

Intensive Swimming Lessons - October 2013

Introduction

Salford Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) provided funding for Salford Community Leisure to deliver a programme of intensive swimming lessons during the October half term holidays. Lessons were targeted at children and young people who were unable to swim 10metres.

Children and young people were offered the opportunity to participate in the programme through letters sent to all Salford schools who currently attend school swimming lessons (primary and secondary). If schools / parents and guardians wanted their child to take part in the programme they registered an interest with Salford Community Leisure.

214 children and young people registered for a place on the programme and were all allocated a place, however a number of children with a confirmed place did not turn up for their allocated lesson and some children who did not register turned up for lessons (all were accommodated).

The programme of lessons was delivered across the 6 pools in the city by 6 highly qualified and experienced swimming teachers. Each day, 24 lessons were delivered, providing 120 hours of swimming tuition across the week. Children and young people were expected to attend for an hour long lesson each day for 5 consecutive days. The number of lessons delivered at each pool varied dependant on demand for places in that area.

Participants

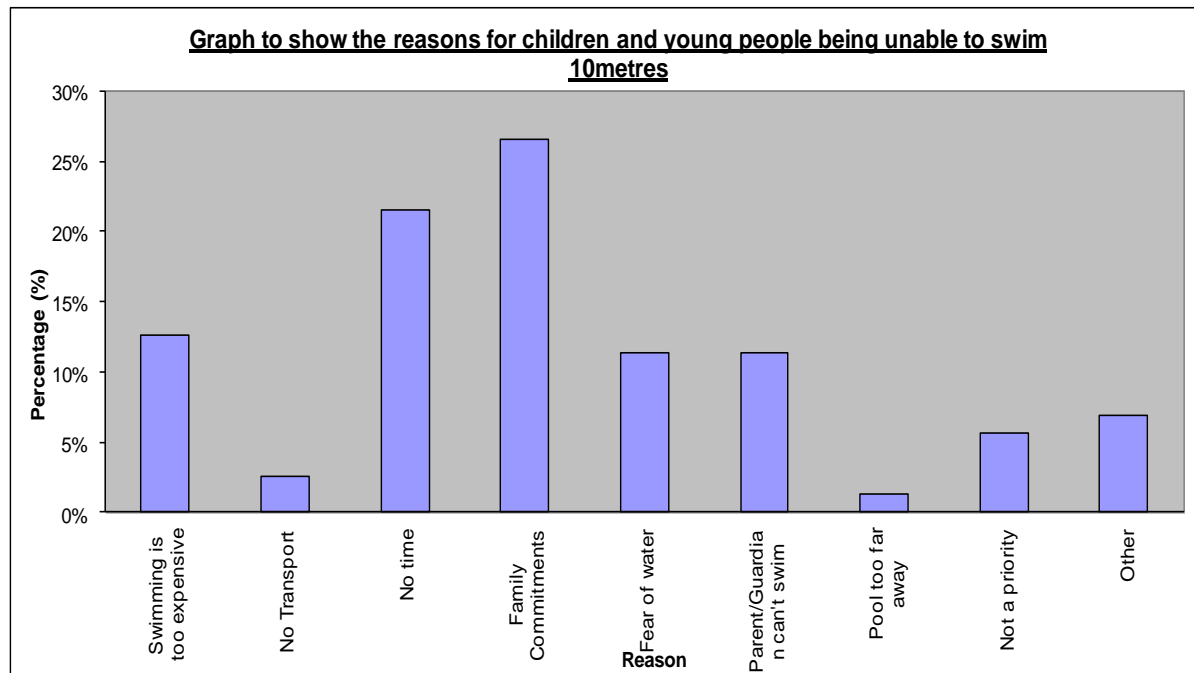
196 children and young people took part in the programme of intensive lessons. The majority of the participants were primary aged with as expected only a small percentage (6%) being of high school age. There was a slight bias in the uptake of places from girls (53%) compared to boys (47%).

Demand for places was highest at Fit City Worsley where 6 lessons were delivered each day (see appendix table 1 for full breakdown). Children and young people from 36 different schools attended the lessons, some schools had a large number of children attend and others had only 1 or 2 children, this could be due to how the schools disseminated and promoted the programme to parents / guardians (see appendix table 2 for school breakdown).

The majority of the participants (73%) were of White British origin with the inner city pools (Broughton and Clarendon) having the highest number of participants from different ethnic backgrounds (see appendix table 3)

Swimming Habits

The majority of participants (88%) had visited the swimming pool where they were having lessons before, however this does not equate to use, as over 60% of the participants only ever swim on holiday, swim rarely or never swim. Only 21% of participants swim on a weekly basis. The graph below illustrates the main reasons why the participants are unable to swim more than 10metres.



'Family commitments' and 'lack of time' were cited as the most common reasons for children and young people not being able to swim 10 metres, however the 'cost of swimming', 'fear of water' and 'parent/guardian not being able to swim' were also popular reasons. None of the reasons appear to be concentrated to one particular pool but are spread across the city.

Awareness of the provision of free swimming during school holidays (funded by Salford CCG) does not appear to be as high as thought as over a third of the participants' parents / guardians were not aware that their child could swim for free during school holidays. The lack of awareness was spread across the city although parents / guardians at Pendlebury and Clarendon had the lowest level of awareness. This will be addressed at Christmas when free swimming is advertised and available again.

Parents / guardians were asked on day 1 of the programme what their expectations were for the week, the majority hoped their child would achieve more confidence in the water as a result of the intensive lessons, be able to swim unaided, be safer in the water and generally improve their swimming ability.

Lessons

Lessons were delivered by 6 qualified and experienced teachers for an hour a day over 5 consecutive days. The majority of the participants attended the full week and benefitted from the intensive nature of the teaching and the consistency of being taught daily by the same teacher. The progression and achievement in some of the participants was beyond the expectations of both the teachers and parents / guardians, there were many examples of children who were frightened to enter the water at the beginning of the week who finished the week swimming confidently without armbands.

At the end of the week, all participants achieved a badge and certificate relevant to the skill level that they demonstrated, this was really well received by both participants and their parents / guardians.

Impact

The parent / guardian feedback received at the end of the week was above and beyond the expectations of all the staff involved in the programme. Despite the intensity of teaching back to back lessons, the sense of reward and achievement felt by the swimming teachers was unprecedented. Many received personal thanks and had requests to continue teaching some of the children.

99% of parents / guardians felt their child enjoyed the programme of lessons, only 1 parent / guardian reported that their child didn't enjoy the lessons, however despite not enjoying the lesson the child in question started the week wearing two armbands on each arm and was afraid to put his face in the water and he progressed throughout the week to being able to swim 10m on his front and back