. This inevitably meant that the full programme of swimming could not be commented on, and it is possible that important incidents may have been missed. However, it was felt that, within the time constraints imposed, the research time spent at the case study schools was sufficient to provide an understanding of the issues surrounding each school's swimming programme.

3.5.2 Interviews

Burgess (1994) stated that interviews were rarely conducted in isolation but form part of a broader programme of research and they were often used to complement observation. The information on the observation sheets completed after the swimming lessons and the informal discussions had provided information concerning the contents and the process of the lessons. However, various points were raised which could not be answered without further discussions with those involved. For example,

- how was the swimming programme financed?
- who was qualified to teach swimming?
- had the swimming programme changed as a result of the National Curriculum?
- what help had been forthcoming from the local education authority in implementing a National Curriculum for swimming?
- where did swimming fit into the curriculum for physical education?
- were any areas related to swimming covered in the classrooms?
- what did those teaching swimming feel were the main problems and benefits of providing swimming?
- what did those teaching swimming feel was the role of the parents in teaching their children to swim?

In view of the fact that there was a clear set of issues that the author wanted to discuss, a semi-structured approach was adopted. A list covering the main issues arising from both the questionnaire and observations was compiled and taken into the interview. This was used as a 'prompt' so that the 'conversation' would have

some structure and the interviewee would be prevented from straying too far from the point of discussion (Appendices B-7 to B-12). The list was not rigidly adhered to as there was also a need for flexibility should other relevant, but unforeseen, issues be raised by the interviewee. This approach would agree with the views of Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) who stated that field researchers tend not to "decide beforehand the questions they want to ask, though they may enter the interview with a list of issues to be covered" (p.113). As well as the need for flexibility, there was a perceived need for a fairly relaxed approach to the interview situation. By the time the interviews took place the author had built up a relationship with several of the teachers, parent-helpers and children who were to be interviewed. To have adopted a completely neutral approach with no nods of encouragement demanded by some textbooks would have presented a very artificial situation and may have inhibited the responses. This could be seen as a weakness in the research process but care was taken not to unduly influence the interviewee. In one interview, where the author's opinion was sought, her handling of the situation evoked the response, "You haven't committed yourself - you're too good at this game" (20.1.95).

3.5.2.1 The interview sample

It was decided to interview all of those involved in teaching swimming in the observed classes (Appendix B-13). This included two peripatetic teachers, employed by county, the headteacher at School B who also taught swimming in one of the observed classes, the deputy warden/class teacher at School A who had been my main contact and who had overall responsibility for physical education in the school, nine teachers (including one supply teacher), two ancillaries, and six parent-helpers. In addition, interviews were held with pupils from the two schools. In School A, a group of five pupils was randomly selected from each of the classes observed, except one class where two groups of three children were interviewed, because the class teacher could only find three of the five children when the interview was scheduled to begin. Later the remaining two children, plus the child nominated as the 'reserve', appeared ready to be interviewed. In School B, a group of five pupils was randomly selected from each school class except for Class 1 which consisted of Reception and the younger Year 1 pupils and considered by both the author and the school to be too young to be interviewed.

Prior to the interviews at the schools, pilot interviews were carried out with two primary school teachers and a peripatetic swimming teacher, personally known to

the author. All taught at schools involved in the initial questionnaire survey, but they did not teach at either of the case study schools (Table 3.2).

3.5.2.2 Interview Procedures

After obtaining permission from the headteacher to carry out the interviews (Appendix B-14), a letter was sent to each interviewee explaining the purpose of the interview, requesting their agreement to take part and stating that, if possible, the interviewer would like to record the interview using a tape-recorder (Appendix B-15). It was felt that this method of recording would enable the interview to flow and result in it being more like a "conversation with a purpose" (Burgess, 1984 p.102). All those approached agreed to be interviewed, but five participants from School B stated that they did not wish their interviews to be taped. In these cases notes were made, recording, where possible, the exact words of the interviewee. As feared, though, these interviews tended to be more formal and less conversation-like than those where a tape recorder was used.

At the start of each interview the interviewee was greeted and thanked for taking part. The interviewee's willingness, or otherwise, to be recorded using a tape-recorder was confirmed and, at the same time, the confidentiality of the interview was stressed. A brief outline of the purpose of the interview and its place in the overall study was also given to the participant.

The interviews with the school children were very brief, and they were seen as additional to the main interviews of the study. Burgess (ibid.) noted that group interviews might be a problem in terms of truth. Where there was doubt as to the integrity of the answer a follow-up question was asked in an attempt to establish the true situation.

In all cases, the interviews were transcribed at the earliest opportunity. Also, where necessary, additional notes were made concerning the setting or incidents that happened during the interview.

3.5.2.3 Interview settings

Time constraints and the busy schedule of the primary school teachers meant that it was not possible for the interviews in each school to take place in the same setting. The interviews tended to be held at lunch-times or after school and took place either

in the classroom, the staff-room or the 'detention' room. On some occasions interviews took place whilst the teacher being interviewed was on duty and eating lunch. Often there were interruptions but, although this was far from an 'ideal' situation, it was felt that this did not hinder the discourse, and in many ways made the interviewee more relaxed and the interview less formal.

3.5.2.4 Limitations of the interview

The deputy warden/class teacher at School A was the only person interviewed at the schools who was not directly involved in teaching the observed lessons. Because of limitations of time, no other teachers or parents were formally interviewed, though informal discussions with other teachers and parents did take place on other occasions. The interviews were kept brief because of the time-pressures on those being interviewed. However, informal discussions on the coach going to the swimming pool, in the classroom and on the pool-side both guided the interviews and supplemented the information obtained from the interviews. The interviews with the children were group interviews and sometimes carried out in a corner of the classroom whilst a lesson was going on. Because of this, the interviews were noisy and, on occasions, identification of the speaker was difficult. Data from these interviews has, therefore, been used very sparingly in this study.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS AND WRITING UP

At the beginning of the research a commitment was made to a qualitative approach and, with such an approach, data analysis tends to be an ongoing process and not a distinct stage of the research (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983). According to these authors,

It begins in the pre-fieldwork phase, in the formulation and clarification of research problems, and continues into the process of writing up.... In this way the analysis of data feeds into the process of research design. (ibid., p. 174).

Familiarisation of collected data was aided by the writing up of observation reports and the transcribing of the interviews. Subsequent reading and re-reading of this data led to ideas being developed which could be pursued as the research progressed. Analysis of the questionnaire data (Chapter 4) demanded a more structured approach. Quantitative data was analysed using Paradox Database and

Excel Spread Sheet, and, again, the process of entering the responses on the database aided familiarisation of the data.

A great deal of consideration has been given to writing up this thesis. As Hammersley and Atkinson (op.cit.) stated:

In some contexts writing a thesis, report, research paper, or monograph might be seen (for better or worse) as a more or less straight-forward affair: after the research is 'completed' the 'results' are presented through the 'neutral' medium of conventionally organized reports.....(but) the logic of ethnography, and the data so produced, do not readily lend themselves to such conventions (p.207).

Essentially, this thesis has followed the traditional structure outlined by Cuba (1993): Introduction; Research methods, Findings; Discussion; Conclusion. However, at times, the author felt that this study did not readily lend itself to such a rigid format and the organisation of the case study data has tended to follow what Hammersley and Atkinson (op.cit.) described as 'thematic organizations'. With this structure a large amount of cultural information can be organised into "a relatively coherent ordering of a few categories" (p.224). Therefore, in Chapter 5 the main issues affecting swimming in the National Curriculum have been highlighted and, where possible, data from both schools has been described and discussed under each heading.

Another problem in writing up this thesis was the adoption of a suitable style. As Newby (1977) stated:

Apart from anything else survey and participant observation require two very different styles of authorship: the former is impersonal, formal and hence usually written in the third person; the latter is more informal and impressionistic and thus written in the first person. Academic convention frowns upon a mixing of the two styles, and even literary consistency makes it difficult to switch suddenly into a first person anecdotal style in the middle of the measured presentation of hard data. (p. 127).

During the writing up of this study the author has felt uncomfortable with writing in the third person because of the belief that the researcher is part of the research and cannot be separated from the social world that is being examined. However, it can be argued that the 'hard data' from the questionnaires does, as Newby has stated, demand a more impersonal approach. Therefore, at the risk of being 'frowned upon' but in order to bow to convention, all chapters with the exception of Chapter 5 have

been written in the third person. Chapter 5 which is concerned with the case studies, has been written in the first person.

3.7 ETHICAL ISSUES

In this thesis the schools and persons researched have not been named and referencing to schools or persons is coded. Because the structure and locations of the schools and swimming pools were felt to be important aspects of the research setting, they have been detailed, even though this may aid identification. However, like Burgess (1984) and Penney (1994) have suggested, it was felt that omitting this information or disguising features would represent a distortion of data.

One of the issues in carrying out any investigation is how 'explicit' to be about the research to those concerned. All those who were involved in delivering the swimming programme during the observations, and all those interviewed were informed of the nature of the research. However, during informal discussions, individuals were not always reminded of the researcher's position. The reasons for not doing so, were primarily to avoid 'disrupting' or unduly 'influencing' the research situation.

3.8 GENERAL LIMITATIONS

At the commencement of the research a commitment was made to a flexible approach as at this initial stage, it was far from clear what the focus of the research would be. It was also stressed that, although this study was not an ethnography, an ethnographic approach would be adopted with both quantitative and qualitative methods of research being used, and an emphasis on a 'holistic' approach. This wish to look beyond what was happening in the school, but also at the 'how' and the 'why', led to a shift of focus from simply a study of the swimming lesson in the primary school to an attempt to understand the underlying issues. Because this research was carried out without assistance, this 'holistic' approach was, by necessity, limited. Only a single borough was surveyed and case-studies took place at just two schools. Also, although an attempt was made to become involved in all aspects of the swimming lesson such as travelling to and from the pool in the bus, not all swimming lessons could be observed and choices had to be made. Through reading, and discussions with teachers an attempt was made to obtain insight into the changes in the role of the local education authority (LEA), but no investigation was carried out with the LEA in order to obtain a more complete understanding.

Finally, other bodies involved in swimming in schools such as the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) and the Institute of Swimming Teachers and Coaches (ISTC) were not approached, although a seminar and a conference on swimming in the National Curriculum run by these organisations were attended.

Because of the limitations of the questionnaire survey to just one borough and the case study to just two schools, it could be argued that the results are not applicable to a wider population. However, as Schofield (1993) has stated:

A consensus appears to be emerging that for qualitative researchers generalizability is best thought of as a matter of the 'fit' between the situation studied and others to which one might be interested in applying the concepts and conclusions of that study. This conceptualization makes thick descriptions crucial, since without them one does not have the information necessary for an informed judgement about the issue of fit (p.109).

Essentially, with the limitations of time and cost, it was felt that for this particular research a study in depth would highlight the issues involved rather than one which covered greater geographical breadth. The literature review tended to confirm that the issues raised in the schools in this investigation are those of concern to other schools.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS: QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The research procedures used in carrying out this survey are discussed in Chapter 3. Questionnaires were sent out to all forty-seven state primary schools within one borough and forty-five (96%) of these schools returned their questionnaire. One school did not have swimming in its curriculum. One school was an infant school and its corresponding junior school had also replied. As these two schools were on the same campus and used the same swimming pool they have been treated as one school. Much of the analysis has been based on the number of schools that swim in each year group. Where this is not the case the number has been given as either $N = 43$ (all schools that swim) or $N = 44$ (all schools), as appropriate. All percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

4.2 THE RESULTS

1. How long has swimming been included in the School Curriculum? (Table 4.1)

Table 4.1: The number of years swimming had been in the curriculum ($N = 44$)

| No. of years in curriculum | No. of schools | % of schools |
|----------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| 6 + years | 39 | 89 |
| 5 years | 0 | 0 |
| 4 years | 1 | 2 |
| 3 years | 2 | 5 |
| 2 years | 1 | 2 |
| 1 year | 0 | 0 |
| Not included in curriculum | 1 | 2 |
| Total | 44 | 100 |

Most of the schools (89%) have had swimming in the curriculum for more than six years (Table 4.1). Two of the schools that had swimming in the curriculum for less than six years were new schools. One of these schools had been open for three years and the other for four years. Both had included swimming since they had opened. The other school that had included swimming for three years stated

specifically that it had included swimming as it was now part of the National Curriculum.

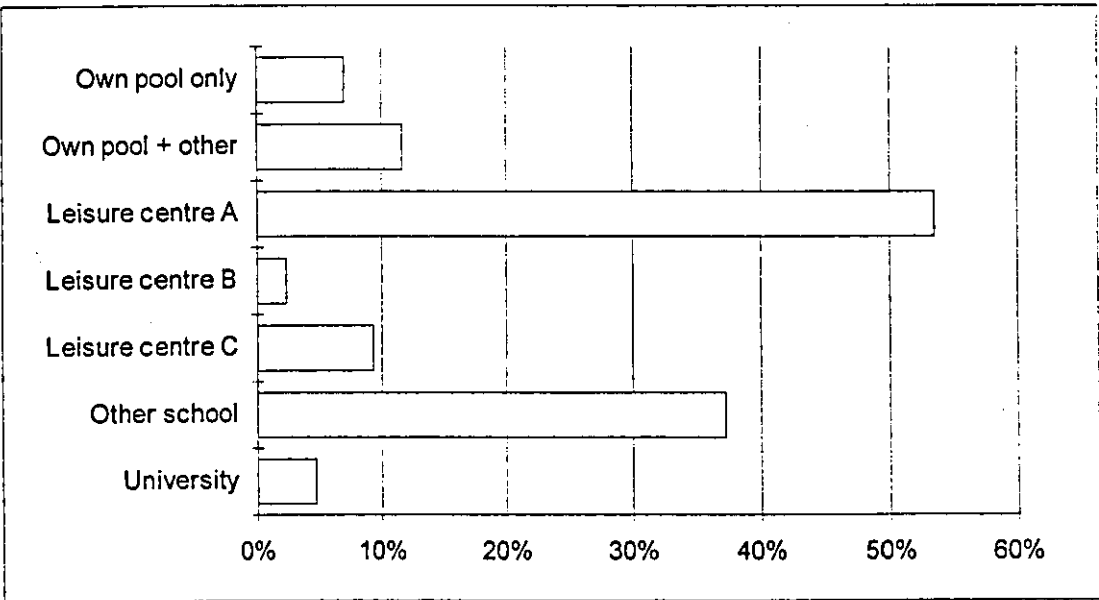
2. *Where do the schools swim ? (Table 4.2; Fig 4.2)*

Table 4.2: Swimming pools used by the schools for swimming lessons
(N = 43)

| Where schools swim | No. of Schools | % of schools |
|-----------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Own school pool exclusively | 3 | 7 |
| Own school pool and another | 5 | 12 |
| Leisure Centre A | 23 | 53 |
| Leisure Centre B | 1 | 2 |
| Leisure Centre C | 4 | 9 |
| Other school | 16 | 37 |
| University | 2 | 5 |
| Total | 54** | 125 |

** Total in excess of 43 because some schools swim at more than one pool. Thirty-seven schools (77%) swam in one pool, nine (21%) used two pools and one school swam at three different pools.

Fig. 4.2: Swimming pools used by the schools for swimming lessons as % of schools that swim (N = 43)



The majority of schools (64%) swam at leisure centres, with over 50% using leisure centre A (Fig. 4.2). Only eight of the forty-three schools that had swimming in the

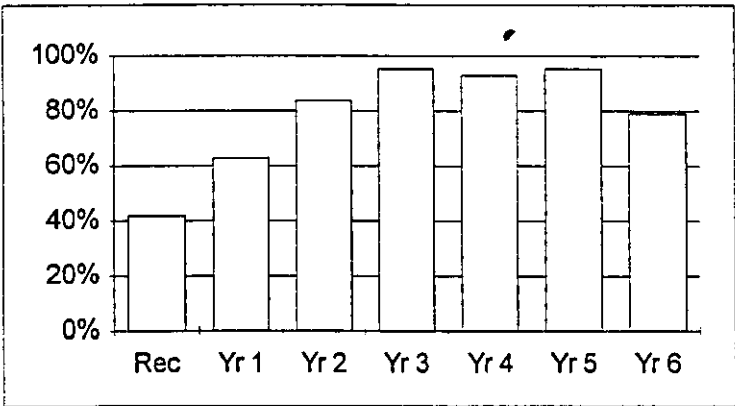
curriculum had a pool on site. Five of the schools with their own pool, also swam at either leisure centre A or leisure centre C. Several of the schools (37%) swam at swimming pools sited at other schools (Table 4.2).

3. Which school years have swimming lessons? (Tables 4.3; 4.4; Fig. 4.3)

Table 4.3: Year groups with swimming in the curriculum (N = 43)

| | Schools: Do swim | % | Schools: Don't swim | % |
|-------------|---------------------|----|------------------------|----|
| Key Stage 1 | | | | |
| Reception | 18 | 42 | 25 | 58 |
| Year 1 | 27 | 63 | 16 | 37 |
| Year 2 | 36 | 84 | 7 | 16 |
| | | | | |
| Key Stage 2 | | | | |
| Year 3 | 41 | 95 | 2 | 5 |
| Year 4 | 40 | 93 | 3 | 7 |
| Year 5 | 41 | 95 | 2 | 5 |
| Year 6 | 34 | 79 | 9 | 21 |
| Total | 237 | 79 | 64 | 21 |

Fig. 4.3: Percentage of schools that swim by school year (N = 43)



Data revealed that 237 (79%) of all year groups at the primary schools in the survey borough had swimming in the curriculum (Table 4.3).

A large number of schools offered swimming in Key Stage 1 and, although the majority of these offered it in the last year of this Key Stage, eighteen of these schools (42%) offered swimming to Reception Classes.

Most swimming provision was in Years 3 to 5 where 95% of the classes swam, with provision dropping off at Year 6 where only thirty-four (79%) of schools offered swimming.

Table 4.4: Criteria used to select pupils who swim

| School Code | Criteria | |
|-------------|------------------|--|
| 004 | Swimming Ability | In Years 3 to 6 only weak and non-swimmers have lessons. |
| 010 | Grade 2 | Only 25 pupils swim at a time. Oldest pupils have priority. When they have reached Grade 2 the next oldest pupils go swimming and so on throughout the school. |
| 040 | Aquanaut 3 | Once pupils have this award they stop swimming |
| 045 | Grade 1 | Only those in Years 1 and 2 who have not achieved Grade 1 swim. Years 3, 4 and 5 swim for 2 terms. |

Data revealed that even if a year group goes swimming, it does not mean that all children within that year group swim. Comments on the questionnaire showed that some schools set a criteria and once pupils have reached that criteria they stop swimming. For example, some schools used a particular swimming award as the criteria and once this had been reached the pupils no longer had swimming lessons (Table 4.4).

Data regarding the setting of criteria for selecting who swims was not directly sought on the questionnaire. Therefore other schools, in addition to those mentioned above, may set criteria but have not stated this on the questionnaire.

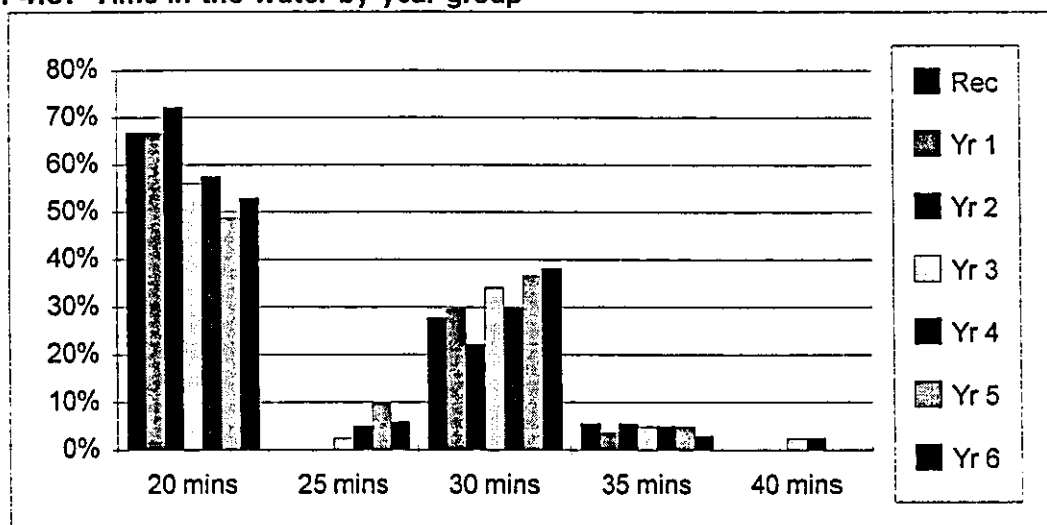
4. Time in the water (Tables 4.5; 4.6; Fig 4.5)

Table 4.5: Time in the water by year group.

| | Length of swimming lesson | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------------------|----|---------|---|---------|----|---------|---|---------|---|
| | 20 mins | | 25 mins | | 30 mins | | 35 mins | | 40 mins | |
| Key Stage 1 | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Reception | 12 | 67 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 28 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Year 1 | 18 | 67 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 30 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Year 2 | 26 | 72 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 22 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 0 |

| Key Stage 2 | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
|-------------|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|---|-----|---|
| Year 3 | 23 | 56 | 1 | 2 | 14 | 34 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 2 |
| Year 4 | 23 | 58 | 2 | 5 | 12 | 30 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 3 |
| Year 5 | 20 | 49 | 4 | 10 | 15 | 37 | 2 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Year 6 | 18 | 53 | 2 | 6 | 13 | 38 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 140 | 59 | 9 | 4 | 75 | 32 | 11 | 5 | 2 | 1 |

Fig. 4.5: Time in the water by year group



Swimming lesson time varied from twenty minutes to forty minutes. Twenty minutes was the most common lesson length accounting for 59% of all year groups that swim (Table 4.5). Approximately 70% of the year groups in Key Stage 1 that swam, had twenty minute lessons. Several year groups (32%) at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 had swimming lessons lasting thirty minutes. Only two schools offered forty minute lessons, one school to their Year 3 pupils and one school to their Year 4 (Table 4.5).

Table 4.6: Mean time in the water and mean yearly total of swimming hours by year group

| | Mean time in the water each week (mins) | Mean yearly total swimming time (hours) |
|-------------|--|--|
| Key Stage 1 | | |
| Reception | 23.61 | 10.58 |
| Year 1 | 23.52 | 10.26 |
| Year 2 | 23.06 | 9.15 |

| | | |
|-------------|-------|-------|
| Key Stage 2 | | |
| Year 3 | 24.76 | 9.95 |
| Year 4 | 24.50 | 9.91 |
| Year 5 | 24.88 | 9.83 |
| Year 6 | 24.56 | 10.10 |

The mean time in the water was slightly lower for Key Stage 1 than for Key Stage 2 (Table 4.6). However, the mean yearly total swimming time for Reception and Year 1 pupils was slightly higher than for the other year groups.

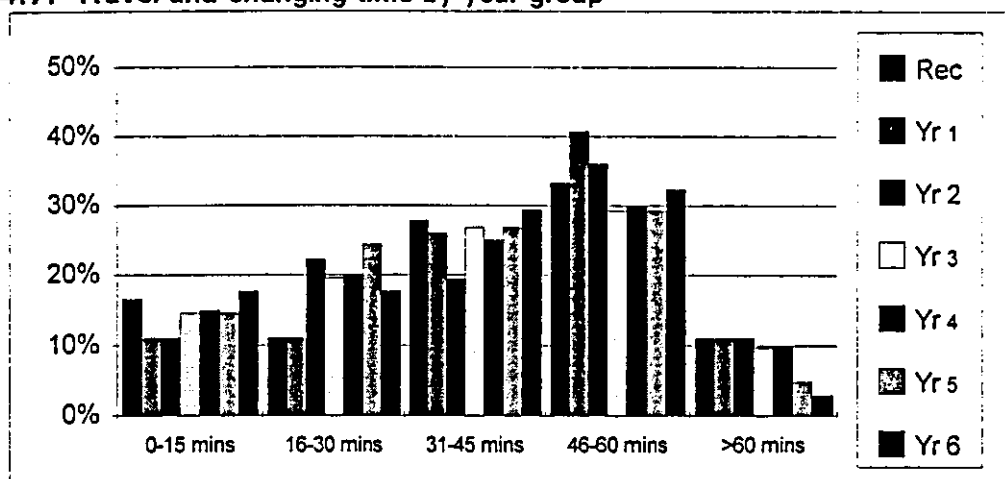
5. Travel and changing time (Tables 4.7; 4.8; 4.9; Fig. 4.7))

Table 4.7: Travel and changing time by year group

| | Travel and changing time by year group | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|--|----|--------------|----|--------------|----|--------------|----|-----------|----|
| | 0 - 15mins | | 16 - 30 mins | | 31 - 45 mins | | 46 - 60 mins | | 60 + mins | |
| Key Stage 1 | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Reception | 3 | 17 | 2 | 11 | 5 | 28 | 6 | 33 | 2 | 11 |
| Year 1 | 3 | 11 | 3 | 11 | 7 | 26 | 11 | 41 | 3 | 11 |
| Year 2 | 4 | 11 | 8 | 22 | 7 | 19 | 13 | 36 | 4 | 11 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|
| Key Stage 2 | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Year 3 | 6 | 15 | 8 | 20 | 11 | 27 | 12 | 29 | 4 | 10 |
| Year 4 | 6 | 15 | 8 | 20 | 10 | 25 | 12 | 30 | 4 | 10 |
| Year 5 | 6 | 15 | 10 | 24 | 11 | 27 | 12 | 29 | 2 | 5 |
| Year 6 | 6 | 18 | 6 | 18 | 10 | 29 | 11 | 32 | 1 | 3 |
| Total | 34 | 14 | 45 | 19 | 61 | 26 | 77 | 32 | 20 | 8 |

Fig. 4.7: Travel and changing time by year group



The majority of pupils in all year groups had travel and changing time of between forty-six and sixty minutes. This 'non swimming' time sometimes included pupils waiting for their turn to swim. One school stated that it made use of the trip to the local leisure centre by taking its first and second year pupils to the park for a story and other curriculum work. Another stated that this time included a break period so that it was not all lesson time that was lost. Travel and changing times would appear to be greater for the younger age groups (Fig. 4.7) with several of the infant classes having travel time and changing time of sixty minutes compared with just twenty minutes in the water.

Table 4.8: Time in the water against travel time by year group

| | Total time in the water (Minutes) | Total travel/changing time (Minutes) | *Ratio of travel/changing time to time in the water |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Key Stage 1 | | | |
| Reception | 425 | 810 | 1.91 |
| Year 1 | 635 | 1265 | 1.99 |
| Year 2 | 830 | 1575 | 1.89 |

| | | | |
|--------------------|------|------|------|
| Key Stage 2 | | | |
| Year 3 | 1015 | 1720 | 1.69 |
| Year 4 | 980 | 1675 | 1.71 |
| Year 5 | 1020 | 1635 | 1.60 |
| Year 6 | 835 | 1360 | 1.62 |

Data revealed that, on average, one hour in the water required one hour, forty-five minutes of travel and changing time. Travel and changing times for infant classes were nearly double the length of time spent in the water (Table 4.8).

Table 4.9: Travel and changing time by school (N = 43)

| Mins | No. of Schools | % of schools |
|---------|----------------|--------------|
| 0 - 15 | 6 | 14 |
| 16 - 30 | 11 | 26 |
| 31 - 45 | 13 | 30 |
| 46 - 60 | 15 | 35 |
| 60 + | 4 | 9 |
| Total | 49* | 114 |

*Total in excess of forty-three because some schools travel to more than one pool.

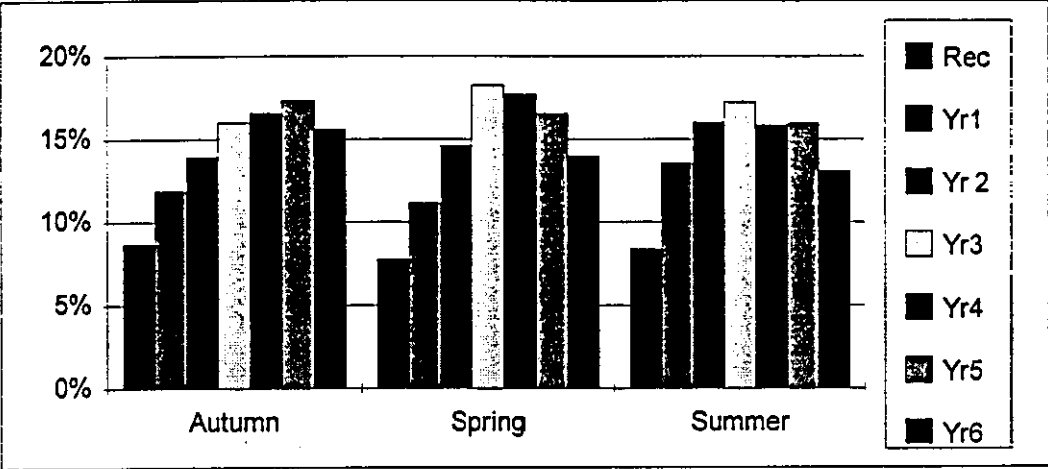
Data revealed that 65% of all schools that swim had travel and changing time between 31 - 60 minutes, with 9% of schools in excess of 60 minutes travel and changing time (Table 4.9).

6. How many swimming sessions does each year group have in each term, (Table 4.10; Fig. 4.10;) and in a year (Tables 4.11;4.12; 4.13; 4.14; 4.15; Figs. 4.11; 4.12a; 4.12b;4.13;4.15)

Table 4.10: Total number of swimming sessions each term by year group for all schools that swim

| | Rec | Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 | Yr 5 | Yr 6 | Total |
|--------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Autumn | 216 | 296 | 347 | 398 | 412 | 431 | 388 | 2488 |
| Spring | 131 | 189 | 248 | 309 | 300 | 280 | 237 | 1694 |
| Summer | 137 | 222 | 262 | 282 | 259 | 261 | 214 | 1637 |

Fig. 4.10: Swimming sessions each term



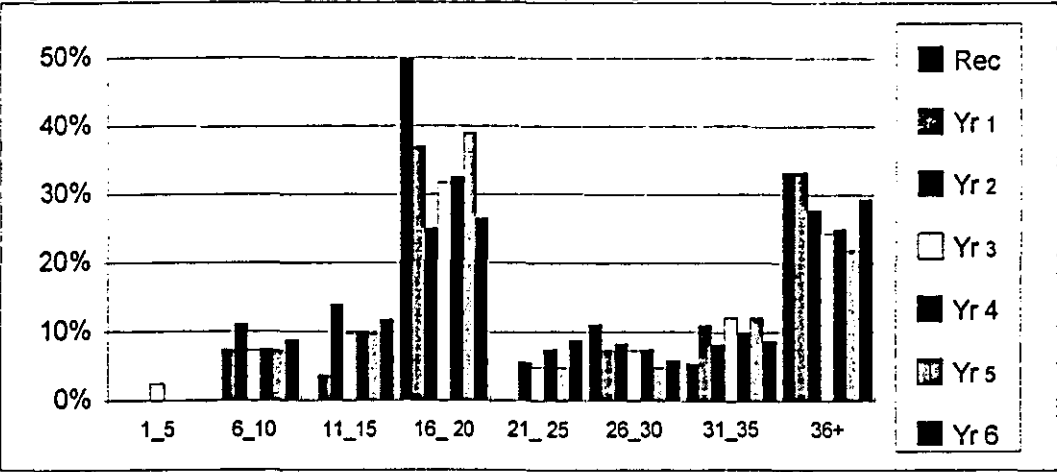
Data revealed that most swimming tended to happen in the autumn term (Table 4.10). This could be expected as this term tends to be longer than either the spring or summer terms. When this data is looked at as a percentage of total sessions each term, it appears that swimming sessions were spread fairly evenly throughout the three terms. (Fig. 4.10)

Table 4.11: Number of swimming sessions a year by year group

| | No. of swimming sessions a year | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------------------------|---|------|----|-------|----|-------|----|-------|---|-------|----|-------|----|-----|----|
| | 1-5 | | 6-10 | | 11-15 | | 16-20 | | 21-25 | | 26-30 | | 31-35 | | 36+ | |
| Key Stage 1 | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Reception | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 50 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 1 | 6 | 6 | 33 |
| Year 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 4 | 10 | 37 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 11 | 9 | 33 |
| Year 2 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 11 | 5 | 14 | 9 | 25 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 3 | 8 | 10 | 28 |

| Key Stage 2 | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % |
|-------------|----|---|----|---|----|----|----|----|----|---|----|---|----|----|----|----|
| Year 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 10 | 13 | 32 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 12 | 10 | 24 |
| Year 4 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 8 | 4 | 10 | 13 | 33 | 3 | 8 | 3 | 8 | 4 | 10 | 10 | 25 |
| Year 5 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 10 | 16 | 39 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 12 | 9 | 22 |
| Year 6 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 12 | 9 | 26 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 10 | 29 |
| Total | 1 | 0 | 18 | 8 | 22 | 9 | 79 | 33 | 12 | 5 | 17 | 7 | 24 | 10 | 64 | 27 |

Fig. 4.11: Number of sessions a year by year group

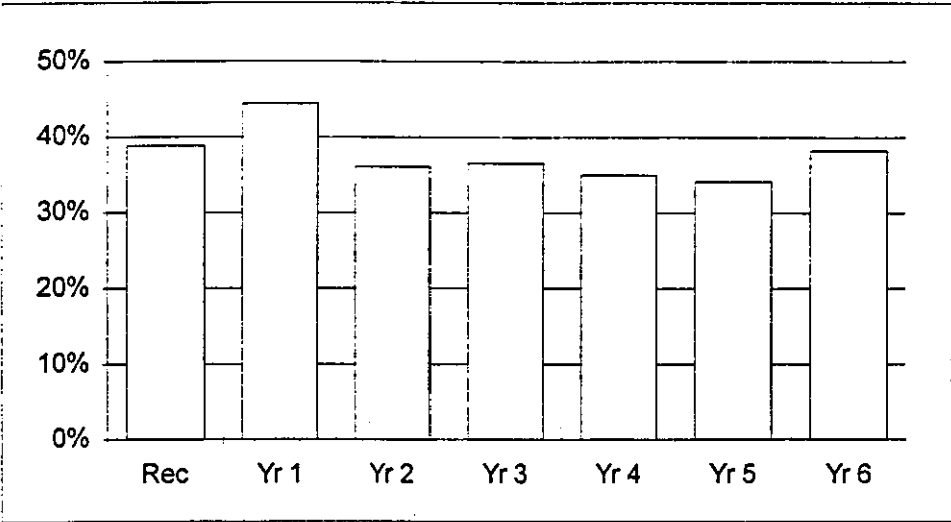


Provision of swimming varied from a yearly total of five sessions to a yearly total of forty-one sessions. Of those classes that swam, the majority had 16 - 20 sessions each year (Table 4.11; Fig 4.11). Nine (50%) out of the eighteen Reception classes that swam had 16 - 20 sessions; none of these classes had less than sixteen sessions, with another six classes having 36+ sessions each year. It would appear that if Reception classes swam, they had a relatively high number of sessions each year. This would also appear to be the case for Year 1 classes where 44% of those that swam had more than thirty sessions a year (Table 4.11).

Table 4.12: Weekly swimming provision by school year group

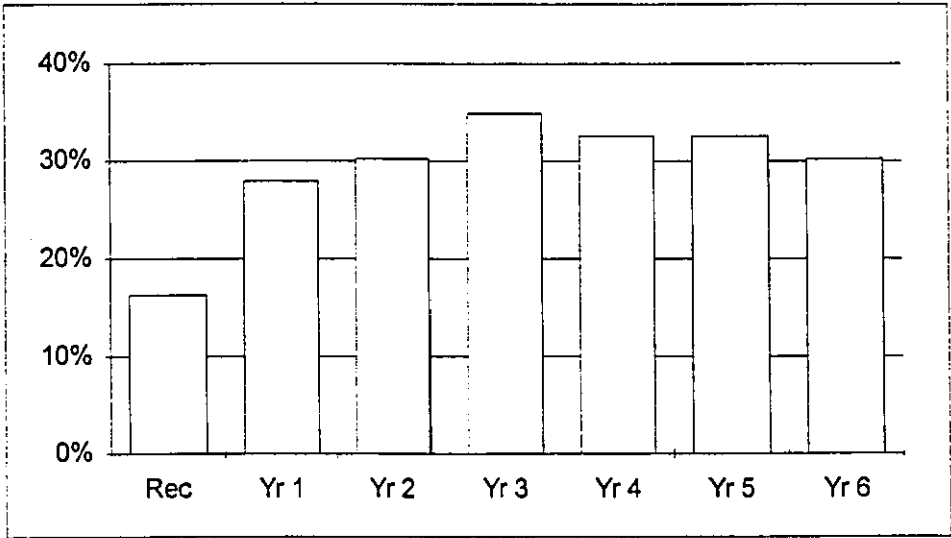
| | Every week for 3 terms (> 30 sessions per year) | | |
|-------------|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| | No. | % of those schools that swim in each year group | % of all schools that swim (N = 43) |
| Key Stage 1 | | | |
| Reception | 7 | 39 | 16 |
| Year 1 | 12 | 44 | 28 |
| Year 2 | 13 | 36 | 30 |
| Key Stage 2 | | | |
| Year 3 | 15 | 37 | 35 |
| Year 4 | 14 | 35 | 33 |
| Year 5 | 14 | 34 | 33 |
| Year 6 | 13 | 38 | 30 |
| Total | 88 | 37 | 29 |

Fig. 4.12a: Schools that have more than thirty sessions a year, as a percentage of the schools that swim in each year group



In spite of 16 - 20 sessions appearing to be the most usual number of sessions in a year, a large variety of frequency patterns did emerge amongst the schools (Appendix C-1), with the most common being weekly sessions¹⁰. Having said this, it would appear that only approximately one-third of those pupils that swam in each year group, swam each week (Table 4.12; Fig 4.12a). The exception to this is Year 1 classes where 44% of that year group that swam, swam each week.

Fig. 4.12b: Schools that have more than thirty sessions a year as percentage of all schools that swim (N = 43)



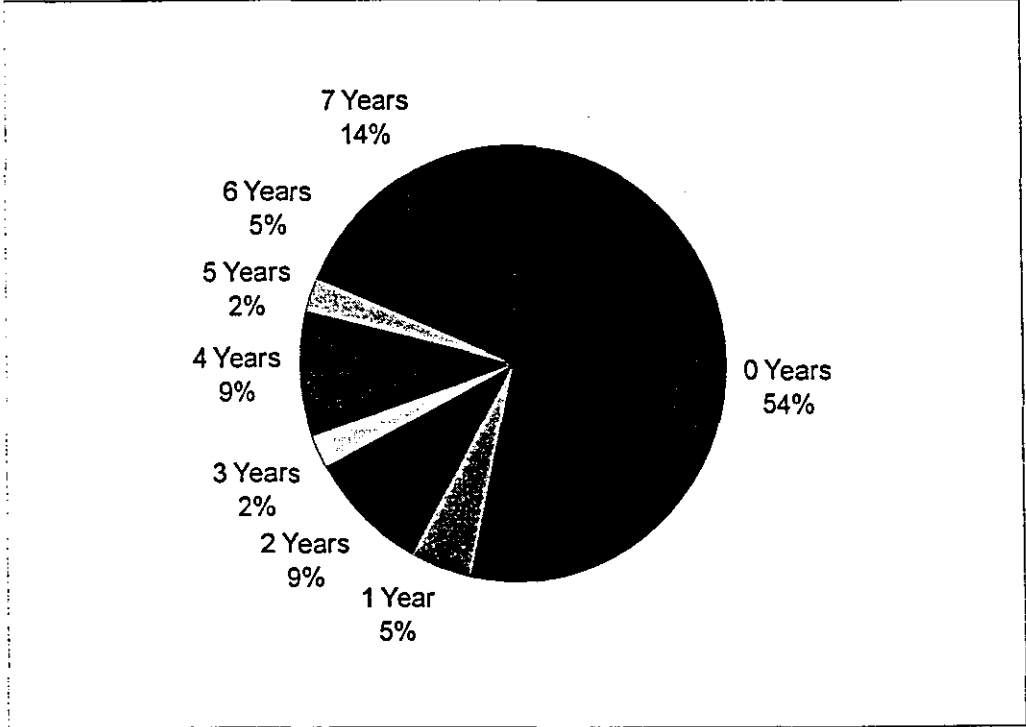
¹⁰Provision of swimming sessions in excess of thirty sessions a year has been taken as swimming each week for a year. This takes into account the fact that some schools do not swim during the first and last weeks of each term.

In spite of a relatively high number of Reception (39%) and Year 1 (44%) classes having weekly swimming sessions when looked at in relation to those year groups that swim, data revealed that few Reception and Year 1 classes had weekly swimming sessions when data was analysed in relation to all schools that swim (Table 4.12; Fig 4.12b). This would indicate that although not so many schools provided sessions for Key Stage 1 pupils as they did for Key Stage 2, when Key Stage 1 pupils were taken swimming they had a relatively high number of sessions each year.

Table 4.13: Weekly swimming provision (N = 43)

| Swimming provision | No. of Schools | % of Schools |
|--------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Weekly for 0 years | 23 | 54 |
| Weekly for 1 year | 2 | 5 |
| Weekly for 2 years | 4 | 9 |
| Weekly for 3 years | 1 | 2 |
| Weekly for 4 years | 4 | 9 |
| Weekly for 5 years | 1 | 2 |
| Weekly for 6 years | 2 | 5 |
| Weekly for 7 years | 6 | 14 |

Fig. 4.13: Weekly swimming provision throughout the primary school years



Although weekly sessions was the most common provision, data revealed that only six schools had weekly provision for the entire seven years of primary school. (Table 4.13; Fig. 4.13). Data also revealed that over half the surveyed schools (54%) never swam weekly (Fig 4.13).

Table 4.14: The mean number of swimming sessions per year

| | Schools with own pool | Other schools | All schools |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Mean number of sessions per year | 161.88 | 129.26 | 135.33 |
| Standard Deviation | ± 52.23 | ±72.59 | ±70.41 |

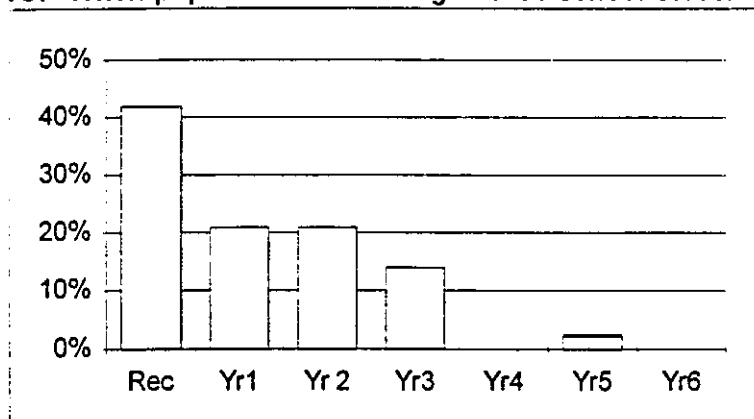
The availability of a school pool may have an influence on the number of swimming sessions a school provides each year. Data revealed that, on average, schools with their own pool in the survey borough had more sessions per year than other schools¹¹ (Table 4.14).

Table 4.15: When pupils start swimming in their primary school career

| End of yr group in which pupils start swimming | Number of schools | % of all schools that swim |
|---|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Key Stage 1 | | |
| Reception | 18 | 42 |
| Year 1 | 9 | 21 |
| Year 2 | 9 | 21 |
| Key Stage 2 | | |
| Year 3 | 6 | 14 |
| Year 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Year 5 | 1 | 2 |
| Year 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 43 | 100 |

¹¹Only eight of the surveyed schools had their own pool

Fig. 4.15: When pupils start swimming in their school career



Data revealed that 98% of schools that provided swimming had started swimming by Year 3. Eighteen (42%) started these sessions in the Reception year (Table 4.15). One school did not start swimming until Year 5 and this school continued with swimming into Year 6 (Fig 4.15). Although this school started swimming fairly late in the pupils' school career, both years (Year 5 and Year 6) swam weekly throughout the year.

Table 4.16: When pupils stop swimming in their primary school career (N = 43)

| End of yr group in which pupils stop swimming | Number of schools | % of all schools that swim |
|---|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Key Stage 1 | | |
| Reception | 0 | 0 |
| Year 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Year 2 | 0 | 0 |

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| Key Stage 2 | | |
| Year 3 | 1 | 2 |
| Year 4 | 1 | 2 |
| Year 5 | 7 | 16 |
| Year 6 | 34 | 79 |
| Total | 43 | 100 |

The majority of the schools stopped swimming at the end of Year 6 but nine stopped prior to this: one at the end of Year 3, one at the end of Year 4 and seven at the end of Year 5 (Table 4.16). The pupils at the school that finished swimming at the end of Year 3 only swam during that school year but they did go each week.

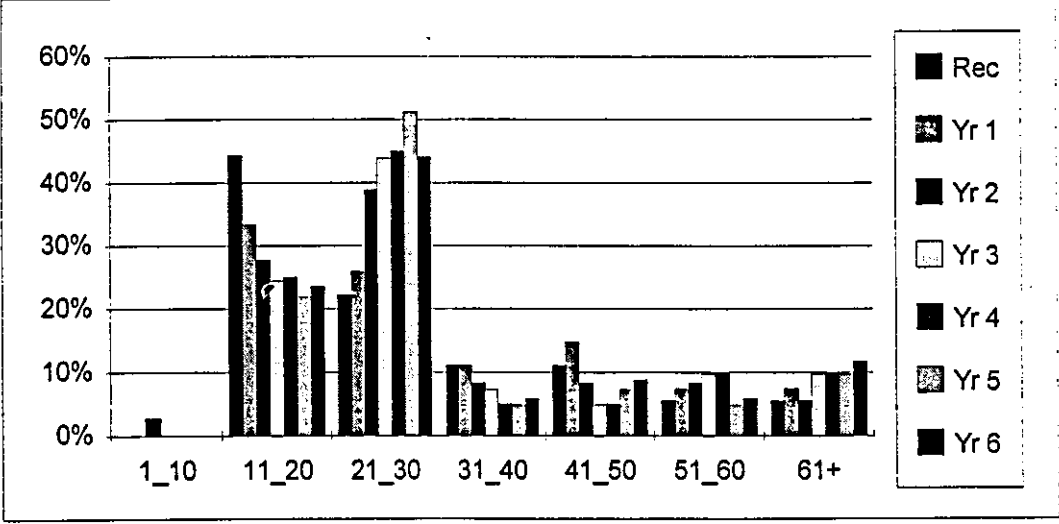
7. Numbers of pupils in the water at the same time (Table 4.17; 4.18; Fig. 4.17)

Table 4.17: Numbers of pupils in the water by year group

| No. of pupils in the water | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--------|---|---------|----|---------|----|---------|----|---------|----|---------|---|------|---|
| | 1 - 10 | | 11 - 20 | | 21 - 30 | | 31 - 40 | | 41 - 50 | | 51 - 60 | | 60 + | |
| Key Stage 1 | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Reception | 0 | 0 | 8 | 44 | 4 | 22 | 2 | 11 | 2 | 11 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 6 |
| Year 1 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 33 | 7 | 26 | 3 | 11 | 4 | 15 | 2 | 7 | 2 | 7 |
| Year 2 | 1 | 3 | 10 | 28 | 14 | 39 | 3 | 8 | 3 | 8 | 3 | 8 | 2 | 6 |

| Key Stage 2 | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
|-------------|-----|---|-----|----|-----|----|-----|---|-----|---|-----|----|-----|----|
| Year 3 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 24 | 18 | 44 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 10 | 4 | 10 |
| Year 4 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 25 | 18 | 45 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 10 | 4 | 10 |
| Year 5 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 22 | 21 | 51 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 10 |
| Year 6 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 24 | 15 | 44 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 12 |
| Total | 1 | 0 | 64 | 27 | 97 | 41 | 17 | 7 | 19 | 8 | 18 | 8 | 21 | 9 |

Fig. 4.17: Number of pupils in the water by year group



Data revealed that twenty-one to thirty pupils in the pool at one time seemed to be the most common, except for Reception and Year 1 where eleven to twenty pupils in the water appeared to be more usual (Table 4.17 and Fig. 4.17). One school stated that less than ten of its Year 2 pupils were in the water at the same time.

Six schools stated that they had sixty or more pupils in the pool at the same time. These were schools that swam at a local leisure centre with two pools: a main pool and a training pool. Some, but not all of these schools, stated that they used both

pools. It seems likely that this was the case with the other schools. Seven schools, with less than twenty pupils in the water at one time, either used their own pool or another school's pool.

Table 4.18: Mean number of pupils in the water by year group

| | Mean No. of pupils in the water |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Key Stage 1 | |
| Reception | 29 |
| Year 1 | 32 |
| Year 2 | 31 |
| Key Stage 2 | |
| Year 3 | 33 |
| Year 4 | 33 |
| Year 5 | 32 |
| Year 6 | 34 |

Although a large number of year groups (41 %) had between twenty-one and thirty pupils in the water at the same time (Table 4.17), the mean number of pupils in the water by year group was between twenty-nine and thirty-four pupils (Table 4.18). This would suggest that pupils usually went swimming in class groups, which were then sub-divided into ability groups. This arrangement was confirmed by some comments on the questionnaire survey forms.

8. Who is responsible for teaching the children to swim?

Thirty-seven of the schools (86%) used people other than members of staff to either help or be responsible for teaching swimming. Of these, nineteen (44%) schools stated that they used either a peripatetic teacher (thirteen schools) or someone other than a member of staff to be 'responsible' for teaching children to swim.

Although some schools stated that they used parents to help teach swimming, data was not sought on who these 'other helpers' might be. From discussions with peripatetic swimming teachers, after administering the questionnaire, it appeared that there is sometimes 'conflict' about who is actually responsible for the swimming lesson and who is a helper (Fieldnotes, 24.11.94). Whilst some schools allow the peripatetic teacher to take control of the lesson, in other schools a class

teacher maintains overall control. It may be that some of those named as 'other' helpers were, in fact, peripatetic swimming teachers.

9. Do you teach life-saving/survival? (Table: 4.19)

Table 4.19: Schools that teach life-saving/survival

| | No. of schools that teach life saving/survival | Total no. of schools that swim in each year group | % schools that swim who teach life saving |
|--------------------|--|--|--|
| Key Stage 1 | | | |
| Reception | 3 | 18 | 17 |
| Year 1 | 5 | 27 | 19 |
| Year 2 | 8 | 36 | 22 |
| Key Stage 2 | | | |
| Year 3 | 18 | 41 | 44 |
| Year 4 | 21 | 40 | 53 |
| Year 5 | 29 | 41 | 71 |
| Year 6 | 27 | 34 | 79 |
| Total | 111 | 237 | 47 |

Although the questionnaire did not attempt to look in detail at the contents of the swimming lesson, the number of those schools who taught survival and/or life saving skills was sought.

Nearly three-quarters of the schools (74%) taught life-saving and survival skills at some time during their pupils' school career, but when this data is broken down into year groups only 47% of those who swam were taught life-saving and/or survival skills (Table 4.19). It would appear that these skills are taught mostly to pupils at Key Stage 2. By Year 6, 79% of that year group who swam were taught life-saving and survival skills, whilst only a total of sixteen (7%) of year groups that swam in Key Stage 1 were taught these skills. (Table 4.19).

In some cases schools did not indicate exactly which year groups were taught life-saving/survival skills, but stated that it was offered to the "top group" or to those that were "ready". One school stated that they would only teach these skills if there was time after the pupils had passed Grade 3. When analysing the data it has

been assumed that for these schools, life-saving and survival lessons would be available to all year groups that had swimming sessions should the pupils have reached an appropriate swimming standard. Eleven schools (26%) did not teach life-saving/ survival at all.

10. How many teachers and helpers have any swimming teaching or life-saving qualification? (Table 4.20)

Table 4.20: Swimming teaching and life-saving qualifications

| Qualification | No. |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| ASA Preliminary Teacher Certificate | 30 |
| ASA Teacher Certificate | 28 |
| ASA Advanced Teacher Certificate | 15 |
| ASA Tutor | 1 |
| Other swimming qualification | 79 |
| Life Saving qualification | 105 |

The questionnaire tried, but failed, to identify the qualifications of both those 'in charge' and the 'helpers'. Data derived from this section of the questionnaire showed that in forty (93%) of the surveyed schools at least one of those teaching swimming held a recognised swimming teaching qualification. Amongst the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) qualifications the most common were the ASA Preliminary Swimming Teacher Certificate and the ASA Swimming Teacher Certificate. However, it is likely that some of these qualifications were held by the same person. For example, someone with an ASA Advanced Teacher Certificate is very likely also to possess the ASA Teacher and the ASA Preliminary Teacher Certificates. In addition, some of those responding to the questionnaire were not aware of the qualifications of all those teaching swimming. The data collected from this question must be treated with caution. A large number (seventy-nine) of those who had a swimming qualification stated that it was a qualification other than one awarded by the ASA¹² (Table 4.20).

Thirty-four (79%) of the schools had at least one person with a life-saving qualification.

¹²From discussions with those teaching swimming after the administration of the questionnaire it became clear that many of those with the Teachers LEA Life Saving Proficiency Certificate regarded this as a swimming teaching qualification. This may explain the high number of non-ASA qualifications.

11. Do you use any of these swimming aids? (Table 4.21)

Table 4.21: Swimming aids available to schools (N = 43)

| Equipment | Number of Schools | % of Schools |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Armbands | 19 | 44 |
| Pull-buoys | 3 | 7 |
| Floats/kickboards | 43 | 100 |
| Other* | 1 | 2 |

*Jackets for special needs

All schools had floats available, but very few schools had access to pull-buoys which can be useful for teaching the more advanced swimmer. Just under half the schools had armbands available for use; although not ideal for teaching swimming, they can be useful in teaching the non-swimmer and giving pupils confidence, particularly if there is no helper in the water (Table 4.21).

12. Do you any of these teaching aids? (Table 4.22)

Table 4.22: Teaching aids available to schools (N = 43)

| Equipment | No. of Schools | % of Schools |
|------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Poles | 27 | 63 |
| Ropes | 27 | 63 |
| Hoops | 35 | 81 |
| Bricks/sink rings/toys | 43 | 100 |
| Balls | 28 | 65 |
| Toys | 1 | 2 |
| Flip discs | 1 | 2 |

The most common teaching aids were sinking objects which were available in all schools. Only one school stated that it used flip discs, which are very useful for teaching pupils to blow out whilst swimming, and which are relatively inexpensive to buy. Twenty-seven of the schools stated that they used ropes and poles; these items are essential for teaching pupils reaching and throwing life-saving skills (Table 4.22).

13. Do you have any of these available in case of problems? (Table 4.23)

Table 4.23: Facilities in the event of problems (N = 43)

| Equipment | No. of Schools | % of Schools |
|---------------|----------------|--------------|
| Phone | 41 | 95 |
| First Aid Kit | 43 | 100 |
| Poles | 43 | 100 |
| Ropes | 37 | 86 |
| Alarm System | 1 | 23 |
| Other* | 5 | 12 |

*Five schools also mentioned that they have special whistle signals for pupils in case of emergency.

All schools stated that they had poles available in the event of problems, and thirty-seven schools had ropes. However only twenty-seven schools stated that these items were available for use as teaching aids (Table 4.23).

Forty schools (93%) stated that they had a formal emergency procedure. Two schools stated that they did not and one school failed to respond stating that the question was "too ambiguous".

4.3 COMMENTS ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE

In order to understand responses on the questionnaires which were not clear or appeared ambiguous, some of the schools were contacted individually. As a result of this, and of studying the comments at the end of the questionnaire, it became clear that there was not as much swimming provision as some schools had indicated. Because of the size of some of the pools used by some schools, it was often the case that only half a class swam at a time. Therefore, pupils may go swimming on a rota basis, every two or three weeks¹³. Comments on the returned questionnaires indicated that school pools tended to be shallow and small which meant that they were not suitable for large numbers of pupils or for more competent

¹³For schools who stated that they go swimming on a rota basis the number of sessions has been adjusted accordingly. As this data was not directly sought some year groups may swim on a rota basis but have not mentioned this on the questionnaire. Some year groups may, therefore, have less sessions than shown in the results of this survey.

swimmers. One school stated that their pool "is 1m only and has a capacity for 20 pupils. This means that most classes go swimming on alternate weeks (half a class at a time) " (School 002), and another who used the pool of a nearby school stated, "our pool is inadequate for better swimmers " (School 004).

Several schools also indicated that pressures on the time-table as a result of the National Curriculum and the costs involved had resulted in some considering a revision of their swimming programme. One school stated that for the first time there was no provision for swimming in the summer term as they had "tried to ensure each area of the PE Curriculum gets its fair quota (time audit)" (School 005) and another stated that "Costs involved and time travelling are under review - swimming may cease" (School 008). Another school highlighted the problem of costs and also the competition for pool time.

"We used to swim twice a week - once at [name of leisure centre]¹⁴ (Y3) and once at [name of school pool] (Y4/Y5). Because of funds/costs we only attend [name of school pool] now and so each group has half of the usual sessions i.e. 5/6 per term instead of 10/12 sessions. We compete for the time-table with our local schools" (School 007).

The role of the schools in teaching pupils to swim was also brought into question by one school who stated that their swimming programme was aimed "at getting non-swimmers to a self-preservation level. After that, up to parents as swimming is very time consuming" (School 010, sic.).

4.4 CONCLUSION

The vast majority of schools in the survey borough had had swimming in their curriculum for more than six years. Of those schools that had not, one stated that they had started swimming lessons because of the National Curriculum requirements. Few schools had their own swimming pool and most schools swam at local leisure centres. Data from the survey highlighted the problems of obtaining access to a suitable pool and the time taken out of the school day either getting to that pool or waiting in turn to swim. In addition, comments on the questionnaire revealed that the time and the costs of providing a swimming programme appeared to be major concerns for some headteachers.

¹⁴Name of leisure centre and school pool not mentioned to aid confidentiality.

Swimming provision in the surveyed schools would seem to be very varied and complex with different arrangements being made not only for different classes within the same school, but sometimes for different pupils within the same class. Many of the schools offered swimming to pupils in Key Stage 1, but few schools offered swimming to their pupils throughout all their primary years.

Twenty to thirty children in the water appeared to be the most common number in a swimming lesson and this would indicate that children swam in class groups. Children were taught to swim by class teachers, peripatetic swimming teachers and parent-helpers. Data from the questionnaire was inconclusive with regard to expertise of those teaching swimming, and this area needed to be clarified through further investigation.

Nearly three-quarters of the schools taught life-saving and survival skills, mostly to the older classes. By Year 6, 79% of that year group who swam were taught life-saving and survival skills, whilst only 7% of year groups that swam in Key Stage 1 were taught these skills.

All schools appeared to have a variety of equipment available to them for their use, with kickboards and sinking objects being the most popular. All schools seemed well equipped in case of emergency although two schools stated that they did not have any formal emergency procedure.

The questionnaire survey had revealed the complex nature of swimming in primary schools and, although the questionnaire survey had given a broad outline of swimming provision, it was clear that there were limitations with such a survey reliant on 'tick-box' responses. This had resulted in some questions being inadequately answered, and it was hoped that the next phase of the research which involved case studies would help to overcome some of these problems.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS: CASE STUDIES

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Documentary data on the various methods used in teaching swimming have been discussed (Chapter 2) and it was shown that there was conflicting evidence as to which was the best method. According to Hardy (1992), it is likely "that actual learning activities used with a particular group of pupils are probably more crucial to the learning outcomes than the general strategy of the method" (p.47). Although the questionnaire survey had provided little evidence of what were 'the learning activities' in a school swimming lesson, it, together with continued documentary research, highlighted issues that might help to shape the school swimming programme. These and the contents of the swimming programme were further investigated through case studies at two schools (Chapter 3).

Although the principle issues raised in providing a comprehensive swimming programme appeared to be similar in the two case study schools, there were many inherent, significant differences between the schools. When writing this chapter consideration was given to discussing each school in turn to highlight these differences. Finally, it was felt that it would be more appropriate to look at the issues raised by the research and to discuss the schools in relation to these. On some occasions, where it seemed most appropriate, each school has been discussed individually under the topic heading. In the first part of the chapter both case study schools are briefly described. Next, the programme of swimming in each school is looked at in relation to the National Curriculum, and then the issues underlying this programme are addressed.

5.2 THE SCHOOLS

School A was situated in a council estate about two miles from the town centre. It was also the local community college and had its own swimming pool. The swimming pool was a small shallow pool, eleven metres long, five-and-a-half metres wide and with a constant depth of one metre. School A was a large school with approximately 500 pupils. The children were arranged in nineteen mixed-ability classes and two special units. In addition to the headteacher, there were twenty-

four other teachers. My¹⁵ main contact at this school was not the headteacher but the class teacher/deputy warden who had responsibility for physical education, including swimming, in the school. The classes observed were Year 1 (two classes), Year 3 (two classes) and Year 6 (two classes). These classes were observed for periods ranging from three to nine weeks (Chapter 3). All classes observed swam in the school pool, except for Year 6 who travelled weekly to the local leisure centre.

In contrast, School B was a village school situated approximately eight miles from the nearest town. It was a small school with seventy-four pupils divided into four classes as follows:

- Class 1 - Reception children and the younger Year 1 pupils,
- Class 2 - Remainder of Year 1 and Year 2,
- Class 3 - Years 3 and 4
- Class 4 - Years 5 and 6

The headteacher at this school was trained in physical education. He was also a class teacher and he taught swimming to one of the groups. This headteacher had also stated that swimming was to be 'prioritised' the year following the observations, and that the swimming programme would be reviewed.

The observation period was the Autumn Term 1994 and, at this time, children at the school went swimming weekly throughout the school year, travelling to use two pools at a leisure centre situated about eight miles away. Because of the size of the bus it was not possible for all seventy-four pupils to go swimming together and classes took it in turn to stop swimming each half-term.

The school hired both pools at the leisure centre. There was a main pool which was twenty-five metres long, with a depth in the shallow end of 0.9 metres and a depth of 1.9 metres in the deep end. The small pool or training pool was twenty metres long. It was a shallow pool, with one side reaching a depth of 0.75 metres and the other side 0.9 metres. There was also a shallow trough full of water which ran the length of the pool. The water temperature in the main pool was approximately 83°F and in the small pool approximately 86°F.

¹⁵Because of the belief that the researcher is part of the research and cannot be separated from the social world which is being studied, it seemed more appropriate to write this chapter in the first person rather than the formal, impersonal third person used in other parts of this study.

5.3 THE SCHOOL SWIMMING PROGRAMME - MEETING THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS?

During the period of observations, the requirements of the National Curriculum for swimming were as laid down in Physical Education in the National Curriculum (DES, 1992a)¹⁶. Therefore, it is the Programme of Study relating to these requirements that shall be discussed when looking at the swimming programme in the case study schools. The full Programme of Study, 'activity specific' (Appendix D-1), and the contents of the observed lessons in each school are shown elsewhere in the text (Appendix D-2 and Appendix D-3). The following discussion draws on this documentation and data. It should be noted that the Programme of Study in the National Curriculum gives a set of objectives that schools should meet, but it allows schools flexibility in choosing ways of teaching that will meet these objectives.

According to the requirements of the National Curriculum, pupils should:

1. be taught the codes of hygiene and courtesy for using swimming pools.

On the whole, the children at both schools tended to be well behaved on the pool-side and in the changing rooms. Little time was lost dressing and undressing, even with the younger pupils. There was, apparently, no pre-rehearsal in the classroom of the procedures adopted at the pool, as suggested by Dallam (1976), but because there were never any large groups of "newcomers" the children tended to "assimilate procedures as they go along" (Teacher H, 17.1.95).

School A had a foot-bath in the school pool and the children had to go through this foot-bath before entering the pool. On one occasion during my observations, a Year 1 class was told the reasons for using this.

There was little opportunity for pupils at both schools to have a shower. Some of the older children from both schools found time to shower at the leisure centre after the swimming lesson, but at School A the changing room was so small it was clearly impractical. Also, because of the size of the changing rooms, the younger children at School A got dressed and undressed in the classroom. They then took a towel and outdoor shoes to the pool in case there was an emergency and the pool had to be evacuated. No child from either school showered prior to a lesson. Taking a

¹⁶The new Orders were not issued to schools until January 1995, for implementation on: "1 August 1995 for all year groups in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, except that, for pupils in years 5 and 6, the requirements relating to swimming come into effect on 1 August 1996 and 1 August 1997, respectively" (DfE, 1995)

shower prior to a lesson is recommended by the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) (1993) and Hardy (1994a), but it would appear to be impractical in the time constraints of school swimming lessons.

For School B and Year 6 in School A who travelled to the leisure centre, safety regulations were explained at the first lesson. However, emergency procedures were never practised during my observations at the leisure centre. Only one class in the school pool at School A practised them and that was on one occasion. It may be that these procedures were practised at times when observation did not take place, or it may be time constraints prevented more practices. The peripatetic teacher who took a group from School B stated that, when she went through the safety procedures at the beginning of each term with another school (not one of the case study schools), one of the teachers from that school looked at his watch thinking "this one's wasting our time" (7.12.94). It would appear that the importance of going over safety procedures is not appreciated by all schools.

2. to be given opportunities to develop confidence in water; be taught how to rest in water, how to float and adopt support positions.

In both schools, children were divided into groups according to ability and most of the time with the younger children was spent on gaining confidence in the water. The less able children from School B used the small training pool at the leisure centre. In this pool there were approximately thirty children from the school, divided into four groups; Group 1, the strongest swimmers, and Group 4 the weakest swimmers. The children in Group 4 were either Reception or Year 1 children, and the lesson consisted of exercises, games such as 'ring-a roses', and practices to improve water orientation.

In School A the children were taught swimming in class groups, and they were then divided according to ability. The emphasis for the Year 1 groups was also on fun and confidence building. Often the lessons began with a nursery rhyme to which the children did actions, and in one lesson one of the teachers taking these children used a tambourine, a practice the children clearly enjoyed (Fieldnotes, 16.9.94).

In general, the work with the younger, less able children consisted of practices to gain and improve water confidence, as required by the National Curriculum, but there was little work done on floating or adopting other support positions. Skills such as sculling or treading water were not taught to the younger children, nor was time spent on teaching the children how to regain their feet. This was also true with

older children, where most of the work consisted of learning the formal strokes rather than looking at the principles of floating, buoyancy and streamlining. Introduction to these concepts can increase older children's understanding of the principles of swimming and inevitably their swimming performance. In both schools buoyancy might be discussed in the classroom, if topic work on flotation is being covered. One teacher stated that he had practised mushroom floats and other floating positions in the swimming pools with his Year 4 group (Teacher 8, 23.11.94), but it would appear that, if floating and sinking was not a specific topic that the school was covering, it was unlikely to be discussed in classroom work.

3. be taught a variety of means of propulsion using either arms or legs or both and develop effective and efficient swimming strokes on front and back.

In both schools, once the children had gained water confidence, the emphasis tended to shift to teaching the strokes. The strokes taught were breaststroke, backcrawl and frontcrawl, but no attempt was made to teach butterfly, even to the competent swimmers. Sculling and other strokes like Old-English backstroke or side stroke were largely ignored.

In spite of a great deal of time spent on teaching formal strokes, it was clear from my observations that several of those teaching were unaware of correct techniques, and the strokes or part-strokes were wrongly demonstrated. For example, when teaching breaststroke leg kick a teacher would demonstrate with her arms, but put no emphasis on turning out the feet prior to the propulsive phase (Fieldnotes, 27.9.94). On other occasions straight arm pulls were demonstrated when teaching frontcrawl (Fieldnotes, 6.9.94). Also, several of those teaching swimming failed to break down the strokes, as recommended by several authors (Elkington, 1980; Lee, 1991; ASA, 1991). On one occasion, when I had to take a group because a parent-helper was absent, I taught the backcrawl kick and, as I gave the children floats they remarked, "we never swim with floats" (Fieldnotes, 26.10.94). These short comings were acknowledged in some instances. For example, the headteacher in School B stated, "I've seen people teaching wrong techniques and they're doing a good job at doing it, but they don't know how to teach the right technique" (20.1.95).

In many of the groups at both schools there appeared to be little feedback given to the pupils to help them improve their technique (Fieldnotes, 11.10.94; 1.11.94; 29.11.94). Comments like, "that's not right, swim it properly" (Fieldnotes, 4.10.94) were overheard during the observations.

The poor technique of swimmers was noted by some of the staff at School A. One teacher expressed surprise at the standard of swimming, bearing in mind the large amount of swimming that was done in the school. She stated that it "doesn't seem to have that much effect on them compared to other children who come from schools that don't do a lot of swimming " (Teacher 4, 28.11.94). Another stated that "it always fascinates me how poor they are as swimmers by Year 6, when they have had the opportunity of swimming all the way through school" (Teacher 3, 2.12.94). An employee at this school, who attended some lessons, felt that in the school there was more emphasis on 'keeping pupils afloat' and much less on technique, in comparison to private swimming lessons where the emphasis tended to be placed more on stroke technique (Fieldnotes, 12.10.94).

4. be taught the principles and skills of water safety and assess the nature, visibility and location of water hazards in a variety of conditions.

The local education authority's (LEA) swimming grades used by School A and, to a lesser extent by School B, had been amended to bring them into line with the requirements of the National Curriculum (Appendix D-4), and each grade had an element of water safety in it. School A, on the whole, was very aware of water safety issues and staff covered this area in the classroom. This concern may be as a result of a pupil drowning in one of the local canals some years ago. The school had devised a 'swimming quiz' for each grade with appropriate questions for the children to complete. These grades were tested each term and all the children in the class worked through the sheets whether they had attained the swimming element of the grade or not (Teacher 8, 23.11.94). In School B, although water safety was occasionally discussed in the classroom, swimming was not a topic that appeared to be covered much during classroom activities. However, the peripatetic teacher, who took School B's top swimming group at the leisure centre, stated that she always covered water safety before the summer term and handed out leaflets on dangers of ice during the winter terms "just to make them aware of the situation" (Peripatetic teacher A, 7.12.94).

5. be taught survival skills appropriate to their competence in water and be encouraged to evaluate their own abilities and limitations.

Survival skills were taught to the top group of swimmers at each school. However, there appeared to be little explanation of the purpose of these techniques or discussion of survival principles. One of the reasons for Year 6 in School A going to

the leisure centre was to enable them to practise such skills, as survival techniques, as these could not be practised in shallow school pool.

6. be encouraged to assess their swimming and water skills efficiency against a range of criteria.

The swimming programme used by School A tended to revolve around its own award scheme, distance awards and the county grades. The school's own award system was very comprehensive and certificates were awarded for very early skills. For example, the first award was for being able to climb out of the pool. Other awards were given for things like sitting on the bottom, picking up a brick, swimming on the back with a float, and swimming underwater. These were then built on as the child moved through the groups and moved up the school, and assessments for these seemed to be on-going with the class teacher 'testing' the child as and when appropriate. There appeared to be some differences in how the teachers assessed the children, particularly with regard to distance awards. One teacher stated that she liked them to have a

good stroke rather than just going for the distance ... because if you get bad habits its sometimes very difficult to cure them. But, on the other hand, you can say that it's better that they swim badly and swim, than not swim at all (Teacher 1, 7.12.94).

During my period of observation children gained awards and, for some teachers, just swimming the distance was enough, irrespective of technique. There was also great encouragement for the children, with teachers and other pupils clapping and cheering whenever a child was successful (Fieldnotes 27.9.94).

In School A all the testing for the county grades scheme was done by one teacher and so some consistency of standard was achieved. However, in spite of the care now being taken to ensure all swimmers came up to standard for these grades, the peripatetic teacher who took the top group of Year 6 at the leisure centre was surprised that many of them had achieved their Grade 3 because of their poor technique (Fieldnotes, 5.9.94). The inconsistency in grade expectations between schools was confirmed by the supply teacher at School A who, having taught at several schools, stated that standards

vary dramatically from what one school considers a Grade 2 or whatever and another school considers a Grade 2 - its chalk and cheese. You know, some schools are very hard and want them to have good style and won't give them the certificate until they consider the stroke is good. Whereas other schools

seem to give it if they've got their feet off the bottom and hopped across almost (Supply teacher, 7.12.94).

In School B the assessment system seemed to be less well structured. In the main pool, during my observations, Group 1 was being assessed for the county's Grade 3. In addition to the county grade scheme the school did have its own distance awards and a 'smiley' face was awarded if a child had "tried really hard" (Teacher H, 17.1.95). Grades 1 and 2 were assessed by the teachers and there "used to be one day to do distance swim assessments in the big pool, but this might have changed now." (Teacher H, 17.1.95). No testing, other than that done for Grade 3, was carried out during my period of observation. There appeared to be no real structure to the assessment procedure which seemed to happen "very infrequently" with the assessment really coming down "to the teachers just teaching them..." (Headteacher, 20.1.95). One of those teaching swimming stated that she was unaware of any assessment procedure, and no one had informed her "of the badge system or anything else like that" (Ancillary, 17.1.95). During interviews with the children at School B, two children stated that they had certificates, but that they did not know what those certificates were for (Pupils M and C, 20.1.95).

7. explore the elements of movement in the water through simple games.

According to Hardy (1994a),

Games are an extension of the simple water activities developed under confidence practices, but they require more body and limb control in water. They also encourage co-operative behaviour (p.225).

During my period of observations, only very simple games like ring-a-roses were used as a teaching aid with the younger children. Older children played no games at all, yet games like 'mini' water polo played across the width of the pool or relay races using equipment such as balls and hoops (ibid.) can be fun and help to improve swimming skills, as well as encouraging co-operative behaviour.

8. be made aware of the role of swimming and water safety skills in supporting other water based activities and activities near water.

Water safety was discussed in the schools as outlined in (4) above.

The Key Stage 2 end of key stage statement which relates specifically to swimming states that pupils should be able "to swim unaided at least 25 metres and demonstrate an understanding of water safety" (DES, 1992a p.6). During my observations both schools encouraged the older children to attempt to swim at least

twenty-five metres. Many Year 6 pupils could already swim twenty-five metres and, bearing in mind that, with the exception of Year 6 at School B, pupils had two more terms of weekly swimming, it was likely that the majority of the pupils would have attained this target by the end of Key Stage 2. The ASA's National Curriculum Resource Pack (1993) lists further recommendations for attainment targets for water safety and these are more detailed and informative than the National Curriculum requirement (Barter and Firth, 1994). The ASA has also devised a National Curriculum Swimming Skills award, although neither school used this test.

It would appear that, in general, the spirit of the National Curriculum was being met in that the children progressed from early water confidence activities to learning stroke techniques and eventually survival skills. However, most teachers felt that if, by the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils could swim twenty-five metres they had fulfilled the requirements of the National Curriculum. It must be remembered, though, that there are other more 'general requirements' of the National Curriculum which schools have to fulfil (Appendix D-5). These more general requirements require the child to plan and evaluate, and children must understand what the outcome of their activity might be. There has to be discussion with the children with a move from a didactic style of teaching to one which involves two-way communication. For example, children have to

- be helped to understand their roles as members of a team or group;
- understand what effects exercise has on the body;
- understand how they perform and how they might improve their performance;
- be able to plan a sequence of movements, working alone and with others (DES, 1992a).

Because of the concentration on teaching technique, there was little evidence to suggest that all of these more 'general' requirements were being met during the swimming lessons. Also, it appeared that neither of the two case study schools had made any changes to the swimming programme as a result of the National Curriculum, except in respect of the county's grade awards (used by both schools in assessing their pupils) which had been revised to bring them in line with the National Curriculum requirements. Although it is true that the requirements of the National Curriculum "constitute a programme which, in reality, is little different to the range of experiences which have been offered in Primary Schools for many years" (Lee, 1994 p. 1), primary schools are now "required to provide children with a Swimming programme which has certain key objectives" (ibid., p.1). Schools need to be aware

of what these objectives are, but in the two case-study schools there appeared to be little knowledge of the requirements of the National Curriculum amongst those teaching swimming. Many of the parent-helpers were not aware that swimming was now part of the National Curriculum, and some of the class teachers appeared to be rather vague about the requirements, although all knew that at the end of Key Stage 2 the children should be able to swim twenty-five metres and have a knowledge of water safety. The peripatetic teacher who took the top group in School A at the leisure centre, and who was employed by the local education authority (LEA) to teach swimming, also appeared to be unsure of the requirements. She stated that she had

never been informed of the requirements by [name of the LEA]¹⁷ but what I've heard on the news is that they should be able to swim 25 metres by the age of ten or eleven - I can't quite remember which (23.1.95).

The reasons for this lack of change in the swimming programme, and the apparent lack of knowledge of all the requirements of the National Curriculum may be explained by the fact that the observations and interviews took place during the Autumn term of 1994. Just prior to this, draft proposals which amended the National Curriculum requirements had been sent to schools (Chapter 2). The National Curriculum for Physical Education was, therefore, in a state of flux and it was uncertain what the eventual requirements would be. Another explanation for this apparent lack of knowledge could simply be lack of time. It would appear that the National Curriculum documents had been passed down through the schools for the teachers to read, but for some teachers it was a case of not having the time to read them thoroughly within the constraints of a 'crowded' curriculum. As one teacher stated:

I've had the draft proposals for everything but I've only looked at [name of academic area]¹⁸ which is my area of responsibility and I've passed it on.... we'll all get one of the proposals eventually (Teacher 3, 2.12.94).

This response to the National Curriculum documents would seem to confirm the view that primary teachers who tend to be subject generalists and who are, therefore, already "overwhelmed by silver ring leaf folders containing a multitude of NC demands.... are not going to receive the NCPE documentation and its requirements with open and outstretched hands" (Evans, Penney and Bryant, 1993 pp 335-336).

¹⁷LEA not named in the interest of confidentiality.

¹⁸Subject not named in the interest of confidentiality.

Although information and advice about safety requirements had been sent to the schools from the LEA, it appeared that little help had been received on the implementation of the National Curriculum for swimming. One teacher, with a responsibility for physical education, stated how helpful a previous physical education adviser had been a few years ago. This adviser had acquired a number of places for members of staff to go on a swimming teaching course. The teacher, however, did not think there was a physical education adviser any more (Teacher 8, 23.11.94). The LEA in which this school is based does, however, have an Adviser/Inspector for Physical Education and also an Advisory Teacher for swimming and physical education, but the relationship between the schools and the advisory services has changed dramatically since the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) (Chapter 2).

The headteacher at School B felt that it would be helpful to have some idea of what standard of swimming to expect from each year group (20.1.95). Publications such as the Resource Pack on Swimming and Water Safety (ASA, 1993), and Primary Physical Education: Implementing the National Curriculum (Bunker, Hardy, Smith and Almond, 1994) are available for schools to purchase to help implement swimming in the National Curriculum. Both of these publications were taken into the interviews. Two teachers stated they had seen the second of these publications but none of those teaching swimming were aware of the ASA Resource Pack. At the launch of this Resource Pack, in June 1993, the aim of the ASA was "to try and ensure that all 21,000 primary schools in England and Wales have at least one copy" (Swimming Times, 1993 p.3). One year later some teachers were not aware of the Resource Pack's existence.

5.4 FACTORS AFFECTING THE DELIVERY OF SWIMMING IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

Informal discussions on the pool-side and data from the interviews (Appendix D-6), reinforced the opinion that the major concerns for many of those trying to implement a National Curriculum for swimming were: 1) access to a suitable pool; 2) expertise of those teaching, and 3) costs relating to both of these. The next part of the chapter will deal with these issues. Time is an inherent factor in the issue of access to a suitable pool and will be discussed in relation to this. It will also be dealt with separately because, throughout the research, it has appeared to be a primary concern for those trying to deliver a swimming programme.

5.4.1 Access to a suitable swimming pool

School A had a pool on site and School B had to travel to a pool. Because of their different access situations, the schools will be discussed separately.

School A

The pool at School A was a small, shallow learner pool. Various types of equipment, including hoops, sinking objects, floats, armbands and balls were available at the pool for use in the swimming lesson.

The small size of the pool limited both the numbers of children who could be in the water at one time and the activities they could do. As one teacher stated, "fifteen is as many as you could manage in the pool to give them a fair session" (Teacher 5, 25.11.94). This meant that classes were split into two with half a class swimming, whilst the remainder sat on the pool-side and wait their turn. By Year 6 even fewer pupils could be accommodated and "more than half-a-dozen physically in the water at once is really too many" (Teacher 3, 2.12.94). The need to split the class was a concern for many of the teachers. They found that it was difficult to both teach and control those waiting their turn to swim. During my observations, one class was taken by a supply teacher who had taught at the school before and knew the conditions. She was not happy with the situation where she was alone in the pool with half the class in the water and half on the side. She stated:

I was quite apprehensive in taking a class of children into the swimming baths when I had only had them for one morning really. It wasn't something that I would advocate to anybody else....you know, we never had any incidents, but there is always a first time, and you had to trust that they would sit there, and it always occurred to me that one could have been tempted to run and jump in or perhaps join the others and you felt as if you had to have eyes in the back of your head, which with the best will in the world, you can't always have.
(Supply teacher, 7.12.94)

This concern was echoed by other teachers in the school and one, in particular, who felt that with the more difficult classes, "you don't spend any time teaching swimming, you spend all the time just getting stressed, really" (Teacher 3, 2.12.94). During my observations both Year 1 and one of the Year 3 classes had additional help on the side of the pool. With the exception of an ancillary who helped a visually impaired child in the Year 3 class on a one-to-one basis, these 'helpers' did not assist with the teaching but kept an eye on the children. The other Year 3 class

had no help and this appeared to be the more usual situation throughout the school (Fieldnotes, 2.12.94). Without help to either discipline the children on the pool-side or to assist those in the water, teachers had to try to teach a group in the water while, at the same time, controlling the children waiting their turn to swim.

The swimming skills necessary to achieve the higher county grade awards could only be done in deep water. This meant that Year 6 had to travel to the local leisure centre each week for a forty minute lesson. During the year prior to my observations those pupils in Years 5 and 6 who had attained Grade 3 had their swimming lessons at the leisure centre whilst other children had their swimming lessons at school. This was felt to be unsatisfactory because after the school swimming lessons the pupils were not with their usual teachers. These teachers felt that they were just 'baby-sitting' until the rest of the class returned from the leisure centre. Also, as the year progressed and more pupils achieved Grade 3, there were no places for them at the leisure centre. The incentive to achieve Grade 3 was, therefore, taken away and as one teacher noted:

it was like nothing to work for. It ended up with a group that didn't want to swim and their parents would condone them not swimming, and so they brought letters every week (Teacher 3, 2.12.94).

This particular teacher stated that she had one child whose dad would come and say, "do you want me to think of some excuse, or is she all right not swimming, or shall I say she's got a headache this week, or did I say that last week?" .

Because of these problems the school decided that all of Year 6 should go swimming at the leisure centre, regardless of swimming standard. However, it soon became clear that some pupils used to swimming in shallow water found the transition to the deep water difficult. This fear was probably reinforced by the fact that few of these pupils swam outside school (Fieldnotes, 7.12.94). During my observations, an average of fifty-two pupils went to the leisure centre each week. All these pupils swam in the main pool and they were divided into three groups. Group 1, the top group, was taken by a peripatetic teacher and Groups 2 and 3 were taken by the two Year 6 class teachers. The pupils in Group 2 could swim but, for some of these pupils who had only before swum in the small shallow school pool, swimming in the a pool with a deep end was a problem. At first Group 2 was placed in the deep end but several were clearly unhappy in the water. One or two voluntarily moved themselves down into Group 3 which was in the shallow water. During one session, one girl panicked, hyperventilated and had to get out, two

refused to swim and one felt sick (Fieldnotes, 12.9.94). As a result Group 2 was moved to shallower water, but some pupils were still afraid as they could only just touch the bottom of the pool. One child in Group 2 continually refused to swim and, by Week 6, had stopped coming to school on the swimming day. She was, generally, a poor attender at the school (Teacher 8, 23.11.94), but her teacher felt that the reason for absence from school was so that she did not have to swim in deep water (Fieldnotes, 31.10.94). As the term progressed other pupils also did not swim. Many of these brought notes from their parents. By Week 8, eleven children came to the swimming lessons but did not swim because they had forgotten their kit or were ill. The teachers speculated that, for some, it was a case of not wanting to swim and so "they invent some excuse" (Teacher 4, 28.11.94). There was a policy at the school that if you were well enough to come to school, then you were well enough to swim (Fieldnotes, 7.11.94), but it would appear this was difficult to enforce if children did not bring their kit.

Many of those who did swim, but were afraid of the deep water, moved to Group 3 situated in the shallow end. This group, therefore, became bigger until it consisted of twenty-two pupils, all of whom were relatively weak swimmers. Because of the size of Group 3 the pupils spent a large proportion of their swimming time sitting on the pool-side waiting for their turn to swim. One of the pupils in this group stated that she did not like it "when you keep on having to get in and out the water - its freezing" (Pupil, 28.11.94). One week, during my observations, one girl in this group swam a total of two widths in approximately ten minutes (Fieldnotes 7.11.94). In Groups 3 there was a non-swimmer but, because of the size of the group, the teacher was not able to give her any individual attention.

In spite of the continuing problems with some of the children, those teachers who had originally been "very dubious" (Teacher 4, 28.11.94) about the benefits of all Year 6 going to the leisure centre each week, regardless of their swimming standard, began to see some benefits. The pupils who were swimming were becoming more confident and it was "good to see the progression made" (Teacher 4, 28.11.94). Also, for many, it was their first trip to the leisure centre, and it was felt that it might be a way of encouraging them to go in the future (Fieldnotes, 7.11.94). As one teacher stated, swimming might not be available to many of the Year 6 pupils at their next school, and it was probable that they would not "hear the word stroke technique again". She felt that it was important that her class "enjoy swimming and want to come to the leisure centre enough to start bringing themselves when they have pocket money to spend" (Teacher 3, 2.12.94).

The main benefits of a school pool on site would appear to be ease of access. Ensuring each class swims weekly still needs careful and sympathetic management of the time-table by the headteacher, but, if this is the case, schools with a pool may have fewer time-tabling problems than those who have to travel to a pool. All classes from Reception to Year 5, at School A, had a twenty minute lesson each week. The four-plus pupils in the school swam fortnightly. The main limiting factor would appear to be size of the pool which resulted in some children still having to travel to a more suitable pool. In addition, some pupils who had only swum in shallow water were unable to cope in deep water. In general, comments from non-teaching staff and parents indicated that they were pleased that the school had its own pool. One stated that it was "good to have a pool" (Fieldnotes, 8.10.94), although another parent added "when it's working" (Fieldnotes, 12.9.94). During my observations, there were two occasions when the pool was out of action for maintenance. Also, there was one week when there was no swimming for Year 1 pupils because the school photographs were being taken.

School B

Each week School B travelled to the local leisure centre where it hired both the training pool and the main pool. Therefore, it had good facilities for both the beginner swimmers and those who are more competent. Approximately thirty pupils swam in the training pool, split into four ability groups, and another thirty pupils swam in the main pool, split into three groups. The top group in the main pool was taken by an instructor employed by the county. The travelling time to and from the leisure centre was approximately twenty minutes each way, and so for twenty minutes of water time, the pupils were off-site for one-and-a-half hours. For some who taught swimming at the school, the opinion was that "its a lot of effort for a twenty minute swim" (Parent-helper A, 17.1.95)

The size of the bus limited the number of children that could go swimming each week, and so, each half-term, a class stopped and another started swimming. This meant that there was a break in continuity in the swimming teaching as the groups had to be reorganised. One teacher felt that this was a problem when trying to plan a lesson because it meant that children moved in and out of groups (Teacher E, 20.1.95). The headteacher felt that the cost of hiring two coaches would be prohibitive, but the school is expanding (Fieldnotes, 23.6.95) and tighter laws concerning seat belts and the numbers of children occupying seats in coaches may

lead to the school to reconsider further its policy on who swims. In future, school swimming may not be accessible to all in the school.

5.4.2 Expertise of those teaching swimming

Only one member of staff in each school held a swimming teaching qualification. Several had been teaching for many years and three had been on a course run by Helen Elkington, a well-known swimming teacher and author. None of the parent-helpers at either school had any type of swimming teaching qualification, and many of them had picked up ideas on teaching swimming from watching others. The documentation on the county swimming grades used by the schools included advice regarding technique (Appendix D-4) but, although the class teachers might have been aware of these, there was little evidence that the parent-helpers had received copies.

In School B, particularly, it appeared that there had been few guidelines as to what they should be teaching. One parent said that she found it "quite petrifying at first" (Parent-helper G, 17.1.95). Although most of the parent-helpers had been teaching for a while, and they were fairly confident about their abilities when I spoke to them, they all felt that some sort of aids to show correct technique would be useful in helping them teach. It was important, though, to realise that some parents may not want to spend too much time learning correct techniques, as one of them pointed out, "parent-helpers are mothers giving up their time. They have different priorities and don't always want to put much effort into it. Everyone is different" (Parent-helper A, 17.1.95). At both schools the parent-helpers were almost exclusively mothers. No fathers were involved, although at School A a male school governor helped with the discipline in the changing room and on the pool-side. In the past he had helped with teaching, but he took no part in teaching swimming during the observation period (Fieldnotes, 13.9.94).

Both schools used the services of a teacher based at the leisure centre who was employed by the county, and at both schools this person took the top group of swimmers. The peripatetic teacher at School B stated, for whatever reason, teachers tended to be unwilling to take the better swimmers. She stated that,

those teachers that come are all right with bringing on the confidence and they have a basic knowledge, but once they get to the swimmers ... they won't have a clue as to what points to pick on ... my orders come from the teachers and it's normally 'please take the top group' especially if I'm in the

deep end, because usually I'm the only one with a life-saving qualification (Peripatetic teacher A, 23.1.95).

Some of those teaching swimming recognised that they may not be well-equipped to do the task because, as one teacher pointed out,

we don't have a lot of training. I feel as though I shouldn't even be teaching because I can't swim myself particularly well and don't go swimming so I don't know what the strokes should look like, or if they're being effective or not. I really feel a bit of a fraud teaching swimming, because I might be teaching children who might be a lot better than I am. You can do that in some subjects, but in swimming I might be having a detrimental effect on them (Teacher 4, 28.11.94).

Another teacher observed that some teachers

start doing the strokes without the vaguest idea of how to teach because most of the teachers in the school haven't done any sort of swimming qualifications and many can't swim themselves (Teacher 3, 2.12.94).

Informal conversations with other peripatetic teachers tended to confirm that, in most cases, they took the better swimmers (Fieldnotes, 27.5.95).

As mentioned previously, many of those teaching swimming were demonstrating incorrect techniques and, in many cases, there was no definite plan or structure to the lesson. One parent-helper stated that she did "think about it (lesson plan) before I go and think first we'll do breaststroke but that's about all ... when we get there ... (I) decide" (Parent-helper D, 20.1.95). However, in School A the award system used throughout the school tended to give structure to the lessons and, in School B, one of the teachers brought a lesson plan and monitoring sheet each week. Her lesson, based on the ability of the group, consisted of "a main objective each week and the session also includes revision from last week and a separate contrasting activity" (Teacher H, 17.1.95). This structure conforms with the recommendations of the ASA (1991).

For several of the teachers, there appeared to be little knowledge on how to progress from the 'fun' element of a lesson to the teaching of the strokes. There was a large amount of kicking with floats but little attention was given to such things as body position, streamlining, sculling actions, and gliding (Fieldnotes, 11.11.95).

As well as asking my advice during observations, teachers in both schools sought advice from those with a swimming teaching qualification. Information about courses on the teaching of swimming had been received at School B but "they've all been ignored. Nobody's got the time or whatever - prioritisation" (Headteacher, 20.1.95). Another teacher stated, "It's impossible to give priority to all subjects. The core subjects are the most important" (Teacher H, 17.1.95). One teacher said that "occasionally swimming courses appear on the scene but I don't feel the need. I may consider a refresher course if I had to change groups" (Teacher F, 20.1.95). Similarly, in School A, swimming seemed to have a fairly low priority in respect of teachers giving up more of their time to become qualified to teach it. Although physical education is now one of the foundation subjects it had not been

tackled as much as the others like history and geography. It's just ticked over really - hasn't it with all the things we've had thrown at us recently, then PE is sort of fairly low down the priority list" (Teacher 3, 2.12.94).

Some of the teachers at this school felt that a way to overcome the problems associated with giving a comprehensive swimming programme was for the school to employ a qualified swimming teacher to take all lessons. This way the swimming teacher could take half a class swimming whilst the other half was doing "something beneficial" (Teacher 8, 23.11.94). The school had considered this but when they started looking at the costs and how it would be organised "it was just forgotten" (ibid.). In spite of some teachers feeling inadequately prepared to take swimming, the vast majority of those teaching swimming stated that they enjoyed it and felt that it was "really good to see the progression made" (Teacher 4, 28.11.94).

With the increasing importance placed on health and safety issues, school teachers not only need to consider qualifications in teaching swimming, but also life-saving qualifications. The LEA responsible for the survey borough recommended that, as a minimum requirement, there should be one qualified life-saver to twenty children. However, the county swimming adviser who ran life-saving courses for schools felt that all those who teach swimming should have a life-saving qualification (Fieldnotes 4.4.95). All staff who taught swimming in School A were required to have a life-saving qualification, and the school paid for them to attend the course organised by the LEA. One of the teachers interviewed felt that she no longer wanted to do this course because she couldn't

blow the thing (resuscitation manikin) up ... and I can't use my wrists It's nerve racking and, to me, it's a wasted day. I know I should, but I don't

mind the swimming bit - I'm happy with that, it's just this physical blowing of this dummy ... I love it (teaching swimming)... but I'd rather somebody else did it rather than do that course. Now that's how much I hate it and [name of colleague]¹⁹ feels exactly the same (Teacher 6, 30.11.94).

During my research I attended one of these life-saving courses. The course is physically tiring and demanding as teachers had to show competence in resuscitation techniques on a life-saving manikin as well as undergoing a water based life-saving test. Some older teachers might have difficulties carrying out all the requirements.

In School B the situation was different. Only the peripatetic swimming teacher and two members of staff held a current life-saving qualification. Two others had previously acquired a life-saving qualification but had not kept it up-to-date. In the training pool a parent-helper acted as a 'spotter' but she had no life-saving qualification. No one at the school had attended an LEA life-saving course and, although the headteacher had stated that the swimming programme was to be reviewed, he felt that he may get opposition from his staff if they were obliged to attend a life-saving course (Fieldnotes, 20.1.95).

5.4.3 Curriculum time

"Time is the factor which seems to concern schools most when it comes to meeting the full requirements of the National Curriculum" (Lee, 1994). The time pressures felt by primary school teachers were clearly expressed by one teacher who stated that he could remember having time to deal

with children and sitting down and having a conversation with children, but there is this pressure now that every member of staff feels....They've done that and have to go on to something else. They don't have time to spare if they've got five minutes left its 'who can come up to my desk and read'? We've got so many kids in this school that are not up to reading age. They are a year or two behind their reading age, so its pressure to do this and pressure to do everything (Teacher 8, 23.11.94).

It might be thought that School A, with its own pool, had less problems in respect of time allocated to swimming lessons than other schools. In fact, for those classes that swam in the school pool, the total time allowed for swimming was one hour for just twenty minutes in the water. This was because of the size of the pool and the

¹⁹Name not mentioned to aid confidentiality.

fact that whilst one half of the class swam the other half sat and waited for their turn and "you end up with half the children sitting on the side and then (they) switch over so those children are doing nothing effectively for half-an-hour perhaps - wasting half-an-hour" (Teacher 8, 28.11.94). After a swimming lesson the children had a 'break' before once again settling down to class routine. Most of the teachers felt that the time factor was a problem within the "curriculum which is very crowded" (Supply teacher, 7.12.94) although one teacher, who took the younger pupils, felt that it was "not a major problem" (Teacher 1, 7.12.94).

For Year 6 at School A, who travelled to the leisure centre, the time allowed for the swimming lesson was one-and-a-half hours. The school hired the leisure centre pool for forty minutes one morning a week, but the children tended to arrive at the pool late and had about thirty minutes in the water. The reason for this was the time involved in taking the register and in collecting dinner and swimming money. This time in the water was reduced further to fifteen minutes on the first morning because of the late arrival of the bus. On subsequent weeks, however, the bus did arrive on time and the children were asked to get to their classrooms a little earlier so that they would not be late leaving. The journey to and from the pool took about five minutes each way, and at the pool there was little time wasting both before and after the swimming lessons. One teacher felt that the day was disrupted and that the rest of the day revolved around swimming, because it was difficult for the children to settle down after an 'outing' in the morning (Fieldnotes, 12.9.94).

For the teacher responsible for physical education in School A, one of the main problems was deciding "how much time to spend on swimming" (Teacher 8, 23.11.94). For this school, swimming time did not only include the time taken up with the lessons in the water, but it also included the swimming 'quiz', the water safety talks that took place in the classroom, and the time spent by the teachers taking the life-saving certificate every three years.

At School B it appeared that the travelling time to the leisure centre was resented by some of the teachers. There was only time for a half-an-hour lesson before going swimming and once the pupils returned there was a break-time. Approximately one-and-a-half hours had passed by the time the pupils returned from the pool, but it was sometimes perceived that the whole morning had been taken up with swimming. One teacher remarked that "to go swimming for the whole morning does seem like a time wasting expedition" (Teacher E, 20.1.95), and another stated that

they enjoyed teaching swimming, but wished they did not have the journey as "the morning is gone. We get nothing else achieved..." (Teacher F, 20.1.95).

When considering the curriculum time required for a swimming lesson it is important to consider how much time children actually spend in the water. According to Lee (1991), frequent, short lessons are ideal for beginners. Both School B and the classes that used the school pool at School A had twenty minute lessons which, according to Lee, may be appropriate for the younger children, but may hinder the progress of older children. At School A the older swimmers, although not always the most competent, had about thirty minutes in the water.

During my observations at School B, there were only two occasions when the pupils had the full twenty minutes in the water. This was because at the leisure centre there was no overlap time between one school finishing and the next school starting. Time at the beginning of the lesson was taken up by children waiting for a previous class to clear the pool, getting themselves on to the pool-side and into their groups. This would appear to be a problem for all schools that had lessons at the leisure centre used by School B. The peripatetic swimming teachers employed by the county to teach the schools both felt that, for most pupils, a twenty minute lesson was too short. One stated:

It used to be twenty-five minutes per class. That gave you a good twenty minute lesson which gave you five minutes leeway on your contrasting activity and getting them out. Twenty minutes is slightly short to get your workload in. I've got the odd school that comes for half-an-hour and we get the workload in. But I think the ideal time would be twenty-five minutes (Peripatetic teacher A, 7.12.94).

The length of time required for swimming would appear to be one of its major problems as subjects compete for a place in the time-table. Swimming, whether in a school's own pool or at a pool some distance away, is a time consuming activity. The concern about the time and the costs led the headteacher of School B and a member of his teaching staff to query whether school was the place to teach children to swim and whether parents had a greater role to play (Teacher F, 20.1.95). Because of the problems of fitting all the pupils on the bus taking them to the pool, Year 6 stopped swimming at Easter. Prior to taking this step the headteacher had asked the views of parents. Out of twenty-one sets of parents, twenty thought this was a good idea because the majority of the children could already swim and "parents wanted their children to sit down and learn rather than go swimming" (Headteacher, 20.1.95).

At School A the feelings about swimming provision were different. In spite of the problems of time allocation, it would seem that in this school, at least, the position of swimming was secure for the time being. "It's got its place (in the time-table) and it will remain so, and at the moment every child in the school swims once a week, so I'm glad about that" (Teacher 8, 23.11.94).

5.4.4 Financing the swimming programme

This study confirmed that the costs involved in the provision of swimming in schools can be high whether a school has a pool or not.

School A, with its own pool was responsible for the day-to-day running and maintenance of the school, but not for structural repairs. The most expensive item was the heating of the pool with the combined bill for the electricity and the gas coming to, approximately £4,000 per year (Teacher 8, 23.11.94). This teacher explained that, when the school was short of money and considering teacher redundancies, the possibility of closing the pool from November through to March was considered. Although it was only one third of the year, that period accounted for fifty percent of the heating bill. It would appear that there is little possibility of the pool permanently closing, because, as Teacher 8 stated, "if you've got a pool, it seems crazy not to use it". However, he added that there may be a time when the school would consider closing it for the winter period to save costs.

As School A was also a community college it might be expected that the pool was hired out to outside users after school hours. It would, however, appear that the pool was not used much at weekends except for swimming lessons on Saturday mornings, when there was quite a "heavy charge" for its use (Teacher 8, 23.11.94). The school had also started letting the pool out to other schools on a small scale, but the charge to other schools were only a "peppercorn rent". Teacher 8 did feel that if School A was looking to recoup more costs, and other schools were in a position to hire the pool, then it was likely that the pool would be hired out more frequently.

Not only did School A have costs relating to its own pool, it also paid to send Year 6 to the leisure centre. The costs included those of the bus to and from the pool, the cost of the pool and the cost of the peripatetic teacher. According to Teacher 8, at the time of my observations, this amounted to about £1,672 per year (Fieldnotes,

23.11.94). Besides these costs the school also paid for those teaching swimming to attend a life-saving course which was about £20 and twelve to fifteen teachers attended a course each year, amounting to this cost of between £250 and £300 (Fieldnotes, 23.11.94). This qualification was renewable every three years, but with new staff joining, a course was run "at least once a year, if not twice on a kind of rolling programme" (Teacher 8, 23.11.94). Also, the school management ensured that members of the community who wanted to bring their children swimming, such as scouts and brownie leaders and those who ran the family swimming groups, had this qualification. The school did not expect these groups to pay to obtain this qualification, and it had a community budget from which the money was drawn. However, this need for a qualification before being able to take a swimming group may have deterred groups from using the pool at weekends.

The Education Reform Act 1988 endorses earlier legislation which stated that, in general, activities taking place in school hours should not be charged for (Lee, 1994). Schools can request 'voluntary contributions' towards these costs so long as they are clearly stated to be voluntary, and no distinction is made between those pupils on whose behalf a contribution has been made and those for whom it has not (Leonard, 1988). At School A, to help towards the cost of swimming, those children travelling to the leisure centre brought 60p each week. Teacher 8 explained that not all families paid, and in a group of fifty about forty paid. He went on to say that these contributions are "voluntary contributions" but

if you mention the voluntary contributions - you get nothing back...we actually don't mention that now and so we require the children to bring 60p on a Monday morning (Teacher 8, 23.11.94).

Also, those Year 6 children who did not swim did not pay, even though they go on the bus with the rest of their year group and watch the lesson. The money received from parental contribution amounted to about half the cost of swimming, the remainder came out of a fund for swimming. One member of the staff felt that there was a limit to how much you could ask parents to pay and, because the parents were asked to contribute towards swimming, the children do fewer other "trips and things to do with the curriculum" (Teacher 3, 2.12.94).

With the introduction of local management of schools there is more competition for resources in the schools. The money spent on swimming appeared to be a major concern for some of the teachers who might be "struggling for maths books and basic equipment" (Teacher 3, 2.12.94) whilst the school was "funding the heating

of the swimming pool here and funding the leisure centre" (ibid.). It would appear that if the school were to reduce its swimming programme then the trips to the leisure centre might have to be stopped (Teacher 8, 23.11.94).

School B was a 'small' school but, according to the headteacher, the budget arrangements were the same as for a larger school (Chapter 2) (Fieldnotes, 20.1.95). However, because it was a small school the headteacher felt that he had less flexibility with his budget than headteachers of larger schools. He stated:

we can't even afford to go £5,000 over because there is no way we could claw it back. There is no flexibility at all. It's all organised and set out the same. Its just the total at the end that's a bit less (Headteacher, 20.1.95)

For School B the costs incurred in going swimming included:

- the hire of the coach;
- the hire of the pool;
- the hire of the peripatetic swimming teacher.

All schools using the leisure centre, attended by School A and School B, were charged by the leisure centre on a basis of 30p per child, and the cost of the peripatetic teacher was approximately £4.50 per lesson (Fieldnotes, 4.4.95).

Like School A, School B recouped the costs from the parents through 'voluntary' contributions, and anything outstanding was taken out of the school budget for 'trips/swimming'. Because School B was situated in a relatively affluent community there was little problem in collecting the contributions, although about three families paid either nothing or made a smaller contribution towards the costs. Other parents paid £1.00 per week, and this was collected half-termly. It was not considered that other school outings had been reduced because of having to ask parents for contributions towards the cost of swimming lessons (Headteacher, 20.1.95). In general, there was not a problem in obtaining the money from the parents, although, this headteacher reported that, on one occasion, a parent did write to the school about the cost of 'free' education.

The cost issue for School B may not have been as great as for School A, particularly as the headteacher stated that the majority of the costs incurred by the provision of swimming lessons were covered by parental contributions. However, it was clear from my discussions with those involved in the teaching of swimming at this school

that cost was seen as one of the major problems. This could be a reaction against the principle of 'voluntary contributions' and the feeling that you cannot keep asking parents to pay, even if, on the whole, they can afford to do so.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The two case-study schools differed in respects such as size of school and catchment area, but for this study, perhaps, the most important difference was the fact that School A had a pool on site, and School B had to travel to a pool. In spite of having a pool on site, School A still had to travel to the local leisure centre in order to provide appropriate lessons for Year 6 children.

Both case study schools aimed to provide a comprehensive swimming programme for their children, but, for a variety of reasons, they were not always able to do so. Generally, teachers, especially those at School A, felt that swimming should be included in the curriculum and the vast majority stated that they enjoyed teaching swimming. Many of the teachers at School A, particularly, were concerned that pupils should have the opportunity to learn to swim and to gain a knowledge of water safety as few of the pupils went swimming outside school. In spite of these feelings physical education, including swimming, was generally felt to be a low status subject having less priority than many other subjects within the curriculum. The low priority given to swimming was also reflected in the fact that many of those teaching swimming were rather vague about the National Curriculum requirements for swimming and little change had been made to the swimming programme in either school as a result of the National Curriculum. This view of swimming is important when one takes into account the amount of time and resources needed to provide swimming lessons and the fact that subjects within the schools are now in competition for these resources.

Despite the differences between the School A and School B in respect of size, location and catchment area, the data from these case studies tended to confirm that the principle issues surrounding the provision of swimming in the primary schools were the same for both schools. These issues were: access to a suitable pool; expertise of those teaching swimming; curriculum time and financing of a swimming programme.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION: QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY AND CASE STUDIES

6.1 SWIMMING PROVISION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The Education Reform Act, 1988 (ERA) placed primary schools in a situation where they have had to provide a programme of swimming (Lee, 1994)²⁰. The questionnaire survey revealed that most primary schools in the survey borough had provided a swimming programme for their children for more than six years, and this was true of the two case study schools. This evidence would tend to confirm that in the survey borough, at least, swimming had been part of the curriculum of most primary schools prior to ERA. One school stated that swimming was now in the curriculum as a result of the requirements of the ERA, and the one school in the survey that did not provide swimming stated that "as from next term swimming will be provided in our curriculum for Years 5 and 6" (School 039).

Although forty-four of the schools which responded to the questionnaire survey offered swimming, there was a wide variation in provision. The number of swimming sessions each year ranged between five and forty-one, with the most common provision being for weekly lessons. Having said this, only approximately one-third of Year Groups 1 to 6 had this frequency and only 16% of all Reception Classes swam each week. Over half (54%) of all the schools responding to the survey never swam weekly and only six schools provided weekly swimming lessons throughout the whole of the primary school years. The wide variety in provision can be explained by the fact that all schools are different, and, depending on the circumstances in the schools, a variety of decisions have to be made regarding swimming provision (Lee, 1994). Inevitably, the results of these decisions will shape what provision is made. Two major decisions that the survey schools had to make were at which Key Stage to start the swimming programme and which school years should swim. A large number of schools in the survey offered swimming to Key Stage 1 pupils, with 84% of the schools offering swimming to Year 2 pupils (the final year of that Key Stage). Lee (op.cit) found that 47% of the schools in his survey offered swimming to Year 2 pupils and stated that he was "pleasantly surprised by the extent to which Swimming is included in Key Stage 1" (p.6).

²⁰Lee carried out a survey of 741 schools on behalf of the Institute of Swimming Teachers and Coaches (ISTC), in order to establish schools' current state of readiness for delivery of a National Curriculum for Swimming. Lee looked at similar issues to that investigated by this present study. In this chapter, therefore, results have been compared in several instances.

However, Lee's figure is much lower than the figure for Year 2 classes in this present study and, this is true for the other years at Key Stage 1 (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1: Percentage of schools that offer swimming at Key Stage 1

| School Year Group | Lee's Survey | This Survey |
|-------------------|--------------|-------------|
| | % | % |
| Reception | 29 | 42 |
| Year 1 | 36 | 63 |
| Year 2 | 47 | 84 |

The high percentage of schools offering swimming in Key Stage 1 in the survey borough might be explained by the rural location of some of the schools. Data was not sought on the size of the schools, but it could be that several of the schools were village schools who tend to bus all the pupils together to the pool for swimming lessons. This was the situation for one of the case study schools.

Results of the questionnaire indicated that several schools in the survey borough tried to encourage children between the ages of five years and seven years to swim. Many authors have written about the benefits of teaching children to swim at a young age (Murray, 1980; Newman, 1967; Prudden, 1974) although there is evidence from others (Gray, 1958; Rousch and Leeper, 1981) to suggest that "class teaching appears to be more effective in the later primary years" (Hardy, 1992 p.35).

Data from the questionnaire showed that Years 3 to 5 were the years that tended to have most swimming provision, with provision dropping off at Year 6 and these findings agree with those of Lee (op.cit). This lower provision for older children may be because by Year 6 the children are preparing for transition to secondary school and concentrating more on the core subjects, or because by then they have reached a satisfactory swimming competence. If pupils are unable to fulfil the National Curriculum attainment target of twenty-five metres by the time they have reached Year 6, schools may have to review their policy of stopping swimming during this year. This point is particularly pertinent for those pupils who are going to a secondary school that has not opted for swimming at Key Stages 3 and 4. It would appear that some schools are now trying to ensure that weak swimmers in Years 5 and 6 are given priority for swimming time over younger pupils. A teacher from one of the survey schools stated that her school had stopped Year 2 children swimming because there were several children in Years 5 and 6 at her school who were unable

to swim twenty-five metres. As a result, these children had been given the sessions previously used by Year 2 (Fieldnotes, 20.11.94).

In some schools, even if a year group had swimming lessons, it did not mean that all the children in that year group go swimming. The questionnaire survey revealed that some schools were setting criteria for their pupils, and once these criteria were met, the pupils stopped swimming. Although, in this present survey, no school stated the ability to swim twenty-five metres as one of its criteria, Lee (op.cit) found that this was the most popular target for schools in his survey and noted that this criterion clearly relates to the National Curriculum. Certainly, many teachers in the case study schools regarded the 'ability to swim twenty-five metres' as the sole requirement of the National Curriculum, and this criterion was seen as the target to be attained at the end of Key Stage 2. However, the ability to swim twenty-five metres does not necessarily mean that children are water-safe, and this requirement should be regarded as a minimum. As Elkington (1971) has noted:

The first width or length mastered in a swimming pool can lead from the joy of achievement to a false sense of security and on to tragedy. It is a very different matter to swim the equivalent distance in the river or sea....Neglect at this stage can leave the child open to a most frightening experience (p.34).

Although the requirements of the National Curriculum have been reduced by the New Orders which came into effect in September 1995 (Chapter 2), children are still required to do more than just swim "unaided, competently and safely, for at least twenty-five metres" (DfE, 1995 p.5). Children should also have been taught:

- to develop confidence in water;
- how to rest, float and adopt support positions;
- to swim using various means of propulsion, using either arms or legs or both;
- to develop effective and efficient swimming strokes on the front and the back;
- the principles and skills of water safety and survival. (DfE, 1995)

In addition, the revised 'general requirements' of the National Curriculum (Appendix E-1; Appendix E-2) state that pupils should be involved "in the continuous process of planning, performing and evaluating" (DfE, 1995 p.2). Also, by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are expected to be able to "make simple judgements about their own and others' performance, and use this information effectively to improve the accuracy, quality and variety of their own performance" (ibid., p.11). The importance of these more "general aspects" of the National Curriculum has been outlined by Lawton (1995) who stated:

Whilst the performance of swimming and water safety skills is paramount, the National Curriculum demands that other aspects related to what is considered to be encompassed within the term 'physically educated' be given attention. Swimming has to be seen to be an integral part of the National Curriculum and not a subject that stands outside and is somehow different. This does not mean that the situations need to be contrived in order to meet particular criteria, but teachers will need to recognise that swimming a good Front Crawl etc can not be the sum total of the swimming programme (p.4).

It would appear that teachers need to look beyond the ability to swim twenty-five metres in order to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Although most teachers felt that swimming should be included in the curriculum it, along with other aspects of physical education, appeared not to have the status afforded to some other subjects. Ironically it was the low status given to physical education that convinced one teacher at School B that it should be in the curriculum because, if it were not, schools may not provide it. She remarked, "it (physical education) is not a priority, schools may let it slip. There is need for a structure - a reminder." (Teacher H, 17.1.95). The headteacher at School B and one of his teachers queried the benefits of swimming to a school like his, where many of his pupils go swimming regularly with their parents. This same headteacher, who originally had seen the provision of swimming as "a selling point for the school" (Fieldnotes, 5.7.94), had stated on his questionnaire that because of the time and costs involved in taking the school swimming, "swimming may cease". This was in spite of the fact that he was physical education trained and a strong supporter of physical education in the curriculum (Fieldnotes, 5.7.94). The trend to deny some children the chance to swim and the opinion that schools may not be the place to teach swimming is in sharp contrast to the efforts of earlier campaigners like the ASA who argued that, "if conditions allowed" it might be advisable to make swimming a "compulsory part of the course of physical exercises" (ASA, 1919; 1930; 1937 Foreword).

At the time of writing up this investigation various new schemes²¹ are being instigated which may result in a higher status being given to physical education, including swimming. The government's initiatives outlined in the document *Sport: Raising the Game* (Department of National Heritage, 1995) and the TOP schemes organised by the Youth Sports Trust may help to change the status of physical education in the primary school. How much commitment teachers will put into these initiatives will inevitably depend on availability of time and the opportunities of being freed from existing pressures (Doug McAvoy, General Secretary, NUT, cited in Gorst, 1995).

In spite of the low priority given to physical education, most teachers felt that swimming should be included in the curriculum and stated that they enjoyed teaching it. This was particularly true of School A where very few of the pupils had an opportunity to go swimming outside of school, and none of those interviewed had private lessons. The staff felt that children should learn to swim in school as they may not have the opportunity otherwise. The social benefits of introducing the children to the leisure centre and hoping that they might go swimming in their free time was also appreciated (Fieldnotes, 3.11.94). The benefits of including swimming in the curriculum mentioned by those teaching swimming from both schools are given elsewhere in the text (Appendix E-3). However, in School A, the question arose as to whether the class teacher was the correct person to take the swimming lessons. Consideration had been given to employing a peripatetic swimming teacher who could take half a class swimming in the school pool, whilst the other half of the class continued with lessons. Certainly, this arrangement would have advantages for schools with their own pool, but in the current economic climate and with the present arrangements for financing the swimming lesson it would appear that this is unlikely to happen.

Data from the case studies tended to confirm that parents also felt that swimming should be taught in school. All the parent-helpers interviewed thought it was good to have swimming as part of the school curriculum and data revealed that of the

²¹ The government policy statement 'Sport - Raising the Game' which aims to revitalise youth sport with a heavy bias towards schools being the main providers.

1. Sportsmake Award which will aim to make schools more accountable for their provision for sporting activities.

2. Gold Star Award for schools who have instigated outstanding schemes for sports development in the school.

3. Club/School links, which is of particular importance to swimming for there is a suggestion that clubs should provide support for local schools by providing coaches to teach pupils both in and out of curriculum time. (Gorst, 1995).

4. TOP awards organised by the Youth Sports Trust - a progressive scheme of awards starting with TOP Play for infants through to TOP Sport, Champion Coaching and TOP Club.

fifteen children interviewed from School B, only six had private swimming lessons. Discussions with peripatetic teachers confirmed that fewer children were having lessons outside of school.

The majority of children I teach don't have private lessons. Actually they are very expensive and a lot of parents don't see the need. They think - let's leave it up to the school (Peripatetic Teacher B, 23.1.95).

and the other peripatetic teacher noted that parents

don't seem to be bringing the children as much. A lot of the children that come in at four-and-a-half now are total non-swimmers. Four years ago most who had started school could swim a bit, but a lot have never been to the pool now when they come. Whether it is the cost or not, I don't know (Peripatetic Teacher A, 7.12.94).

6.2 THE SWIMMING PROGRAMME - DELIVERING THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM?

The evidence from the case studies would suggest that the National Curriculum had not led the schools to rethink their swimming programme. The only changes that had occurred to the case study schools' swimming programmes were as a result of the amendments to the county grade system. These findings would tend to agree with Penney's (1994) research where schools implementing the National Curriculum for Physical Education tended to 'accommodate' its requirements within the existing curriculum. Certainly in School B the National Curriculum was not seen "as a driving force to change people's attitudes" (Headteacher, 20.1.95). For some schools the National Curriculum has merely formalised what was already happening in the schools and, as Lee (op.cit.) points out, the "only significant difference lies in the fact that it is now a statutory requirement." (p.1). Although it is true that the swimming programmes followed by the case study schools covered many of the National Curriculum requirements, the concentration on teaching technique and aspects of water safety meant that some of the more 'general' requirements were not always being met. However, there was, on the whole, progression in the swimming programmes with young children spending most of their time on confidence building exercises before progressing to learning more formal strokes and then on to survival and life-saving skills for the older children. Howell et al (1962) suggested that swimming classes with children aged five to seven years of age should be called 'adjustment to water' classes, and research has shown that children who are subjected to water familiarisation lessons prior to being taught formal strokes learn to swim quicker (Cernusak, 1966). However, because of the

poor technique displayed by many of the swimmers in the case study schools, it may be that even more time could be spent on early water skills, such as gliding, floating and sculling, before progressing to the more formal strokes.

Both case study schools covered water safety to some extent in the classroom, and the top group in each school covered survival and life-saving skills in the pool. The staff at School A, particularly, were keen that pupils had a sound knowledge of water safety. One of the reasons for this may be because, some time ago, a pupil from the school had drowned in the local canal (Teacher 8, 23.11.94). The questionnaire survey also showed that life-saving and survival skills were taught in 74% of the schools surveyed, but normally only to the more able swimmers. A total of 79% of Year 6 were taught these skills compared with 19% of Year 1. Life-saving and survival skills are essential to all children but especially those beginning to swim. These children may be over confident and not appreciate the limitations of their abilities and thus put themselves in danger (Langley, Silva and Williams, 1981; Langley and Silva, 1986). Skills such as treading water and surface dives cannot be taught in shallow water, but sculling, floating, and simple life-saving skills such as reaching and throwing or simply learning what to do in an emergency can be taught to the younger less able swimmer. The county swimming adviser to the surveyed schools has devised a programme of resuscitation (Appendix E-4) that can be taught to children right through the primary school, although there was no evidence that this was being taught in either of the schools (Fieldnotes, 2.5.95).

Although the swimming programmes followed by the case study schools did cover many of the National Curriculum requirements there was little structure and planning to the programme, particularly in School B. In both case study schools county grade awards were used, and these did help to structure the swimming programme, but, as Lee (op.cit.) points out,

Award schemes, per se, do not constitute structured learning progressions. Educational objectives are more clearly identified in a scheme of work which takes account of learning progressions, available facilities and the needs of children in a particular school (p.8).

In addition to the county grades, School A did have its own award scheme which was clearly progressive and used primarily by the staff teaching the younger children. However, even with the use of this award scheme, several of the lessons that were observed lacked structure and few teachers had any sort of lesson plan.

The reasons for this may simply be lack of time to prepare a plan or it may be lack of expertise and knowledge of how to go about structuring a swimming lesson.

When structuring and planning a school swimming programme consideration must be given to those children not swimming. Data from School A revealed that, on one occasion, eleven (out of a total of around fifty) Year 6 pupils did not swim because of 'illness'. For these children who brought a book and read or just sat and watched (Fieldnotes, 31.10.94), the time spent at the swimming baths was unproductive time. However, the children not swimming could not stay at school because there were no staff to supervise them. Ideally, these children should have been incorporated into the lesson but, with time limitations imposed on the teacher during swimming lessons, this would not have been an easy task.

Another area that teachers may need help and advice with is assessment. The award schemes used in both schools not only helped to structure the swimming programme but were also used as the principal means of assessing pupils' progress. There are no standardised tests for assessing in the National Curriculum for Physical Education, and although this discretion may be welcomed by many teachers, others, especially the non-specialists, may feel uneasy (Carroll, 1991). Data from the case studies revealed that there were varying standards of assessment both within and between schools, with different teachers expecting different standards from their pupils. Teachers may need more guidance on how to assess their pupils so that there is closer agreement on what are acceptable performances.

The National Curriculum for Swimming deals with objectives to be achieved rather than lesson content (Lee, op.cit.). It would appear that teachers need help to plan their swimming programmes in order to meet these objectives, but neither of the case study schools felt that they had had much help or advice from the local education authority (LEA). Tools like the Resource Pack for Swimming in the National Curriculum (ASA, 1993) and Primary School Physical Education, Implementing the National Curriculum (Bunker et al, 1994) are available, but most teachers in the case study schools were not aware of these. The problems of forming and implementing a swimming programme in the schools has also been recognised by both the Institute of Swimming Teachers and Coaches (ISTC) and the ASA. The former has run seminars on the subject of swimming in the National Curriculum, and a National Conference organised by an LEA and the ASA entitled *Swimming Through the National Curriculum* was held in Autumn 1995. Such conferences may be very helpful but, with the time constraints placed on schools by

the National Curriculum and the money constraints arising from local management of schools (LMS), schools may be reluctant to send their teachers.

6.3 FACTORS AFFECTING THE DELIVERY OF SWIMMING IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

Although there were inherent differences between the case study schools with respect to the size and location of the schools, the major issues affecting swimming provision in the two schools were the same, namely: access to a suitable pool; expertise of those teaching; curriculum time and financing the swimming programme. These issues were also found to be the ones causing concern to the primary schools surveyed by Lee (op.cit.). Concerns regarding the amount of time needed to deliver a swimming programme and costs involved were also expressed by schools in the questionnaire survey carried out in this present study.

6.3.1 Access to a suitable swimming pool

Only eight (19%) of the forty-four schools surveyed had their own swimming pool, and, of these, only three (7%) used their own pool exclusively. These findings would tend to agree with both Page and Nash (1977) who found that primary schools tended to have poor access to swimming pools when compared to the secondary sector, and Lee (op.cit.) who found that 22% of schools in his survey had their own pool but only 7% used their own pool exclusively. With regard to access to a suitable pool this current investigation would tend to indicate that the answer may not be found in schools having their own pool. Comments on the returned questionnaires indicated that school pools tended to be small, shallow learner pools and, although these pools are seen by some to be most suitable for the teaching of swimming (Ministry of Education, 1953; Wilson, 1968; Elkington, 1976; Brain 1976), this study has shown that there are problems arising from their use. Such pools are often too small to accommodate a whole class of approximately thirty children, and the shallow depth of these pools means that activities like jumping, diving and some life-saving and survival skills cannot be taught.

The size of the pool at School A meant that only half a class could swim in the pool at one time. The teacher was then faced with the problem of what to do with those children waiting their turn to swim. Comments on some of the questionnaire forms would indicate that this is not an unusual situation, and teachers are being asked to both teach children in the water and control those waiting their turn to swim; a

situation that is clearly unacceptable and one which may lead not only to children being inadequately taught, but which may also be putting children at risk. In this situation, the teacher concentrating on teaching those in the water may not be able to prevent a child from jumping in unsupervised.

The size and shallow depth of the school pools often means that pupils have to travel to other deeper pools in order to have experience of deep water and take the higher county swimming grades. This was true of some of the survey schools, and of School A whose pupils swam at the local leisure centre. The results of the case study at School A suggested that children, used to being able to put their feet on the bottom, may not readily transfer from a shallow pool to deep water. Research has shown that fear can inhibit the speed of learning to swim (Fleming, 1971; Patrick, 1976; Fisher, 1981; Shank, 1984; Ingham, 1993), and in one case study school it resulted in a child being absent from school on swimming days. All schools where children swim in shallow pools should ensure that at some time during their time at school they experience deep water. This point is particularly relevant to children who rely solely on the school swimming lesson for their swimming experience.

For whatever reason, the vast majority of schools will have to travel to a pool to cater for at least some of their pupils. This was true of 93% of the survey sample, including both case study schools. However, travelling by coach is not only time consuming and costly, but it has to be arranged and administered. The questionnaire survey showed that, on average, one hour of swimming time required one hour forty-five minutes of travel and changing time, whilst Lee (op.cit.) found that, "in order to provide approximately 27 mins of water time, 89.06% of schools are off-site for between 1 and 2 hours" (p.7). Several of the teachers in the case study schools resented this time taken out of the school day and felt that 'half-a-day' was gone.

6.3.2 Expertise of those teaching swimming

"To some extent the level of staffing of PE may be regarded as a basic limitation on the range of activities incorporated in the PE curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning" (Penney, 1994). Lee (op.cit) found that, in his sample, the possession of a recognised swimming teaching qualification was restricted to only 20% of the school teachers and parents currently teaching swimming. However, 96% of his schools used external teachers (instructors). This figure according to Lawton

(1995), "is without doubt unrepresentative of the National picture" (p.14), and it was becoming apparent that, as schools started to control their own budgets, the use of external teachers would decrease. Data from the questionnaire survey in this study indicated that in over 90% of the schools at least one person who was teaching swimming held a swimming teaching qualification. This high number may be because over 60% of the schools had lessons at local leisure centres and, in many cases, used qualified swimming teachers employed by the county or the leisure centres. This was the case with the two case study schools where a swimming teacher employed by the county took one group at each school. However, all the other groups were taken by teachers and parent-helpers and amongst these only one in each of the case study schools held a swimming teaching qualification. This meant that the majority of children were being taught by teachers who had not obtained a recognised swimming teaching qualification.

Data from the case studies indicated that, as a result of being taught by non-specialists, pupils received little feedback, and skills were often wrongly demonstrated. Also, informal discussions with some of the pupils suggested that often better swimmers found lessons boring (Fieldnotes, 9.6.95). Children who are 'gifted' at swimming have to be catered for, and it is up to those teaching them to deliver a programme that is appropriate to that child's need, in the same way that extra attention may have to be paid to the non-swimmer. Children in a swimming lesson, as in any other lesson, require a challenge and this need not revolve around simply improving technique. As Reeves (1992) pointed out, once the basic skills have been taught, pupils could join the local swimming club in order to improve their technique. He stated that the main focus for the "vast majority" of children should be on the development of "watermanship", and it was essential that the swimming programme involved progressive and logical development of aquatic skills and activities including diving, water safety, water games, synchronised swimming and swimming for fitness because,

A balanced and comprehensive aquatics programme will not only improve the educational experience for children but will also enhance the possibility that swimming will be allocated sufficient time to enable teachers to provide a swimming programme which goes beyond that which is statutory (*ibid.* p.4).

Many of those teaching swimming in the case study schools felt ill-prepared to do so. However, in spite of this feeling of inadequacy, it appeared that few teachers would be willing to take a course leading to a swimming teaching qualification. Among the reasons for this lack of enthusiasm to become qualified were the

pressures of time and the low priority given to swimming. Schools may allow their teachers a set number of 'INSET' days per year, but now with competition for resources within the schools it would seem that teachers are more likely to devote this small amount of time to core subjects or their own specialist area (Fieldnotes, 15.8.95).

Donlan (1993) recommended a ratio of one qualified teacher to ten pupils for young children who were beginning to learn to swim. Data from the questionnaire revealed that most schools had around thirty children in the pool at a given time. For these schools to comply with Donlan's recommendation, there would need to be three qualified swimming teachers on the pool-side at each lesson. In order to cope with the school situation Donlan stated that,

...extra help can be provided by utilising other adults who would work under the supervision of the teacher, eg parents, grandparents, auxiliaries, sixth form students working on a sport leader award etc. (p.29)

In the observed swimming lessons at School A's own pool, where approximately fifteen children were in the water at any one time, no one teaching swimming held a swimming teaching qualification. School B had one qualified teacher in the small pool where approximately thirty children were divided into four groups. The qualified teacher took the non-swimmers, but the other three groups were taken by two class teachers and one parent-helper. None of these parent-helpers held a swimming teaching qualification, and they were not "under the supervision" of the one qualified swimming teacher who was an ancillary at the school. For more accomplished swimmers, the recommendation for all commercial sessions was one teacher to sixteen pupils. With regard to the school situation Donlan (ibid.) stated that in "*exceptional circumstances*" which

results in a pupil/teacher ratio which is greater than that which is desirable, it is possible for a *qualified, skilled* and *experienced* teacher, eg a qualified physical education teacher whose qualifications include a major swimming teaching element or a general classroom teacher with an ASA Teacher Certificate, to adopt a variety of strategies to help with the management of the group (p.29, sic.).

Over fifty children from School A swam in the main pool at the leisure centre and they were divided into three groups. Two of these groups were taken by qualified swimming teachers but the third was not. School B's better swimmers also swam in the main pool at the leisure centre. Approximately thirty children were divided into three groups and the only qualified swimming teacher was the peripatetic

swimming teacher taking the top group. Again, she did not supervise any of the other groups.

Both case study schools relied on parent help during the swimming lessons and there was evidence from the questionnaire data that several of the surveyed schools used parents as helpers. For one of the case study schools, this reliance was such that swimming lessons "could not run without them" (Teacher F, 20.1.95). Most of the parent-helpers in the case study schools had been teaching swimming for several years, even though several no longer had children at the schools. Comments from the staff of both schools tended to indicate that it was becoming more difficult to obtain help from parents as more and more were going out to work (Fieldnotes, 23.11.94). If this is the case, it may be that schools will be unable to rely so heavily on this type of help in the future.

None of the parent-helpers at the case study schools held a swimming teaching qualification, and it would appear that they received little help and advice on how to teach swimming. Comments from swimming teachers and evidence from the case study schools suggested that primarily parent-helpers assisted with infants and non-swimmers (Fieldnotes, 7.12.94). If these parent-helpers are unqualified, and are just 'left to get on with the job', this may lead to skills being wrongly taught in the early stages. According to Connell (1993) children tend to rely heavily on visual information when learning a skill, and, although not all authors agree on the value of augmented or external feedback in skill acquisition (Magill, 1993), many authors have written about the need for correct demonstrations and adequate feedback (Barclay, 1968; Ezell, 1976; Christina and Corcos, 1988; Lee 1991). The benefits of augmented feedback may be of particular importance at the very early stages of skill acquisition (Nettleton, 1980), and specifically, the Amateur Swimming Association (1981) noted the importance of accurate demonstration and feedback when learning swimming skills, particularly breaststroke. They stated that,

it is the opinion of many experienced swimming teachers that 'screw kicks' often arise from confused or inaccurate teaching of the stroke at the formative stage. If faults are allowed to persist, it becomes increasingly difficult to eliminate them later (p.20).

If this is true, then inaccurate demonstrations and inadequate feedback in the early stages of learning a skill might, at best, lead to poor performance on that skill, and, at worst, it might possibly mean that the skill is never acquired.

Another cause for concern is the growing tendency for teacher training institutions not to include a swimming component in the physical education courses for trainee primary teachers (Lee, 1994). This was supported by data from one of the case study schools. A teacher at School B, who had only recently finished her training, stated that there was no swimming element on her course (Fieldnotes, 20.1.95). Therefore, schools may have problems finding suitably qualified staff to teach children to swim, and this shortage could be exacerbated by the recent changes in the ASA teaching and coaching qualifications. Reorganisation of the ASA teaching and coaching awards means that, from September 1994, swimming teachers have five years in which to renew their swimming qualifications. All the qualified swimming teachers spoken to during this study showed concern about the new regulations. As one stated:

I think the biggest problem and the biggest 'aggro' within the teachers at the moment is all this change. Whether its just change for changes sake I don't know. I'm a bit despondent on that side of it. (Fieldnotes, 7.12.94).

As a result of these feelings teachers may not become 'requalified'. If leisure centres and local education authorities (LEAs) insist on the new qualification for renewal of contracts, some swimming teachers may find themselves out of work.

Most of those teaching swimming agreed that simple teaching aids outlining basic technique would be of assistance. Comments from the case studies would tend to support the fact that schools no longer see this help coming from the LEAs unless they pay to attend a specific course. However, there is help available for those teaching swimming. The county swimming grade guidelines, used by both schools, includes technique points for the strokes, as does the ASA's Resource Pack (1993), but it would appear often those teaching swimming, especially the parent-helper often has little help and advice. Perhaps too, schools could form links with local swimming clubs and other appropriate organisations, both to obtain advice and help, and also to obtain information and knowledge about appropriate outlets for their better swimmers. Primary schools should also consider forming stronger connections with their link secondary schools where there is a physical education specialist whose help could be sought.

This shortage of qualified swimming teachers may be alleviated with the new Government Policy Statement on Sport, entitled Sport: Raising the Game (1995), which states that trainee teachers should be given the opportunity to obtain coaching qualifications. It is not clear, though, who will pay for these qualifications

or where the time will be found for teachers to attend these courses. However, even if these problems are resolved this initiative will take time to implement and will do nothing to help alleviate the present situation.

It is desirable for those teaching swimming to possess some form of swimming teaching qualification, but it is essential that they possess some form of life-saving qualification. The county in which this study took place recommends a ratio of one qualified life-saver to twenty children, although the county's swimming adviser felt that all those teaching swimming should hold a life-saving qualification (Fieldnotes, 4.4.95). This adviser arranges courses for teachers to obtain the county's own life-saving certificate. Of the schools surveyed 79% had at least one person with a life-saving qualification, but this means that 21% of schools did not have a teacher qualified in life-saving. Perhaps the situation can best be summed up by one peripatetic teacher who, commenting on a school (not one in this study) where she taught swimming, stated, "go to [name of leisure centre²²] any Tuesday morning and it's an accident waiting to happen" (Fieldnotes, 26.11.94). With regard to the case study schools, School A insisted that all those who taught swimming had the county life-saving qualification, but this was not the case with School B where only two of the class teachers held a current life-saving qualification. Interestingly, comments from teachers both in informal discussions and on the questionnaire forms tended to suggest that some of those teachers who did possess the county's life-saving qualification felt it was all they needed to make them 'qualified' to teach swimming. Results of the questionnaire survey revealed that seventy-nine people held a swimming teaching qualification 'other' than an Amateur Swimming Association qualification. Data from the questionnaire survey did not reveal what these 'other' qualifications were, and it may be that some of these people only held the county's life-saving certificate but believed this to be a swimming teaching qualification.

Comments from teachers in both schools hinted that not all teachers would be prepared to take a life-saving course even if the school insisted that those teaching swimming were required to have a life-saving qualification. To combat this, schools that use leisure centres could ask the management of these centres to provide life-guards. This would mean incurring an extra 'swimming cost', but it may be cheaper than sending staff on a course, and it would ensure that the children were safe.

²²Name of leisure centre not given to aid confidentiality

6.3.3 Curriculum time

Swimming is a time-consuming exercise. The questionnaire data showed that a twenty minute swimming lesson was the most common, with an average lesson length of approximately twenty-five minutes for Key Stage 2 children and between twenty-three and twenty-four minutes for Key Stage 1 children. The reason for this may be because traditionally this is seen as the normal swimming lesson length; for example, the ASA (1980) recommended lessons of between twenty and thirty minutes for beginners. However, it may be due to the fact that leisure centre A, where a large number of schools swim, normally hires out its pool in twenty minute blocks (Fieldnotes, 19th September 1994). This lesson time might need to be reviewed in the light of the results of the case study which showed that for School B, the twenty minutes was often reduced because of 'changeover' time between schools and the time it takes to organise the children. This meant that on occasions children only had fifteen minutes actual swimming time. The benefit of such little water time is questionable, particularly when some teachers perceive that the whole morning is disrupted because of the swimming lesson. This research has shown that even when a school has a pool on site the swimming lesson can take an hour of curriculum time for a twenty minute swim.

The questionnaire data revealed that travel and changing time was greater for Key Stage 1 children, in spite of Rousch and Leeper's (1981) assumption that children of this age dress and undress rapidly. Children of this age often need practice at dressing and undressing and the experience gained during swimming lessons may be helpful and may also help children to become more independent. School B, whose younger children swam at the leisure centre did not have any pre-rehearsals of changing procedures in the classrooms prior to going to the leisure centre, as recommended by Dallam (1976). Such pre-rehearsals may help to reduce the time spent by these younger classes and could be considered by schools. It should be noted that the questionnaire in this study did not separate travel and changing time. Another explanation for the longer time taken by the younger classes might be that many of them come from village schools and had longer travel time rather than that they require longer changing time.

The ASA is aware of the problems surrounding the amount of time taken out of the school day in order to provide a comprehensive swimming programme (Lawton, 1995). However, several of their suggestions to help reduce this time may, in reality, be impractical for many schools. Their suggestions included:

- utilising lunch/break times for travel on the day which swimming is timetabled;
- starting the school day early - perhaps arranging for children to be dropped off at the pool in the morning, rather than the school. Alternatively extending the school day;
- maximise the use of travelling time to do other work, e.g. water safety;
- transferring a half days swimming group to the leisure centre/pool for half a day and withdrawing swimmers as appropriate. The pupils not swimming would have normal lessons but in a room at the centre (Ibid. p.17).

The impracticality of some of these suggestions is recognised by Lawton who added,

Many of these suggestions may not, at first, appear appropriate to your particular situation. What is required, however, is careful consideration of all possibilities and a little imaginative thinking (p.17).

A survey carried out in the south of England in 1993 showed that 41% of the primary schools surveyed felt that there was not enough curriculum time devoted to physical education (Penney and Evans, with Hennink and Bryant, 1994). Although both case study schools managed to cover other areas of physical education in school time, for some schools, the amount of time given to the swimming lesson means that other physical education activities have to be fitted into lunch times (Fieldnotes 30.5.95). This situation might lead to some schools reducing swimming provision because of the need to provide a 'broad and balanced curriculum' in order to satisfy OFSTED. Data from the questionnaire indeed indicated that, because of the time pressures from other areas of the curriculum, some schools were reducing the time allocated to swimming. This was also the case in Lee's (op.cit) survey and he stated that there might need to be a reappraisal of priorities in primary schools with regard to the National Curriculum bearing in mind that "no more important skill than being able to save one's own life is learned by children during this stage of their education" (p.9). New orders which came into effect from September 1995 have pruned the National Curriculum for Physical Education, and this may put less time pressures on staff, and as one teacher stated, they "may now be able to justify the time spent" on swimming (Teacher F, 20.1.95).

6.3.4 Financing the swimming programme

Schools implementing a National Curriculum for swimming have to incur a variety of costs which may include transport, hire of the pool, hire of a swimming teacher and, for schools with a pool on site, there are the added costs of its maintenance and heating. In addition, because of the size and shallow depth of many school pools, schools with their own pool may also have to finance a weekly trip to the local leisure centre in order to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum. Now that schools have control over their budget and can no longer rely on the support of local education authorities (LEAs) for such activities as swimming (Evans and Penny, 1994), many rely on parental contributions towards the costs of the swimming lessons. Swimming is the only subject in the National Curriculum that is so reliant on the ability of parents to pay, and, in many cases,

without parental contribution, Swimming would cease altogether. Swimming's place in the National Curriculum is very much at parents' expense, a situation which demands review at both local and national levels (Lee, *op.cit.*, p.7).

This dependence on parental contributions also raises the question of parents feeling that their children have a right to 'free' education, and some object to contributing on these grounds. A teacher from another school stated that, on occasions, parents refused to send swimming money 'on principle' but gave the school a monetary donation each term. This was because they felt that swimming should be free and they did not want to be seen to be contributing towards the costs. However, they did not wish the school to suffer (Fieldnotes, 20.11.94).

Because of heating and maintenance costs some schools with their own pools are considering closing them (Fieldnotes, August 1994). An article in the *Swimming Times* (Rawlins, 1995) urged schools with their own pools to open up these pools during school holidays, but stated that for many headteachers it is "all too much hassle" and they would rather keep "the doors firmly locked" (p.24). This 'accusation' that headteachers and governors cannot be bothered to do this may be unfair. Certainly some schools have turned their school pools into profit making enterprises, and projects in which the ASA have been involved have shown that school swimming pools can be a financial asset if usage is maximised (Lawton, 1995). In order for public use of pools in school holidays, headteachers and governors would need to advertise, manage and organise the activities, contact caretakers, swimming teachers and outside users. School A did, on occasions, hire

out the pool and it might do more frequently as a means of raising funds. However, the school management also ensured that those people using the pool had adequate life-saving cover (Teacher 8, 23.11.94). With the increased administrative pressures on headteachers and the increased costs of maintenance and heating in hiring out the pool, it may not simply be a case of not wanting the 'hassle' of opening the school pool to public use, but rather a matter of time, costs and safety constraints.

CHAPTER 7

GENERAL SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 GENERAL SUMMARY

The thesis has been concerned with swimming in the primary school, particularly in relation to the implications of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The research can be divided into two distinct phases. Phase 1 - the questionnaire survey and Phase 2 - the case studies. Literature review continued throughout the period of research. This was important as during this time a review of the National Curriculum led to the publishing of New Orders being issued in January 1995. Also, during this time other research into physical education and swimming in the National Curriculum was published.

The literature review showed that, for many years, several individuals and organisations had pressured the government to make swimming a compulsory part of the education of all children. With the ERA, swimming became a required element of the National Curriculum for Physical Education, and it appeared that its place within the primary school curriculum was secured. However, there was evidence from the literature that this might not be the case. The ERA also established local management of schools (LMS), giving budgetary control to schools, with the result that funding of swimming lessons became the responsibility of school governing bodies and not local education authorities (LEAs). Documentary data indicated that now finances were controlled by schools' governing bodies, there was no guarantee that the support given to swimming lessons prior to LMS would continue.

The objective of the initial questionnaire survey (Phase 1) was to obtain an overall picture of swimming in schools. Results of the survey indicated that, although there was a large variation in the provision of swimming amongst the schools in the survey borough, swimming had been established in the majority of the primary schools for a number of years. One school, however, specifically stated that it included swimming in the curriculum as a direct result of the ERA. It also became clear that swimming in primary schools was very complex with different provision

arrangements being made, not only between schools, but also between classes within the same school, and sometimes between children within the same class.

The questionnaire survey data revealed that only eight of the surveyed schools had their own pool, and those that did tended to have a higher frequency of lessons than other schools. Most schools had to travel to a pool, and even some schools with their own pool also travelled to another location, usually a leisure centre, for some of their lessons. Most children spent twenty minutes in the water during their swimming lessons but the travel and changing time was between forty-five and sixty minutes. Although the most common frequency pattern was for weekly swimming, only six schools (14%) provided weekly swimming throughout the primary years and over half the schools (54%) never provided weekly swimming lessons. Data was not sought on lesson content, except with respect to whether survival and life-saving skills were taught. Although 74% of the surveyed schools taught these skills, it was primarily to the older year groups.

Twenty to thirty children in the water at the same time seemed to be the most usual number and schools tended to swim in class groups. Data from the questionnaire also revealed that the teaching of swimming was being carried out by class teachers, peripatetic teachers and parent-helpers. The data obtained with respect to qualifications of those teaching swimming was not conclusive, and this needed to be looked at further in Phase 2. Data revealed that the staff of the schools used several different types of aids in their swimming lessons, but kickboards and sinking objects appeared to be the most common. All but two schools stated that they had a formal emergency procedure.

Comments on the questionnaire indicated that the time and costs of providing swimming lessons were of concern to some headteachers. Data showed that a great deal of curriculum time was needed to provide swimming lessons and that access to a swimming pool would affect the amount of time needed for those swimming lessons. Continued documentary research also highlighted the issues of access, time and costs, along with the expertise of those teaching swimming, as concerns in providing primary school swimming lessons. Therefore, it was decided to select two schools, which differed in respect of their access to a suitable pool, for case studies in Phase 2.

The objective of this phase of the research was firstly, to study the entire process of the swimming lesson and to see if the schools were fulfilling the requirements of the

National Curriculum and secondly, to highlight issues and concerns surrounding the teaching of swimming in the schools. The research tools used were observation and interviews.

Results showed that the schools' swimming programmes had not changed to any great extent because of the requirements of the National Curriculum. The only changes that had been made were as a result of the changes to the county swimming grades used by the schools to assess their pupils. Indeed, many of the parent-helpers were unaware of the requirements for swimming in the National Curriculum, and some of the teachers, including the two peripatetic teachers, appeared to be unsure of the requirements other than the need for pupils to be able to swim twenty-five metres and have a knowledge of water safety. Although it could be said that, overall, the swimming programme in both schools fulfilled the 'activity specific' requirements of the National Curriculum, some of the more 'general requirements' appeared not to be met. This rather narrow view of the swimming programme also meant that better swimmers were not always challenged as instruction tended to concentrate on stroke technique and survival/life-saving skills. During the period of observation no attempt was made to teach such activities as synchronised swimming, or small-sided games to the better swimmers.

Data from the case studies also revealed that, apart from the two peripatetic teachers, only two of those teaching swimming held a recognised swimming teaching qualification. This lack of expertise meant that skills were often wrongly demonstrated and the swimming lessons often lacked planning and structure. Also, teachers and parent-helpers without a current life-saving qualification were teaching swimming. Although this might comply with the recommendations of the survey borough LEA, which stated that there should be one qualified life-saver to twenty pupils, ideally all those teaching swimming should know how to life-save.

Although all those teaching swimming in the two schools appreciated the benefits of learning to swim, they were concerned about the costs involved and the amount of curriculum time needed to provide swimming lessons. As a result, the headteacher of one of the schools was now looking at ways to reduce swimming provision in order to save time and money. For both schools (with the exception of Year 6 at School A) the travel and changing time (including time waiting to swim) was at least twice the actual time in the water and for many pupils the amount of time in the water was just fifteen minutes. Year 6 at School A travelled to the local leisure centre in order to experience deep water and to practise skills that could not be

taught in the shallow school pool. Data revealed that some children, unused to deep water, had problems transferring to a large, deep pool.

Both schools relied on parental contributions towards the costs of swimming, and data from the case study schools and informal conversations with other teachers revealed that some parents resented this. Also, some teachers in School A felt that, because parents were contributing towards the cost of swimming, other school outings had been reduced.

Data revealed that, although those teaching swimming appreciated the benefits and necessity of learning to swim, swimming along with other aspects of physical education did not have the same status as some other foundation subjects. Certainly the headteacher at School B queried whether a school like his was the right place to teach swimming, yet there was some evidence from swimming teachers, and also from the children themselves, to suggest that fewer children were having private swimming lessons, and that parents were increasingly reliant on schools to teach their children to swim.

7.2 CONCLUSIONS

With the Education Reform Act (1988) (ERA) swimming became a compulsory activity for primary school pupils. However, this study has shown that swimming in primary schools is highly complex with a wide variation in provision. In order to try to understand what has helped to shape the swimming programmes in primary schools, this study has attempted to focus on the issues underlying this provision. Essentially, a qualitative methodology was adopted with both quantitative and qualitative techniques being employed and seen as complementary. Although the case studies involved only two schools, and the problem of generalisation to a wider population is appreciated, it is hoped that there may be a 'fit' (Schofield, 1993) between the situations studied and situations in other schools.

Two aspects of the ERA which were likely to have significant implications on swimming provision in the schools were the National Curriculum and local management of schools (LMS). The National Curriculum set out objectives to be met with regard to swimming, but the study showed that several of those teaching swimming were not aware of the requirements beyond the necessity for pupils to swim twenty-five metres by the end of Key Stage 2. Certainly neither of the case study schools had significantly changed their swimming programmes as a result of

the implementation of the National Curriculum. LMS resulted in the devolution of funds to school governing bodies, and there was now competition for resources not only between schools but also within schools. In addition, extra demands placed on primary school teachers meant that subjects now 'competed' for a place on the time-table.

Swimming is a subject that relies heavily on resources and what schools offer in terms of swimming provision will depend on how headteachers and governors solve the problems associated with access to a suitable pool, expertise of those teaching swimming, curriculum time and resulting costs. Moreover, the resources a school is prepared to allocate to swimming will depend on its status relative to other curricular activities. There was evidence from the study that physical education, including swimming, lacked the status afforded to some other foundation subjects. This lack of status, together with the demands of a very 'crowded' curriculum meant that it was unlikely that some teachers in the study would be prepared to attend a course leading to a swimming teaching qualification. Also, because of the pressures on school resources required to provide a swimming programme, some schools were now looking at ways to cut back on provision. At the same time, it appeared that there was a trend towards more and more parents relying on schools to provide swimming lessons.

7.3 IMPLICATIONS

Schools who, as a result of curriculum pressures and the constraints of time and costs, are considering reducing swimming provision will establish criteria to select who should swim. The requirement that pupils should be able to swim twenty-five metres at the end of Key Stage 2 could mean that some schools will use this target to restrict provision. This may result in some children having little or no swimming in the primary school, and rather than securing its place in the curriculum, the ERA may result in swimming provision, at least for some primary school children, being under threat. However, the ability to swim twenty-five metres does not guarantee that pupils are water safe, particularly if they have not experienced deep water, and teachers need to regard this requirement as a minimum. This may be particularly important if, as the evidence suggests, less children are having lessons outside of school.

With the prescribed target of the ability to swim twenty-five metres, comes the need to consider how to deal with pupils who fail to reach this standard by the end of Key

Stage 2. Not all secondary schools will opt for swimming at Key Stage 3, and some children may, therefore, never reach the required standard unless provision is made for them to do so. Also consideration must be given to the 'gifted' swimmer; if not challenged, such swimmers are likely to become bored and disinterested.

The length of the swimming lesson must, to some extent, determine what can be achieved in that lesson. It could be argued that fifteen minutes in the water, often being taught by a non-specialist without any recognised swimming teaching qualification, can hardly justify the resources needed to provide a swimming lesson. Although it could also be argued that something is better than nothing, if children are to truly benefit from their swimming lessons then time in the water needs to be increased. Also, help and advice needs to be more readily available to help those teaching swimming who, through no fault of their own, often feel ill-equipped to do so.

If changes are to take place in schools with regards to swimming, then steps need to be taken to increase the status afforded to physical education. Headteachers and governors will not spend money on improving the quality of teaching swimming unless they think it is of a high enough priority to do so. Perhaps what is fundamental to the future of swimming provision in the schools is the question of how the swimming programme is financed. Swimming is the only curriculum subject that relies so heavily on parental contributions, and if swimming is to remain a compulsory activity in primary schools, the arrangements for its financing need to be reviewed. By doing so, schools may be freed from some of the constraints which they now face. This may result in a higher standard of provision, and the continued opportunity for all primary school children to learn a skill that is not only excellent exercise, but is also necessary if they are to be safe playing in or near the water.

7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study has highlighted many issues that primary schools face in trying to provide a National Curriculum for swimming. Recommendations for further research include:

1. Investigations into the treatment of low ability and 'gifted' children in the swimming lesson in the primary school to ascertain if their needs are being met.
2. Investigations into the effectiveness of simple teaching aids to help those without a swimming teaching qualification to teach swimming.

3. Investigations into INSET provision with regard to swimming within primary schools to establish whether the needs of those teaching swimming are being met.
4. Investigations into the effects of the government's and the Youth Sports Trust's initiatives on physical education in the primary school.
5. Investigations into the management of school swimming pools to ascertain why some of these pools are closing whilst other schools run their pools at a profit.

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Appendix A-1

MAP DETAILING SUBJECT CONTRIBUTION TO MEETING EACH OBJECTIVE

Objective: Promoting an Exercise Focus

Maths

Recording results

- graphs
- averages

Dissemination of results

Science

Biology

- effects of exercise on cardiovascular system

English

Action

Poetry

Diary

Log

Information Technology

Software to create

lifestyle profiles

Activity patterns Analysis

Monitoring Progress

Geography

planning routes

distances

gradients

orienteering

as aerobic activity

History

Social/historical perspectives with regard to:

- heart disease
- leisure

programmes for health

- percentage participation

R.E.

Religious beliefs and traditions affecting participation

P.S.E.

Development of self awareness and self esteem through:

- leadership, creativity, initiative, imagination, interaction

H.E.

Energy balance

Qualitative aspects of food

Art

Design Posters

Logos

Badges

Clothing

Music

Composition

Rhythm/Time

Tempo, metre

Pulse

P.E.

Aerobic activity

Strength

Flexibility

Safe and correct exercise

Planning an Exercise Programme

Health Ed.

Lifestyle Management

Stress

Management

From Dickinson and Almond (1990, p.240).

SWIMMING QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE ANSWER FOR YEAR 1993/94

School

Address Tel:

..... Fax:

Post Code Teacher's name

Position

Is swimming included in your curriculum at present?

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| No | Yes | For how long has it been included? | | | | | |
| | | 1yr | 2yrs | 3yrs | 4yrs | 5yrs | 6+yrs |

Where do children from your school swim?

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--|----------------|--|
| Charnwood Leisure Centre | | Grammar School | |
| University | | De Lisle | |
| School's own swimming pool | | Other | |

Which school years have swimming lessons?

| | | Rec | Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 | Yr 5 | Yr 6 |
|---|-------------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Actual swim time per lesson (mins)? | | | | | | | | |
| Time travelling/undressing/dressing (mins)? | | | | | | | | |
| Time between swimming lessons (weeks)? | | | | | | | | |
| How many pupils per lesson (on average)? | | | | | | | | |
| In which school terms do you swim? | Autumn term | | | | | | | |
| | Winter term | | | | | | | |
| | Summer term | | | | | | | |

Who is in charge of the swimming lessons?

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Member of staff | |
| Peripatetic | |

Does he/she have any swimming qualification?

| | | |
|--------------------------|------|--|
| | None | |
| Preliminary ASA Teachers | | |
| ASA Teachers | | |
| Advanced ASA Teachers | | |
| Other | | |

PTO

Does the person in charge have any help with swimming lessons?

Help from members of staff

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|--------------------|---|---|---|---|----|
| No | Yes | Number of helpers? | | | | | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6+ |

Help from others?

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|--------------------|---|---|---|---|----|
| No | Yes | Number of helpers? | | | | | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6+ |

Do any of these helpers hold a swimming teaching qualification?

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|---------------------------|---|---|---|---|----|
| No | Yes | No. of qualified helpers? | | | | | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6+ |

Do you use any of these swimming aids?

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Armbands | |
| Pullbuoys | |
| Floats/kickboards | |
| Other | |

Do you teach lifesaving/survival ?

| | | | |
|-----|--|----|--|
| Yes | | No | |
|-----|--|----|--|

Do you use any of these teaching aids?

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Poles | |
| Ropes | |
| Hoops | |
| Bricks/sticks | |
| Balls | |
| Other | |

Do you have any of these available in case of problems?

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Telephone | |
| First aid kit | |
| Poles | |
| Ropes | |
| Other | |

Do you have any formal procedures in case of emergencies?

| | | | |
|-----|--|----|--|
| Yes | | No | |
|-----|--|----|--|

If you have any comments please add them here.

| |
|-------|
| |
| |
| |
| |

Please send the completed questionnaire in the reply paid envelope to:

Tel: 0509 263171 extn. 3266

Di Bass
P.E. Department
Loughborough University of Technology
Loughborough LE11 3TU

Appendix B-2 FINAL QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY FORM

SWIMMING QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE ANSWER FOR YEAR 1993/94

School

Address Tel:

..... Fax:

Post Code Teacher's name

Position

Is swimming included in your curriculum at present? ☒

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| No | Yes | For how long has it been included? | | | | | |
| | | 1yr | 2yrs | 3yrs | 4yrs | 5yrs | 6+yrs |

Where do children from your school swim? ☒

| | |
|------------|--|
| Rawlins | |
| Burleigh | |
| De Lisle | |
| University | |

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Charnwood Leisure Centre | |
| School's own swimming pool | |
| Other | |

Which school years have swimming lessons? ☒

| | Rec | Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 | Yr 5 | Yr 6 |
|--|-------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Actual swim time in the water (mins) | | | | | | | |
| Time travelling/undressing/dressing (mins) | | | | | | | |
| How many swimming sessions each term? | Autumn term | | | | | | |
| | Spring term | | | | | | |
| | Summer term | | | | | | |
| Average number of pupils in the water at the same time | | | | | | | |

If pupils from more than one year swim together, please describe how the years are grouped together.....

Who is responsible for teaching the pupils to swim?

| | Rec | Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 | Yr 5 | Yr 6 |
|---|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| (S) Member of staff (P) Peripatetic (O) Other | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Average number of additional helpers who teach swimming | Staff | | | | | | |
| | Others | | | | | | |

PTO

Do you teach life-saving/survival? ☒

| |
|----|
| No |
| |

| Rec | Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 | Yr 5 | Yr 6 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Yes | | | | | | |

How many teachers and helpers have any swimming teaching or life-saving qualification?

| | Person in charge | Helpers |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|---------|
| Preliminary ASA Teacher's Award | | |
| ASA Teacher's Award | | |
| Advanced ASA Teacher's Award | | |
| Other swimming teaching qualification | | |
| Life-Saving qualification | | |

Do you use any of these swimming aids? ☒

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Armbands | |
| Pullbuoys | |
| Floats/kickboards | |
| Other | |

Do you use any of these teaching aids? ☒

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Poles | |
| Ropes | |
| Hoops | |
| Bricks/Sticks | |
| Balls | |
| Other | |

Do you have any of these available in case of problems? ☒

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Telephone | |
| First aid kit | |
| Poles | |
| Ropes | |
| Other | |

Do you have any formal procedures in case of emergencies? ☒

| | |
|----|--|
| No | |
|----|--|

| | |
|-----|--|
| Yes | |
|-----|--|

| |
|---|
| If you have any comments please add them here |
| |
| |

Please send the completed questionnaire in the reply paid envelope to:

Tel: 0509 263171 extn. 3266

Di Bass
P.E. Department
Loughborough University of Technology
Loughborough LE11 3TU

Appendix B-3

FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO SCHOOLS TAKING PART IN QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

7th February 1994

Dear Headteacher

Last month I wrote to you with a questionnaire about your swimming programme.

As yet I have not received a reply from you. In case the questionnaire has been misplaced I have enclosed another copy. I would ask that you complete the form and return it in the enclosed reply paid envelope as soon as possible. If you have replied recently please ignore this letter.

I would like to stress that the names of all the schools taking part will remain confidential and we will send a summary of the final report to you.

Thank you for your help.

Yours sincerely

Di Bass

Encl.

Appendix B-4

**SECOND FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO THOSE SCHOOLS TAKING PART IN
QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY**

March 1994

Dear Headteacher

Recently I wrote to you enclosing a questionnaire about your school swimming programme.

I am sorry to trouble again, but I do not appear to have heard from you and I am now anxious to complete this part of my research.

I am, therefore, enclosing a further questionnaire with a s.a.e.

May I stress, once again, that the names of all schools taking part will remain confidential and I will send a summary of the final report to you.

Thank you, once again, for your help.

Yours sincerely

Di Bass

Enc.

PILOT OBSERVATION SHEET

School

Code

| | | | | | | |
|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Rec | Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 | Yr 5 | Yr 6 |
| | | | | | | |

Preparation for session

Date.....

Water familiarization

Pool regulations and rules

School regulations and rules

Hygiene

Emergency Procedure

Changing procedure rehearsal

Collection of money

Children not swimming

Illness/Injury

Forgotten costume

Financial

Religious

Other

Do non-swimmers attend?

Yes

No

What do they do?

Journey to the pool

Start time

Arrival time

Number of children

Number of helpers

Staff

Others

By coach

Activities during journey

Coach waits for class

Coach collects next class

Walking

Busy roads to cross

Approx distance

Any other activities

151

Which Pool(s)

Pool suitability

| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| | Depth - shallow end |
| | Depth - deep end |
| | Length |
| | Width |
| | Water Temperature |
| | Air Temperature |
| | Life guards |
| | Suitable changing rooms |
| | Clean |
| | Good size |
| | Space for clothes |

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Lane Ropes

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| | Across pool (widths) |
| | Along pool (lengths) |

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.....

Equipment (S)chool (P)ool

| S | P |
|---|---------------|
| | Floats |
| | Ropes |
| | Poles |
| | Bricks/Sticks |
| | Toys |
| | Other |

| | |
|--|---------------|
| | First Aid kit |
| | Whistle |
| | Alarm system |

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Organisation

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| | Helpers in changing room |
| | Staff |
| | Others |

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| | How long do children wait |
|--|---------------------------|

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Who is the main person in charge

.....

Number of helpers

.....

| | |
|--|--------|
| | Staff |
| | Others |

.....

.....

| | |
|--|------------------------------|
| | No. of children in the water |
|--|------------------------------|

.....

.....

How is the class divided

| | |
|--|---------|
| | Group 1 |
| | Group 2 |
| | Group 3 |
| | Group 4 |
| | Group 5 |

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| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Criteria for dividing the class | |
|---------------------------------|--|

.....

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| | Non-swimmers (<5m) |
|--|--------------------|

.....

Lesson content (time)

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Water familiarization | |
|-----------------------|--|

.....

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| | Pool regulations and rules |
|--|----------------------------|

.....

| | |
|--|------------------------------|
| | School regulations and rules |
|--|------------------------------|

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| | |
|--|---------|
| | Hygiene |
|--|---------|

.....

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| | Emergency Procedure |
|--|---------------------|

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| | |
|--|------------------------|
| | Knowledge of equipment |
|--|------------------------|

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| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Water orientation | |
|-------------------|--|

.....

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| | Control of body position |
|--|--------------------------|

.....

| | |
|--|----------|
| | Floating |
|--|----------|

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| | |
|--|---------|
| | Gliding |
|--|---------|

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| | |
|--|----------|
| | Sculling |
|--|----------|

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| | |
|--|---------|
| | Kicking |
|--|---------|

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| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| | Introduction to strokes |
|--|-------------------------|

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| | |
|------------------|--|
| Stroke technique | |
|------------------|--|

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| | |
|--|---------------|
| | Basic strokes |
|--|---------------|

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| | |
|--|----------------------|
| | Recreational strokes |
|--|----------------------|

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| | |
|--|------------------|
| | Starts and turns |
|--|------------------|

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| | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Water competence | |
| | lifesaving/survival |
| | Simple games |
| | Stroke improvement |
| | Exercise programme |
| | Synchro swimming |
| | Diving |
| | Free time during lesson |
| | Total time of lesson |

Changeover

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| | How long do children wait |
| | Are staff the same |
| | Are helpers the same |
| | Person in charge the same |

Dressing

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| | How long in changing rooms |
| | Do children shower |
| | No. of helpers |
| | Staff |
| | Others |

Return Journey

| | |
|--------------|----------------|
| Start time | |
| Arrival time | |
| How long | |
| | No. of Helpers |
| | Staff |
| | Others |

Time scheduled for swimming

Time actually taken

| |
|--|
| |
| |

Remarks

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Appendix B-6

FINAL OBSERVATION SHEET

School Code

| Rec | Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 | Yr 5 | Yr 6 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| | | | | | | |

Date.....

Preparation for session

| | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Water familiarization | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Pool regulations and rules | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | School regulations and rules | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Hygiene | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Emergency Procedure | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Changing procedure rehearsal | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Collection of money | ..... |

Children not swimming

| | | |
|--|-----------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Illness/Injury | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Forgotten costume | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Financial | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Religious | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do non-swimmers attend? |  | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> What do they do? |

Journey to the pool

| | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Start time | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Arrival time | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Number of children | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Number of helpers | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Staff | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Others | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | By coach | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Activities during journey | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Coach waits for class | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Coach collects next class | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Walking | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Busy roads to cross | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Approx distance | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Any other activities | ..... |

Organisation

| | | |
|--|---------------------------|--|
| | Helpers in changing room | |
| | Staff | |
| | Others | |
| | How long do children wait | |

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Lane Ropes

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| | Across pool (widths) |
| | Along pool (lengths) |

.....

.....

.....

Lesson Start Time

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

| |
|----------------------------------|
| Who is the main person in charge |
|----------------------------------|

.....

Number of helpers

| | |
|--|------------------------------|
| | Staff |
| | Others |
| | No. of children in the water |

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

How is the class divided

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| | Group 1 |
| | Group 2 |
| | Group 3 |
| | Group 4 |
| | Group 5 |
| Criteria for dividing the class | |
| | Non-swimmers (<5m) |

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Lesson content

Water familiarization

| | |
|--|------------------------------|
| | Pool regulations and rules |
| | School regulations and rules |
| | Hygiene |
| | Emergency Procedure |
| | Knowledge of equipment |

Water orientation

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| | Control of body position |
| | Floating |
| | Gliding |
| | Sculling |
| | Kicking |
| | Introduction to strokes |

Stroke technique

| | Basic strokes | F/s | Arms | Legs | Breathing | Timing |
|--|---------------|-----|------|------|-----------|--------|
| | Backstroke | | | | | |
| | Breaststroke | | | | | |
| | Butterfly | | | | | |
| | Front crawl | | | | | |

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| | Recreational strokes |
| | Starts and turns |

Water competence

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| | lifesaving/survival |
| | Simple games |
| | Stamina swimming |
| | Synchro swimming |
| | Diving |

Free time during lesson

Lesson End Time

Total time of lesson

Changeover

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| | How long do children wait |
| | Are staff the same |
| | Are helpers the same |
| | Person in charge the same |

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Dressing

| | | |
|--|----------------------------|--------|
| | How long in changing rooms | |
| | Do children shower | |
| | No. of helpers | |
| | | Staff |
| | | Others |

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Return Journey

| | |
|--------------|----------------|
| Start time | |
| Arrival time | |
| How long | |
| | No. of Helpers |
| | Staff |
| | Others |

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Time scheduled for swimming

Time actually taken

Remarks

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Which Pool

Pool suitability

| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| | Depth - shallow end |
| | Depth - deep end |
| | Length |
| | Width |
| | Water Temperature |
| | Air Temperature |
| | Life guards |
| | Suitable changing rooms |
| | Clean |
| | Good size |
| | Space for clothes |

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Equipment (S)chool (P)ool

| S | P | |
|---|---|---------------|
| | | Floats |
| | | Ropes |
| | | Poles |
| | | Bricks/Sticks |
| | | Toys |
| | | Other |
| | | First Aid kit |
| | | Whistle |
| | | Alarm system |

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Remarks

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Appendix B-7

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: SCHOOL CHILDREN

Thank you for coming along to talk to me. I just want to ask you a few questions about your swimming lessons.

1. How many of you can swim?
2. How far can you swim? Do you have any badges and certificates?
3. Do you enjoy swimming at school?
4. What do you like the most in a swimming lesson?
5. What do you dislike?
6. Do any of you go swimming with your parents?
7. Do any of you have swimming lessons?
8. Can your parents swim?

Appendix B-8

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: PARENT-HELPERS AND ANCILLARIES

A. Qualifications/Experience

1. Can I start by asking you a little about your swimming teaching experience?
 2. How long have you been teaching swimming atschool?
 3. Have you helped with swimming anywhere else?
 4. Have you any swimming teaching qualification ?
 5. **Do you have a child attending the school?
 6. **How did you start helping with the swimming lessons?
- ** (Parents only)

B. Swimming Programme

1. Do you follow a specific swimming programme?
2. Do you know that swimming is now part of the National Curriculum?
3. How do you feel about it being part of the National Curriculum?
4. Do you know if the swimming programme followed by this school has changed because of the requirements of the National Curriculum?

C. Comments

1. What do you feel are the main benefits in providing a swimming programme?
2. What do you feel are the main problems in providing a swimming programme?
3. What would help you with your teaching swimming to the children?
4. Do you feel school is the place where children should learn to swim?

Appendix B-9

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: TEACHERS

A. Qualifications/Experience

1. Can I start by asking you about your swimming teaching experience?
2. Do you possess any swimming teaching qualifications or have you attended any courses?
3. Was swimming covered in your teaching course at college?
4. How long have you been teaching swimming?

B. School Swimming Programme and County Hall

As you know I am interested in school swimming programmes with regard to the National Curriculum.

1. Does your school follow a specific swimming programme?
2. Within this structure do you follow a specific programme of study?
3. Are you aware of the requirements of the National Curriculum in relation to swimming?
4. Has this programme been adapted to fulfil National Curriculum requirements?
5. Have you received any directives or advice from County Hall to help fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum in your swimming programme?
6. Do you know of any publications that may help? Have you seen either of these before? (Show Amateur Swimming Association Publication, National Curriculum Resource Pack For Swimming and Water Safety, the information on the 'Swimming' software package, and Primary Physical Education: Implementing the National Curriculum)
7. What form of assessment do you use for your pupils?
8. Where do you feel swimming fits into the National Curriculum for Physical Education?

C. Swimming Related Work in the Classroom

1. Is any preparation done in the classroom prior to swimming lessons.
2. Are areas regarding water safety covered in the classroom?
3. Are elements relating to swimming covered in any other subject areas?

D. Comments

1. What are your feelings about swimming being part of the National Curriculum?
2. Are there benefits in providing a swimming programme in the school?
3. Are there problems? How might these be overcome?
4. What is the role of parents in providing swimming experience.?

(For Year 6 teachers at School A).

5. What are your feelings on having all of Year 6 swimming together at the local Leisure Centre this year?

Appendix B-10

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: PERIPATETIC SWIMMING TEACHERS

A. Qualifications/Experience

1. Can I start by asking you about your swimming teaching experience and qualifications?
2. How many schools do you teach at?

B. School Swimming Programme

1. Do these schools have a swimming programme?
2. As you may know swimming is now part of the National Curriculum for Physical Education. Are you aware of the requirements of the National Curriculum with regards to swimming?
3. Has the school swimming programme in your schools been adapted to conform to the requirements of the National Curriculum?
4. Have you received any guidance or directives from County Hall with regards to swimming in the National Curriculum?
5. Do you know of any publications that might help a school implement a programme?
6. Have you seen any of these? (Show Amateur Swimming Association publication, National Curriculum Resource Pack for Swimming and Water Safety, details of 'Swimming' software package and Primary Physical Education: Implementing the National Curriculum.)
7. What is the standard of school pupils that you usually teach. Is it the top group, middle or bottom group?
8. Do you feel that teaching school pupils different from teaching say a group of swimmers at the leisure centre, during leisure centre lessons?
9. How much water safety is included in your lessons?

Comments

1. What do you feel are the benefits of teaching pupils to swim in the school?
2. What do you feel are the problems? How would you overcome them?

Appendix B-11

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: DEPUTY WARDEN/CLASS TEACHER SCHOOL A

A. Organisation

1. What percentage of the school time-table is taken up by swimming?
2. How is the swimming programme financed - maintenance costs and the cost of Year 6 going to the local Leisure Centre.
3. Do all pupils pay?
4. Is there any risk that the school pool might close?

B. Swimming Programme and NC

1. Does your school follow a swimming programme?
2. Do you feel that it meets the requirements of the National Curriculum?
3. Has the swimming programme been altered in any way to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum?
4. Have you received any directives or advice from Leicester Education Authority to help implement the National Curriculum for swimming? Could they have helped more?
5. Are you aware of these two publications? (Show the ASA publication, National Curriculum Resource Pack for Swimming and Water Safety, the details of the computer 'Swimming' package and Primary Physical Education: Implementing the National Curriculum).
6. What criteria is used for assessing the children?
7. I understand you do all the swimming assessments why is this?
8. Do you have any swimming teaching qualifications?
9. What swimming teaching qualifications do most of your teachers possess?
10. How do you fund the life-saving course?

C. Comments

1. What do you see as the main benefits of providing a school swimming programme?
2. What do you see are the main problems?
3. How do you feel these could be overcome?
4. Do you think the school is the correct place for children to be taught swimming?
5. How do you handle a situation of a child who persistently refuses to swim?

Appendix B-12

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: HEADTEACHER - SCHOOL B

A. Organisation

1. What percentage of the school time-table is taken up by swimming?
2. Now that children go swimming on one day, how often does each class go and when?
3. How is the swimming programme financed?
4. Are arrangements for financing different for small schools?

B. Swimming Programme and NC

1. Does your school follow a swimming programme?
2. Do you feel that it meets the requirements of the National Curriculum?
3. Has the swimming programme been altered in any way to fulfil the requirements of the N.C.?
4. Have you received any directives or advice from Leicestershire Education Authority to help implement the National Curriculum for swimming? Could they have helped more?
5. Are you aware of these two publications? (Show Amateur Swimming Association publication, National Curriculum Resource Pack for Swimming and Water Safety, the information on the 'Swimming' software package and Primary Physical Education: Implementing the National Curriculum).
6. What criteria is used for assessing the children?

C. Comments

1. What do you see as the main benefits of providing a school swimming programme?
2. What do you see are the main problems?
3. How do you feel these could be overcome?
4. Do you think the school is the correct place for children to be taught swimming?
5. Do you ever have a pupil who persistently refuses to swim? How do you handle this?

D. General

1. As you help with the swimming lessons - do you have any swimming teaching qualifications?
2. Was swimming part of your course at college/university?

Appendix B-13

INTERVIEWEES - SCHOOL A

CLASS TEACHERS

Year 1 - two class teachers

Year 3 - one permanent class teacher and one supply teacher.

Year 6 - two class teachers

SUB-WARDEN AND YEAR 5 TEACHER

A SCHOOL ANCILLARY

PERIPATETIC SWIMMING TEACHER

PARENT-HELPERS

Two parent-helpers who assisted the Year 1 swimmers

SIXTEEN PUPILS

Five children from each Year 1 Class

Five children from each Year 3 Class

Five children from one Year 6 class

Six children from one Year 6 Class

INTERVIEWEES - SCHOOL B

All staff at School B were interviewed.

CLASS TEACHERS

Class 1 teacher - Reception and Younger Year 1 pupils

Class 2 teacher - Year 1 and Year 2

Class 3 teacher - Year 3 and Year 4

• HEADTEACHER AND CLASS FOUR TEACHER - YEAR 5 AND YEAR 6

A SCHOOL ANCILLARY

PERIPATETIC SWIMMING TEACHER

PARENT-HELPERS

Four parent-helpers who each took a group of swimmers

FIFTEEN PUPILS

Five children from Class Two

Five children from Class Three

Five children from Class Four.

Appendix B-14

LETTER TO CASE STUDY SCHOOLS REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT
INTERVIEWS

27 November 1994

Headteacher (School B)
Class teacher/Deputy Warden (School A)

Dear

Thank you for letting me observe the swimming lessons at your school. Please thank your staff for all their patience.

With regard to the next stage of my research, would it be possible to set up interviews with yourself, the teachers, ancillaries and parent-helpers who have been involved in the swimming lessons that I have observed? At a later date I should also like to interview some of the pupils. Perhaps we could discuss this some time.

The interviews will last about twenty minutes and I would like to tape the discussions. Once the tape has been transcribed it will be erased and the person's identity will not be revealed.

I have enclosed copies of letters to your staff and the parent-helpers involved. I would be grateful if you would return the signed copies.

Thank you, once again for all your help.

Yours sincerely,

Di Bass

Appendix B-15

**LETTER TO THOSE TEACHING SWIMMING REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CARRY
OUT INTERVIEWS**

November 1994

Class teachers
Parent-helpers

Dear

Thank you for allowing me to observe your swimming lessons. I found this a really interesting and helpful exercise.

As part of the next stage of my research, I would like to discuss your swimming programme with you. The interview should last approximately 20 minutes and I will tape our discussion. However, once the tape has been transcribed, it will be erased and your identity will not be revealed.

Perhaps you would sign this letter and return it to [name of headteacher].

Thank you for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Di Bass

I agree to being interviewed by Di Bass as part of her research into swimming in primary schools.

Name (Please print).....

Signature.....

Date.....

Appendix C-1

PATTERNS OF SWIMMING PROVISION IN SURVEYED SCHOOLS

1. Weekly all year
2. Weekly for two terms
3. Weekly for one term
4. Weekly for one half-term
5. Weekly for two half-terms
6. Weekly for three half-terms
7. Weekly for one half-term and weekly for one term
8. Weekly for four weeks (two terms) and weekly for three weeks (one term)
9. Weekly for five weeks (one term)
10. Weekly for six weeks (three terms)
11. Weekly for six weeks (two terms)
12. Weekly for six weeks (one term)
13. Weekly for eight weeks (one term)
14. Weekly for ten weeks (one term)
15. Weekly for ten weeks (three terms)
16. Weekly for ten weeks (two terms)
17. Weekly for ten weeks (one term) and weekly for seven weeks (one term)
18. Weekly for ten weeks (one term) and weekly for six weeks (two terms)
19. Every two out of three weeks for three terms
20. Every two weeks

Appendix D-1

NATIONAL CURRICULUM - PROGRAMMES OF STUDY (1992)

Key Stage 1: Programmes of study (activity specific)

At Key Stage 1, pupils should pursue the programmes of study for five areas of activity: athletic activities, dance, games, gymnastic activities, outdoor and adventurous activities, and if the school chooses to teach in Key Stage 1, swimming.

SWIMMING

If swimming is taught in Key Stage 1, teaching of the early parts of the programmes of study set out in Key Stage 2 should be considered first.

Key Stage 2: Programmes of study (activity specific)

SWIMMING

Pupils should:

- be taught the codes of hygiene and courtesy for using swimming pools.
- be given opportunities to develop confidence in water; be taught how to rest in water, how to float and to adopt support positions.
- be taught the principles and skills of water safety and assess the nature, visibility and location of water hazards in a variety of conditions.
- be taught survival skills appropriate to their competence in water and be encouraged to evaluate their own abilities and limitations.
- be encouraged to assess their swimming and water skills efficiency against a range of criteria.
- be made aware of the role of swimming and water safety skills in supporting other water based activities near water.

From Physical Education in the National Curriculum. Department of Education and Science (1992, p. 7)

Appendix D-2

CONTENTS OF OBSERVED SWIMMING LESSONS - SCHOOL A

School A - Year 1 Class A

School Pool. Lesson Time 20 minutes

| <p>Year 1 Class A: Children change in the classroom. Towels and shoes taken to the pool-side. Helpers - 1 staff (ancillary), and two parent-helpers. Usually two or three parents help with changing. Also one student teacher present during observations. Class divided into two so that approximately 14 children in water at one time. Children usually get a full twenty minutes in water.</p> | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| | Group 1 | Group 2 | Group 3 | Group 4 |
| Week One - pool closed. | | | | |
| Week Two | Jumping to a tambourine. Picking up fish from bottom of pool. Kicking on front and back. Kicking and breathing to side. | Jumping to a tambourine. Kicking on front and back with floats. Some attempt at full stroke front and backcrawl. | Jumping to a tambourine. Kicking on front and back with floats. | As Group 3 |
| Week Three - no swimming school photos. | | | | |
| Week Four - explanation of why children need to use footbath. Two children not swimming - one ill, and one forgotten kit. | Actions to 'Grand Old Duke of York'. Kicking practice on front and back. Lunging to side. Getting legs up and faces in water. Games with hoops and balls. | Actions to 'Grand Old Duke of York. Flutter kicking on front and back. Attempts to swim widths with and without floats. Games with hoops and balls. | 'Actions to Grand Old Duke of York'. Flutter kicking with floats on front and back. Games with balls. | As Group 3 |
| Week Five - two children not swimming. One broken arm, one sore throat. | Actions to song- 'When all the world is sleeping'. Children attempted to glide and lunge for pool-side. Some attempts at teaching front and backcrawl. | Actions to song- 'When all the world is sleeping'. Front and backcrawl kick. Attempts to swim width. | Actions to song- 'When all the world is sleeping'. As Group 2 but widths mostly with floats. One girl who had been very nervous swam across on her back and front kicking in stretched body position. | Actions to song- 'When all the world is sleeping'. Only one very nervous boy in this group this week. Had individual attention - some improvement. |
| Half-term | | | | |

School A - Year 1 Class A (Continued)

| | Group 1 | Group 2 | Group 3 | Group 4 |
|--|--|---|--|------------|
| Week Six - session started with children sitting on side of pool, kicking with 'straight' legs from hips. | Sitting on bottom. Kicking, front and back. Attempts at frontcrawl. Swimming through hoops. | Kicking on front and back - some gliding. Swimming through hoops | Kicking on front and back. Playing with balls. | As Group 3 |
| Week Seven - two children not swimming. Forgotten kit. | Children sitting on pool-side kicking with long legs. Children pretended to be fireworks. Lunging for wall. Breathing exercises for frontcrawl. Leg kick on front and back. | Children sitting on pool side kicking with long legs. Children pretended to be fireworks. Kicking on front and back. | As Group 2 | As Group 2 |
| Week Eight | Children sitting on side kicking with long legs. Pretended to be different fair rides. Kicking on front and back. One girl attempted breaststroke. | Children sitting on side kicking with long legs. Pretended to be different fair rides. Lots of kicking with floats. Gliding and kicking without floats. | Children sitting on side kicking with long legs. Pretended to be different fair rides. Lots of kicking with floats . | As Group 3 |

School A - Year 1 Class B

School Pool. Lesson Time 20 Minutes

Year 1 - Class B. Children change in the classroom. Towels and shoes taken to the pool-side. Normally an ancillary and two parent-helpers in the water. Usually a parent on pool-side, and a student teacher was present during observation period. This class teacher does not hold a current life-saving qualification and does not, therefore, teach, but 'oversees' the lesson. Class divided into two so that approximately fourteen children in the water at one time.

| | Group 1 | Group 2 | Group 3 |
|--|--|--|---|
| Week One - no swimming. Pool closed. | | | |
| Week Two - safety rules gone and emergency procedure gone over with class. | Consists of those who can swim a width with a float. Lots of kicking and attempts at full stroke, frontcrawl and backcrawl. | Lots of kicking on front and back with one float. | As Group 2 |
| Week Three - no swimming. School photographs. | | | |
| Week Four | Mostly kicking with floats. Swam through hoops. | Mostly kicking on front and back with one float. | As Group 2. One very nervous girl at beginning of lesson. Fine by end. |
| Week Five | Gliding and floating. Kicking with floats. | Lots of kicking again. Game of ring-a-roses. Some children attempt to gain 'Puffin' Badge by swimming across width with float. | As Group 2 |
| Half-term | | | |
| Week Six - only fifteen minutes each in water this week. Baking bread in class prior to lesson - late arriving at pool. | Lots of gliding and floating. Kicking with stretched arms - maintaining streamlined position. Full stroke, frontcrawl attempted. | Mostly kicking. Some children still nervous at putting face in water. | As Group 2 |
| Week Seven | Continued practice at stretching and gliding. Two children obtained 10m badge. Children spent time practising strokes on own. | Kicking with floats. Attempts to obtain 'Puffin Badge'. | As Group 2 |
| Week Eight | Continued practices as above. One girl who was a non-swimmer at beginning of year, achieved a 10m badge. | As Above. | As Group 2. One very nervous boy at beginning of session achieved 'Puffin Badge' at end of session. |

School A - Year 3 Class A

School Pool. Lesson Time 20 minutes

| | |
|---|---|
| Year 3 Class A: Children take off jumpers and trousers/skirts in the classroom and then finish getting changed in the changing rooms on the pool-side. These are very small. Towels are taken to the pool in case of an emergency. Approximately twenty-six children divided into two groups. One 'helper' who does not help teach swimming but watches session and help to supervise changing, but not there every week. In addition there is an ancillary who has charge of a girl with impaired vision. | |
| Week One - one child did not swim - forgotten kit. | Floating and gliding on front and back. Backcrawl full stroke and kick. Frontcrawl full stroke and kick practice. Better swimmers tended to swim lengths and the weaker swimmers widths. Time during lesson to practise on own. |
| Week Two | Some gliding practices. Breaststroke kick and frontcrawl kick and full stroke. Free time at the end of the session to practise on own. |
| Week Three | Pool closed |
| Week Four | Weaker swimmers practised backcrawl and frontcrawl (full stroke and kick). The better swimmers practised breaststroke. Free time to practise. Two children removed armbands and swam for first time. One of these achieved five metres. |

School A - Year 3 Class B

| | |
|--|---|
| Year 3 Class B: This group taken by two different teachers during my observations. With one teacher children changed completely in classroom and then took towel and shoes to pool. With other teacher only jumpers were removed in classroom and children finished undressing in the changing rooms. Class divided into two groups of about fifteen children. Children usually have twenty minutes in the water. | |
| Week One | Preparation for session took a long time so children only had fifteen minutes in the water. Several practices of the safety procedure. Jumping and splashing. Frontcrawl and backcrawl kicking and full stroke. Weaker swimmers were told to cross pool and collect float. No additional instruction. Get across pool as they wished. |
| Week Two | Floating, gliding, changing body position. Frontcrawl kicking and an introduction to full stroke. One arm frontcrawl. Better swimmers attempted to swim a length. |
| Week Three | Pool Closed |
| Week Four | Work on body position. Reaching for pool-side. Lifting legs off bottom. Blowing bubbles. Some stroke work on frontcrawl. |

School A - Year 6

Local Leisure Centre - Main Pool. Lesson Time 40 Minutes

Year 6: The whole of Year 6 travel to the local leisure centre each week. They are divided into three groups. A member of the leisure centre staff takes the top group (Group 1) and two class teachers take the other two groups (Groups 2 and 3). Altogether there are about fifty-two children in the water. Initial arrangement - Group 2 swam in the deep water, Group 1 in the middle section and Group 3 in the shallow water. Later arrangement - Group 1 in the deep water, Group 2 in the middle section (but still some children only just able to stand) and Group 3 in the shallow water.

| | Group 1 | Group 2 | Group 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Week One - four children not swimming. Bus late, lesson started very late. Children only had fifteen minutes in the water. | Safety procedures outlined. Swam lengths on different strokes. | As Group 1. | As Group 1, but swam widths and not lengths. |
| Week Two - seven children not swimming this week. Time in water - thirty-five minutes. | Backcrawl pull, kick and full stroke. | Backcrawl kick and full stroke. Frontcrawl full stroke | All aspects of breaststroke. |
| Week Three - five children not swimming. Time in the water - thirty-five minutes | Backcrawl and frontcrawl. | Backcrawl. | Breaststroke and frontcrawl (pull, kick and full stroke) and full stroke backcrawl. |
| Week Four - one child not swimming, illness. Time in water - twenty-five minutes. | Emergency procedure explained. Breaststroke (kick and full stroke). | Backcrawl (full stroke) and frontcrawl kick. Teacher taken ill during this session. Author took over group. | Backcrawl, breaststroke and frontcrawl (full stroke). Frontcrawl kick. |
| Week Five - one child not swimming. Time in the water - thirty minutes. | Breaststroke (full stroke and kick). Attempts at swimming lengths. | Backcrawl and breaststroke (kick and full stroke). Attempts at swimming lengths. Some swimming lengths with floats. | Safe entries from pool-side. Kick on backcrawl and breaststroke. Attempts at swimming lengths, not all tried. |
| Week Six - four children not swimming. Time in the water - thirty minutes. twenty-one children now in Group 3. Several moved themselves from Group 2 because they wanted to be in shallow water. | Breaststroke (kick, pull and full stroke). Sitting dives. Not attempted by all. | Floating, relaxing on back. Backcrawl arms, legs and full stroke. | Frontcrawl (legs and full stroke), picking up bricks, log rolls and mushroom floats. |
| Half-Term | | | |

School A - Year 6 (Continued)

| | Group 1 | Group 2 | Group 3 |
|--|---|---|---|
| Week Seven - five children not swimming. Time in the water - thirty minutes. Very nervous girl who has not swum was absent from school today. | Backcrawl (full stroke, pull and kick), frontcrawl full stroke. Sitting dives. Not attempted by all. Treading water with one arm, no arms. Somersaults. | Backcrawl (full stroke, arms and legs). | All aspects of breaststroke. Wedge kick taught. |
| Week Eight - eleven children not swimming. Time in the water - 30 min. Very nervous girl still not at school. | Frontcrawl (pull, kick and full stroke) | As Group 1. All managed a length at end of session. Some still using a float. | Backcrawl, full stroke and kick. Some managed a length at end of session. |
| Week Nine - nine children not swimming. Time in the water - 30 min. Very nervous girl came swimming but did not bring kit. | Sculling. Underwater swimming. Surface diving, picking up brick. Breaststroke kick. | Backcrawl (pull, kick and full stroke). Attempted lengths at end of session. Some still using floats. | Frontcrawl (kick and full stroke). All attempted to swim a length. Some with floats. Some only managed half a length. |

Appendix D-3

CONTENTS OF OBSERVED SWIMMING LESSONS

School B

Local Leisure Centre - Small Pool. Lesson Time 20 minutes

| 1st Half-term | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| 4 groups - Groups 1 and 2 working across the pool and Groups 3 and 4 from one end to half-way down pool. | | | | |
| Teachers - 2 teachers (Groups 1 and 3), 1 ancillary (Group 4), 1 parent-helper (Group 2) plus a 'spotter'. | | | | |
| | Group 1 | Group 2 | Group 3 | Group 4 |
| Week Two - one child not swimming. Time in water - seventeen minutes. | Breaststroke (full stroke). Frontcrawl kick. | Backcrawl (full stroke) Breaststroke kick. | Running, stretching for the side. Attempts at frontcrawl (full stroke). | Running, reaching for side, stretching legs. Ring-a-roses. Kicking on front with floats. |
| Week Four - three children not swimming - colds. Time in water - nineteen minutes. | Breaststroke, picked up brick and swam on backs with brick, doing breaststroke kick. | Breaststroke full stroke and kick. | Splashing, jumping, kicking on back and front with floats. | As Group 3 A very nervous girl used a big frog float instead of ordinary float |
| Week Six - Time in water - fifteen minutes. | Breaststroke full stroke, pull and breathing. Backcrawl full stroke | Frontcrawl full stroke and kick. | Backcrawl and frontcrawl(full stroke). Breaststroke kick. | Kicking with floats. Gliding, pushing from wall, floating and sitting on bottom. Counting feet on bottom of pool. |

| 2nd Half Term | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| Reception Class joined the swimming sessions. These now formed Group 4 and some of the other children moved up. Many of Group 3 stopped coming. The weak swimmer in the original Group 4 stayed in that group with the Reception children. | | | | |
| Teachers - 2 teachers (Groups 1 and 4), 1 ancillary (Group 3), 1 parent-helper (Group 2), plus a 'spotter'. | | | | |
| | Group 1 | Group 2 | Group 3 | Group 4 |
| Week Eight - time in water - fifteen minutes | Breaststroke kick (wedge). Picking up bricks. | Breaststroke full stroke and kick. Backcrawl kick. | Kicking, front and back. Pushing off from wall on back and gliding. One little girl swam a width with no float. | Kicking on front. Lots of games, jumping, splashing, blowing bubbles. Shown how to enter the water safely. |

During Week Ten the author was scheduled to observe in the Small Pool but because of the absence of a teacher the author took a group and was, therefore, unable to observe.

School B

Local Leisure Centre - Main Pool. Lesson Time 20 minutes

Three groups working across the pool. Group 1, top group, at the deep end, Group 2 in the middle and Group 3 in the shallow end. One rope across pool in the shallow end. Teachers: 1 teacher (Group 2), *1 parent-helper (Group 3), 1 swimming teacher employed by County Direct Services.

*2 different parents help on alternate weeks.

| | Group 1 | Group 2 | Group 3 |
|---|---|--|---|
| Week One - two children not swimming - illness. Time in water - fifteen minutes. | Backcrawl kick and full stroke. Frontcrawl full stroke. Diving (one dive each). | Backcrawl pull and kick. Frontcrawl pull and kick. | Breaststroke full stroke and kick. Frontcrawl breathing. |
| Week Three - one child not swimming - broken finger. Time in water - sixteen minutes. | Breaststroke full stroke and kick. Swam through hoops. | Breaststroke full stroke. Attempts at 50m swim. | Backcrawl, breaststroke and frontcrawl - full stroke. Breaststroke pull. |
| Week Five - two not swimming - no costume. Time in water - 18 minutes. | Sculling and treading water. Swam lengths | Backcrawl pull and kick. Swam lengths | Backcrawl pull and kick, frontcrawl(full stroke). Breaststroke pull and kick. |
| Week Seven - the author took Group 3 this week as parent-helper absent. Difficult to observe Groups 1 and 2. | Surface dives and picking up bricks. | Surface dives. | Backcrawl full stroke and kick. |
| Week Nine - Time in water - seventeen minutes. | Backcrawl full stroke and kick. Sculling. Some assessed for Grade 3. Author taught other children for part of this session. | Breaststroke and frontcrawl full stroke. Floating | Breaststroke full stroke. |
| Week Eleven - Time in water - Eighteen minutes | Assessment for Grade 3 continued. Sculling. Treading water. Floating in various positions, straddle jumps. | Swam lengths. (One length geo out walked back). Some tried two lengths. Frontcrawl, full stroke and breathing. | Frontcrawl and breaststroke full stroke. Breaststroke pull. |

Appendix D-4

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR [NAME OF COUNTY]²³ SWIMMING GRADES

The following notes are intended to be guidelines only and to offer possible interpretations of the syllabus for the grades.

GRADE 1

Please Note: The skill numbers below correspond to the Water Section numbers on the Grade 1 syllabus sheet. N.B. One half width should be at least a distance of 5m.

| | SKILL | TEACHING POINTS | REASON |
|---|---------------------------------|--|---|
| 1 | Correct and safe entry. | If entering by the side sit on pool edge, turn and slide in with back to water. Controlled entry, if by steps by turning and entering with back facing water, one step at a time. | To be able to enter the pool safely not necessarily by using the steps. |
| 2 | Push and glide on front. | Stretch body. Face in water. Eyes looking towards pool bottom. Legs straight and together. Toes pointed. | Streamlining of body position for swimming and diving. Early confidence practice. |
| 3 | Push and glide on back. | Stretch body. Tummy up. Eyes looking upwards. Legs straight and together. Toes pointed. | Streamlining of body position for swimming on back. Body position for floating. |
| 4 | Face in water and blow bubbles. | Breathing in and out above water and progressing to completing exercise with face in. | To be able to appreciate the feeling of blowing out under water. |
| 5 | Swim on front, 1 width. | Frontcrawl or breast stroke without hands or feet touching bottom. | Progress can be seen. |
| 6 | Swim on back, half a width. | Swim on back without hands or feet touching the bottom. | Progress can be seen. |

Extracts from the survey LEA's new Swimming Grades for the Academic Year 1994/95.

²³Name of county not mentioned to aid confidentiality

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR [NAME OF COUNTY] SWIMMING GRADES

The following notes are intended to be guidelines only and to offer possible interpretations of the syllabus for the grades.

GRADE 2

Please Note: The skill numbers below correspond to the Water Section numbers on the Grade 2 syllabus sheet. N.B. One half width should be at least a distance of 5m.

| | SKILL | TEACHING POINTS | REASON |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Correct and safe entry. | If entering by the side sit on pool edge, turn and slide in with back to water. Controlled entry, if by steps by turning and entering with back facing water, one step at a time. | To be able to enter the pool safely not necessarily by using the steps. |
| 2 | Mushroom float for 5 seconds. | Big breath in. Slowly tuck legs under body. Hands placed around lower legs. Chin on chest. Face in water. Breathe out slowly. | Beginning of aquatic breathing. Practice for using natural buoyancy. |
| 3 | Star float on front. Star float on back. | Arms stretched out beyond head. Legs apart. Relax. Face in water. Eyes looking downwards. Arms stretched out beyond head. Legs apart. Relax. Head and ears in water. Eyes looking upwards. | Streamlining of body position for swimming on back. Body position for floating. |
| 4 | Pick up an object from bottom of pool using <u>both hands</u> . | Breathing in and out above water and progressing to completing exercise with face in. | To be able to appreciate the feeling of blowing out under water. |
| 5 | Swim on front, 1 width. | Frontcrawl or breast stroke without hands or feet touching bottom. | Progress can be seen. |
| 6 | Swim on back, half a width. | Swim on back without hands or feet touching the bottom. | Progress can be seen. |

Extracts from the survey LEA's new Swimming Grades for the Academic Year 1994/95

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR [NAME OF COUNTY] SWIMMING GRADES

The following notes are intended to be guidelines only and to offer possible interpretations of the syllabus for the grades.

GRADE 3.

Please Note: The skill numbers below correspond to the Water Section numbers on the Grade 3 syllabus sheet.

N.B. One half width should be at least a distance of 5m.

| | SKILL | TEACHING POINTS | REASON |
|---|---|---|--|
| 1 | Straddle Jump Tread water for 30 seconds | If pool less than 1.8m then execute safe entry i.e. slide in. Head up. Eyes looking forward. Step out into the water. Arms spread out. Legs as in walking position. Lean forwards. Keep head out of water. Press down with hands on entry. Use arms and legs as slowly as possible to conserve energy. Just enough movement to keep mouth clear of water. Body in vertical position. Using breast stroke or scissors leg action and breast stroke, sculling or dog paddle arm action. | Used as entry into known deep water, maintaining head clear of water. Used from a height up to 1m. Might have to be used while waiting to be rescued. |
| 2 | Head first surface dive | If pool less than 1.5m dangers must be pointed out i.e. risk of collision with pool floor. Big breath in. Chin on chest. Bend at waist. Aim for the bottom of the pool | To demonstrate ability to reach pool bottom. |
| 3 | Sculling - see attached sheet | | |
| 4 | Swim 25m | Frontcrawl, breast stroke, or backcrawl without hands or feet touching bottom, with good style | Progress can be seen |
| 5 | Swim 25m | Frontcrawl or breast stroke without hands or feet touching bottom, with reasonable style. Stroke not used in 4. | Progress can be seen |
| 6 | Swim 1 width | Frontcrawl or breast stroke without hands or feet touching bottom, with reasonable style. Stroke not used in 4 or 5. | Ability to demonstrate a third stroke |

Extracts from the survey LEA's new Swimming Grades for the Academic Year 1994/95

TECHNIQUE POINTS - SWIMMING GRADES

These points are intended to be used in conjunction with a recommended publication such as the ASA/Kia-ora National Curriculum Resource Pack or the ASA Teaching and Coaching Level 1 Book.

BACKCRAWL

1. Body as horizontal as possible while allowing the leg action to take place under the water.
2. Straight legs toes pointed.
3. Continuous arm action.
4. Little finger enters the water first.
5. Hand enters the water in line with the shoulder and beyond the head.
6. Relaxed arm on recover.
7. Slight roll of the body towards the arm that is in the propulsive phase.

FRONT CRAWL

1. Body horizontal and streamlined.
2. Head in line with body.
3. Head just turning to breathe.
4. Continuous leg action.
5. Toes turned in.
6. Thumb/wrist/elbow entry of arm.
7. Flexed wrist.
8. Elbow recovering first.
9. Relaxed arm on recovery.

BREAST STROKE

1. Eyes looking forward.
2. Face either in or out of the water.
3. Slight incline from the head to hips.
4. Heels come towards seat.
5. Legs stay behind body throughout the whole stroke.
6. Feet turn out on the drive backwards.
7. Arm movements take place in front of shoulder line.
8. Arms movements simultaneous, and in the same horizontal plane.
9. Elbows come to side of body after the propulsive phase of the hands.
10. Hands are pushed forwards together.

BUTTERFLY

1. Eyes looking straight ahead.
2. Chin in the water throughout the whole stroke.
3. A small amount of undulation of the body.
4. Both legs move simultaneously.
5. Feet just coming to the water surface.
6. Toes pointed.
7. Relaxed fling action of the arms on recovery.
8. Thumbs enter the water first.
9. Hands pulling under the body during the propulsive phase.

Extracts from the survey LEA's new Swimming Grades for the Academic Year 1994/95

SCULLING

Sculling is an important skill which can be used in association with the backcrawl leg action, the inverted breaststroke kick or in learning watermanship generally. It is included in the stroke section because of its value with the leg actions mentioned.

Sculling can propel, balance and control the body. The hands move inwards and outwards at the wrists. In the head first or standard scull, the pattern of the hand movement is similar to a figure of eight. (i.e. on the outward movement the thumb draws the first half of the figure of eight and on the inward movement the little finger draws the second half.) In all sculling the hands are kept flat, with the fingers together and stretched. The force is applied in the direction opposite to the direction of travel. The more continuous the force the better, and the faster the sculling action the greater the force.

There are numerous sculls but the three main sculls are probably the most useful to the primary teacher.

1. Standard or head first scull.
2. Reverse or foot first scull.
3. Stationary or flat scull.

Teaching points for sculling

1. The elbows should be as straight as possible during the sculling movements.
2. The arms should be close to the body.
3. The hand position needs to be constantly adjusted to maintain pressure.
4. A firm flat hand with fingers together is essential.
5. Smooth continuous pivoting from the wrists will aid steady travel and propulsion.
6. The speed of sculling can help propulsion and the body position. In a firm speedy scull the body should stay flat and travel smoothly. Efficiency in sculling provides great scope, making movement more enjoyable and encouraging freer use of the pool area.

ACTIVITIES

Sculling can be improved by practice. Sculling to a drum beat will maintain interest.

1. Sculling to a drum beat had first, on the spot, feet first. Changing scull every time there is a heavy drum beat.
2. Sculling to music. Change direction of the scull as the phrasing to the music suggests. 'Side Saddle' is an excellent piece of music to scull to.

Extracts from the survey LEA's new Swimming Grades for the Academic Year 1994/95

Appendix D-5

NATIONAL CURRICULUM FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Key Stage 2: End of Key Stage statements and programme of study (general)

| End of Key Stage Statement By the end of Key Stage pupils should be able to: | Programme of Study (General) Pupils should: |
|--|--|
| a) plan, practise, improve and remember more complex sequences of movement; | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• be assisted to plan, refine and adapt performance when working with others.• be encouraged to develop, consolidate and combine physical skills through practice and rehearsal• be enabled to remember, select and repeat a range of movements and perform more complex sequences alone and with others. |
| b) perform effectively in activities requiring quick decision making; | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• be encouraged to plan and use simple tactics and judge their success.• be enabled to respond quickly to changing environments or adjust to other people's actions. |
| c) respond safely, alone and with others, to challenging tasks, taking account of levels of skill and understanding; | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• be helped to explore and present different responses to a variety of tasks and stimuli.• be given opportunities to work along to ensure the development of their own personal skills.• be encouraged to adopt good sporting behaviour and recognise and reject anti-social responses including unfair play. |
| d) swim unaided at least 25 metres and demonstrate an understanding of water safety; | See programme of study for swimming at Key Stage 2 |
| e) evaluate how well they and others perform and behave against criteria suggested by the teacher and suggest ways of improving performance; | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• be taught to help themselves to improve by making simple comments and judgements on their own and others' performance.• be helped to understand their roles as members of teams/groups and take into account others' ideas. |
| f) sustain energetic activity over appropriate periods of time in a range of physical activities and understand the effects of exercise on the body. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• be taught to understand the value of and demonstrate sustained activity over appropriate periods of time.• be taught to understand the immediate and short term effects of exercise on the body• be taught to understand and demonstrate how to prepare for particular activities and to recover afterwards. |

From Physical Education in the National Curriculum. Department of Education and Science (1992, p.6).

Appendix D-6

COMMENTS FROM THOSE TEACHING SWIMMING WITH RESPECT TO THE PROBLEMS OF PROVIDING A SWIMMING PROGRAMME IN SCHOOLS

School A

"Its very important because it could end up being a life saver but at the moment (and it's being discussed anyway) it seems we are spending a lot of time on swimming and it's not ill spent but it's time, because of the staffing problems. It wouldn't need that time if you had another member of staff perhaps who taught swimming full time. You could take a small group out of the classroom for perhaps half-an-hour, because that's all the swimming time they get anyway, and then return them after half-an-hour ...and take another group so that we're taking up a lot of extra time that they are not actually doing swimming during that time, so that is the time that is ill spent" (Teacher 4, School A).

"Some children don't like it. Some children forget their swimming costumes every week. Some parents are a bit against swimming really, 'Oh she's got a cold, and so she's not going in' and they try and come up with an excuse. Whether it's the parents that don't enjoy swimming themselves or don't enjoy water. I don't know" (Ancillary, School A).

"... the time factor is a factor. Within the curriculum which is very crowded and not every school - at [name of school]²⁴ perhaps it was easier having your own pool because it was just a case of getting them changed and going just across the corridor. Whereas here you have a twenty to twenty-five minute bus journey and the same back, so it's really a whole morning ,which is a lot out of a week to give that whole block of time to swimming and there is no way around it. You cannot get from here to a swimming bath without going on a coach and the cost is high to parents. Its not too bad here, I don't think they have too much of a problem collecting the money, but certainly there must be schools that are not in such good areas and are still a long way from a bath" (Supply teacher, School A).

"Discipline can be a problem with certain schools. Certain schools definitely have a better record than othersYes very often they are late. That's often due to the buses being late and not the fault of the school. They can be five minutes late

²⁴Name of school not mentioned to aid confidentiality.

and by the time they're ready and in the water the twenty minute lesson becomes a ten minute lesson" (Peripatetic swimming teacher B, School A).

"Negative side, yes, like where we have got the pool and the authority I think give us money to maintain it, they don't give money to go to the Leisure Centre etc. They have got to find the money or the parents have to pay, and I think that is really bad because those children are disadvantaged at the side of our children. I've got friends in that position. There are four of them and they all go swimming and its twenty pence a week, OK its only eighty pence a week but over a year its quite a lot of money - £32 or £34. Perhaps they should have tickets like free dinners. It's time consuming for us. Although we have an hour swimming, half of that is spent waiting your turn, getting them dressed because the pool is only big enough for supposedly twenty people, but I suppose as the children get bigger fifteen is as many as you could manage in the pool to give them a fair session, and so they are waiting half the time and are swimming for twenty minutes of their hour swimming. At the Leisure Centre they are swimming about thirty minutes for their hour-and-a-half time - so it's cost and time, but saying that, I still think that its valuable" (Teacher 5, School A).

"I think it's important that the children can learn to swim and they should be given that opportunity. That they are given leisure opportunities and taught ways to use leisure time but it takes an awful lot of resources, when you consider we are struggling for sort of maths books and basic equipment and we are funding the heating of the swimming pool here and funding the leisure centre and the time commitment of going down to the leisure centre this year with children who are just not competent in the deep water, so I can't see any justification for going down there. I'd probably think it was a nightmare if I stayed here and went back to having the whole class in the pool as well" (Teacher 3, School A).

"Well I don't really think there are many. I think maybe we don't have enough time for both the playing and the swimming. I think if we could have two sessions with half the class in I think - but we can't do that because we haven't got the manpower, but I think it would be nice to have a session for only half the class so you've got only half the class in there and not worrying about this lot behind you on the side so you can really concentrate on them, and if we had half-an-hour you could have a quarter-of-an-hour really playing and exploring water and what they can do - freedom and then another quarter of an hour doing what they want to do but obviously its got to be more structured if they want to get on - so I would say that

it's a pity that we don't have longer but having said that we've got more than lots of people have so you can always have more couldn't you. I sometimes think it's an awful rush though" (Teacher 6, School A).

"The parent's attitude to protect their children from this awful teacher who makes them swim when I know that they'll love it, if they only get the confidence to do it, and they will get the confidence to do it if they are allowed to go in. You sometimes have to do a bit of encouragement, but I've always got a mum or grandma who comes and helps and will have that particular child solely on her own so they never have anything to be afraid of. They will do more than mums and dads do really. They will hold on to that child and walk across take it entirely for the quarter of an hour and spend all their time with it and I've never found one yet that wouldn't come round with that sort of treatment but they are not always given a chance. I had one child who's mother always made an excuse I don't know I think he is swimming now, but it's taken an awful long time" (Teacher 6, School A).

"Start on negative side first. The down side is the cost and I can see if we were contracting our swimming programme, I could see the first thing to go would be the trips to the leisure centre. I did try to change it from a Monday morning to, not a more convenient time, but a time when we could use non-curriculum time either over a break or part of the lunch period. I looked at the time-table at the leisure centre and looked where there were blocks of schools together. I wrote to various schools saying you use such and such blocks of time, and if you were considering changing would you consider using this period. In fact, as I suspected, not only would not one of them change but they did not reply, so I took it that no one wanted a Monday morning when you've got problems of dinner money and the rest of it, so we're stuck with it..... If there came a time when we were starting to cut back financially, I could see that as a time when we would drop that because it is obviously quite a drain on resources. The other thing is we are expecting teachers to teach swimming with their co-operation and some of them,they have not got swimming training and qualifications and background. We are quite happy for them to go out and teach games to the best of their ability, but swimming is significantly different because of the situation you're in - a life threatening situation and there are a number of members of staff who have actually said - 'I don't want to do it and I don't see why I should'. They have actually left now, but they do have a point of view, I think. All be it that we offered them some form of training but one or two of them rejected that, but we have had a significant influx of younger members of staff who are keen to do anything, so to give them their credit, they are keen to have a

go even though their background is not in any shape or form, PE or swimming. So bearing in mind we have the cost of training those as well, especially on the safety side, I can't think of anything at the moment - all be it the redundancy thing - I can't see at the moment there is any pressure on swimming in the time-table. Its got its place and it will remain so and at the moment every child in the school swims once a week, so I'm glad about that" (Teacher 8, School A).

"Not really (any problems) as long as you have adults with them. We're lucky we do have volunteers - they tend to be the same ones and I've kept mums from last year. There is a mum this year who said she would go in if I needed her. You do need the extra bodies, particularly for those who are not confident. But the parents here are very supportive. We have no trouble in getting kits and hats. As soon as you say there are not going to be any spare ones you find that they have got one at home. No I can't really see any problems. Well you can't have more than twenty in and really that's as many as you can have in without them crashing in to each other all the time. You have got a slight problem of half of them watching and while the other half are in - not a major problem" (Teacher 1, School A).

"I feel as though I shouldn't even be (teaching swimming) - because I can't swim myself particularly well, and don't go swimming so I don't know what the strokes should look like, or if they're being effective or not. I really feel a bit of a fraud teaching swimming, because I might be teaching children who might be a lot better than I am. You can do that in some subjects but in swimming I might be having a detrimental effect on them" (Teacher 4, School A)

"I think you need more than one adult per class even to make it effective because in our pool we are only allowed a certain number in at a time so when you actually take it in our school you end up with half the children sitting on the side and then we switch over so those children are doing nothing effectively for half an hour perhaps wasting half an hour. If you had another member of staff you would be able to have them in the pool. I think its not the numbers you're allowed in the pool but the restriction of the number of pupils per teacher. So that's the main problem at our school and then like down the Leisure Centre you've got such big groups - it's getting more and more so that there are not many children - there were about ten not swimming today. It's getting to the stage soon when we are going to need another member of staff sitting on the side of the pool with them"

(Teacher 4, School A)

"It's very important because it could end up being a life saver, but at the moment, and it's being discussed anyway, it seems we are spending a lot of time on swimming and it's not ill spent, but it's time because of the staffing problems. It wouldn't need that time if you had another member of staff, perhaps, who taught swimming full time. You could take a small group out of the classroom for perhaps half an hour, because that's all the swimming time they get anyway, and then return them after half an hour and take another group so that we're taking up a lot of extra time that they are not actually doing swimming during that time, so that is the time that is ill spent" (Teacher 4, School A).

School B

"The main problem is that it's a lot of effort for a twenty minute swim. It runs OK at (this school) because it is well organised but may not be so well organised in other schools...." (Parent-helper 1, School B).

"I think there are three: time, cost and qualifications people need to do the job properly, which eats into time, eats into cost. It means something else has to go... I don't think there are many teachers who would spend their free time qualifying themselves to teach swimming even if they thought that swimming was the most important thing in the curriculum, I don't think they would go out of their way to do it. You're continually asking the parents to pay, and for twenty minutes in the pool to use up two hours for it, and I think we're quite lucky. I think there are schools that use up more time to get twenty minutes in the pool and its just the general knowledge of the people doing it" (Headteacher, School B).

"Actually in this school I don't think it (swimming) is that important. We have a lot of parents that will take their children swimming as standard and whatever we do in this area doesn't make a great deal of difference. I think in other schools where the parents are not that supportive they need to learn to swim for safety reasons if not for anything else - recreation comes into it but safety I would have thought is the main priority. But in this school I think we could do no swimming we might get the odd complaint but you would still find that a lot of children can swim. I think its important, but in this day and age I think there are a lot of teachers who don't put in anywhere near the top" (Headteacher, School B).

"I think its a shame we have to go on the bus. That they haven't got a swimming pool here and you have to go on the bus and it takes a good fifteen to twenty

minutes to get there whereas if they had a pool here... No I just think it is so important for them to swim - that's the main thing it doesn't matter how much it costs really. I know that's easy for me to say because I've only got one, and I don't always pay mine on time but I think its important that they learn to swim" (Parent-helper B, School B).

"Possibly the amount of children to the amount of teachers. Not with all the schools but with some of the schools they bring very limited teaching staff, probably it's myself and one other teacher. The other teacher not really being involved in swimming. Sometimes they are non-swimmers themselves, and so you get the one group that are not getting the right sort of attention, but you can't take it all on yourself. It's usually the nuns that come, they are not really into swimming themselves. I do give them advice and I will, if they ask, give them sheets on what they should be looking for. They haven't really got the knowledge. They send them across and back and think they are doing a good job, which they are because they have been put in a situation where its up to them to bring the school swimming. But then you have two groups, one that are doing well and those that aren't doing so well. Possibly there could be a form of rotation so that each group is getting my attention at some part. That might help" (Peripatetic swimming teacher A, School B).

"With swimming there is a time factor - competition for time/resources. Need to look at priorities. With Dearing's slim down (we) may now be able to justify the time taken. I'm not sure swimming is not a parent's job. Schools are constantly being the butt - 'schools can do that'. The line must be drawn somewhere. How schools manage when they have not so much money as this school, I don't know. Parents whose children have lessons outside of school feel it is a waste of time. They want their children in school learning. Perhaps it would be a bigger incentive for parents to take their children swimming if schools didn't provide it" (Teacher F, School B).

"Problems with priority. If there are courses for Maths and Swimming and only money for one - Maths will win" (Teacher E, School B).

"To go swimming for the whole morning does seem like a time wasting expedition" (Teacher E, School B).

"I can appreciate its a lot of time out of the school day. It's more or less a whole morning which is a lot out of .." (Parent-helper D, School B).

"Money and time. Not just the cost of the coach but teaching INSET. On the whole PE doesn't have priority. (I'm) not aware that any other member of staff has a life saving qualification. We are asking parents to pay a lot of money" (Teacher H, School B).

"No real problems. One or two grumble about the cost, but I feel strongly about swimming being taught" (Parent-helper G, School B).

Appendix E-1

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION: KEY STAGES 1-4 (1995)

Physical education should involve pupils in the continuous process of planning, performing and evaluating. This applies to all areas of activity. The greatest emphasis should be placed on the actual performance aspect of the subject. the following requirements apply to the teaching of physical education across all key stages.

1. To promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles, pupils should be taught:
 - a to be physically active;
 - b to adopt the best possible posture and the appropriate use of the body;
 - c to engage in activities that develop cardiovascular health, flexibility muscular strength and endurance;
 - d the increasing need for personal hygiene in relation to vigorous physical activity.
2. To develop positive attitudes, pupils should be taught:
 - a to observe the conventions of fair play, honest competition and good sporting behaviour as individual participants, team members and spectators;
 - b how to cope with success and limitations in performance;
 - c to try hard to consolidate their performances;
 - d to be mindful of others and the environment.
3. To ensure safe practice, pupils should be taught:
 - a to respond readily to instructions;
 - b to recognise and follow relevant rules, laws, codes, etiquette and safety procedures for different activities or events, in practice and during competition;
 - c about the safety risks of wearing inappropriate clothing, footwear and jewellery, and why particular clothing, footwear and protection are worn for different activities
 - d how to lift, carry, place and use equipment safely
 - e to warm up for and recover from exercise.

From Physical Education in the National Curriculum. Department of Education and Science (1995 p.2).

Appendix E-2

ATTAINMENT TARGET

END OF KEY STAGE DESCRIPTIONS (1995)

The following descriptions describe the types and range of performance that the majority of pupils should characteristically demonstrate by the end of the key stage, having been taught the relevant programme of study. The descriptions are designed to help teachers judge the extent to which their pupils' attainments relate to this expectation.....

KEY STAGE 2

Pupils find solutions, sometimes responding imaginatively, to the various challenges that they encounter in the different areas of activity. They practise, improve and refine performance, and repeat series of movements they have performed previously, with increasing control and accuracy. They work safely alone, in pairs and in groups, and as members of a team. They make simple judgements about their own and others' performance, and use this information effectively to improve the accuracy, quality and variety of their own performance. They sustain energetic activity over appropriate periods of time, and demonstrate that they understand what is happening to their bodies during exercise.

From Physical Education in the National Curriculum. Department of Education and Science (1995 p.11).

Appendix E-3

COMMENTS FROM THOSE TEACHING SWIMMING WITH RESPECT TO THE BENEFITS OF PROVIDING A SWIMMING PROGRAMME IN SCHOOLS

School A

"Yes I think they are lucky and some children never ever go swimming except at school, and so I think they do need it otherwise they miss out such a lot socially as they get older..... Perhaps not everyone would agree with me, but I think it's lovely to be able to go swimming" (Ancillary, School A)

"Exercise, well it's very good exercise for them and I think it teaches them confidence within themselves. I know it did with me. Once I could swim I felt very proud of myself... it's also nice that children who are not particularly academic can perhaps shine at something and if they can swim it's something they can shine at, and it's nice to be able to praise them and give them a certificate and get them up at the top. In that respect, I think it's very useful, if you have someone that fails academically but who will excel at swimming it's lovely, because you can praise them and they respond well to that" (Supply teacher, School A)

"Oh I think it's very important - especially how kiddies wander around these days. I mean if they get near the canals ,and all that, I think it's very important for them to learn to swim. I'm glad mine did. As I say, I wish I was a better swimmer. But then again I'm glad all mine learnt to swim and all that - really glad" (Parent-helper 2, School A)

" You're introducing children to water. Some children may never go to a pool - and safety - we do try and teach points of safety here and there - open their eyes to the world of swimming. A lot are very enthusiastic. Teaching them to swim so they can enjoy it and come down to swimming sessions when they are old enough to come on their own. When they go on holidays - we're not trying to make them into Olympic swimmers but just to enjoy the water and be happy in the water. That's really what we are trying to do" (Peripatetic swimming teacher B, School A).

"Swimming is a life-saving activity, if you know what I mean - something that children should be taught from that point of view and they can get so much fun out of it. They are always near water, they love water and if they are taught to swim it's good and it's healthy like when you're older and got injuries you're told to swim

because the water supports your weight. There are so many advantages to swimming - I don't think its a bad thing at all" (Teacher 5, School A).

"I think it's important that the children can learn to swim and they should be given that opportunity. That they are given leisure opportunities and taught ways to use leisure time but it takes an awful lot of resources" (Teacher 3, School A).

"Well I think it's excellent for these children, for getting physical activity, because a lot of them spend half their time, if not you know, a lot of their time watching television because you do find that they don't do a lot, they don't go out to play a lot, only in the summer and that's for a very short time isn't it? So I feel that it's very important and the confidence is amazing because a child who maybe is not very clever can shine, again they're amazed, so that gives them confidence in their other things and they'll try things in their other lessons" (Teacher 6, School A).

"Hopefully when they are older they will continue to swim for pleasure. I mean it's great exercise even if you've got injuries, swimming is excellent . You're always going to be able to swim. And for the safety aspect" (Teacher 1, School A).

School B

"Swimming is something you can do for life, as well as the safety aspect" (Parent-helper A, School B).

"Important for when you go away on holiday so that you can actually swim. I don't know really, it's something you can do and it's important for you to swim. I know, like, when we were children we used to swim in the river and we used to tell people - we used to call them such names if they couldn't swim. Never gave it a second thought what could happen to them - when you're at that age you don't see anything like that - you just think, if you can, you think everyone else can too. We used to just go in the river and all sorts, never gave it a second thought - so dangerous as well" (Parent-helper B, School B).

"Safety, health, fun.....Also mustn't forget the social aspects of going swimming. Getting dressed, getting organised. Important for the little ones to gain independence" (Teacher F, School B).

"Important, it's something for them to enjoy and to learn. Safety - it's important for their safety and to enjoy it" (Parent-helper D, School B).

"Important skill...exercise. PE is needed. Needs to be said not just push the core subjects. Need physical side as well. Lots of children can't and don't go (swimming)" (Teacher E, School B).

"It's a skill for life..... Good exercise. Tangible success. Children good at swimming may not be good at other PE sports. Swimming commands different skills. It is a chance for some children to shine" (Teacher H, School B)

"Definitely the children benefit. It's physical exercise. It's a good - it's good. To be able to swim is necessary, you never know when you're going to find yourself in water. It could be floods, or the sea or a lake - you could be on a boat couldn't you, and it could capsize? You all need that experience not to be able to panic" (Ancillary, School B).

"I would say safety more than anything else. There is a lot of water areas about and if they are taught water safety from an early age, then they don't try out these varying areas and if they are brought swimming enough they won't be trying out these areas anyway. I would say definitely safety - leisure comes into it because as they get older they get canoeing and these outward bound courses where they have to be able to swim - I think its fifty metres for these outward bound courses they go on, and unless they can (swim fifty metres) they are not allowed to go on these courses anyway. So really, your whole life, as you get older it goes back onto the swimming side for these outdoor pursuits" (Peripatetic swimming teacher A, School B).

Appendix E-4

EMERGENCY LIFE SUPPORT PROGRAMME IN SCHOOLS

| AGES | | LEARNING OUTCOMES |
|---------|---------|--|
| 4 - 7 | | Pupils Should: a) recognise the need for personal safety b) recognise an emergency c) know how to obtain help |
| 7 - 11 | 7 - 8 | a) open the airway b) turn someone into the recovery position c) check breathing |
| | 8 - 9 | a) check the carotid pulse b) perform artificial ventilation# c) know the basic principles of clearing an airway d) know the basic principles of caring for a casualty. |
| | 9 - 10 | a) know the basic principles of the treatment of choking b) know the basic principles of the treatment of serious bleeding |
| | 10 - 11 | a) demonstrate improved competence in the performance of artificial ventilation# b) show an improved knowledge in the care of a casualty |
| 11 - 14 | | a) perform chest compression# b) perform one-rescuer cardiopulmonary resuscitation# |
| 14 - 16 | | a) perform one-rescuer cardiopulmonary resuscitation on child and infant-sized manikins# b) know how to clear the airway of an infant or child. |

NB: #These skills must only be performed on resuscitation training manikins.

From [Name of LEA]²⁵ swimming adviser

²⁵Name of local education authority not mentioned to aid confidentiality

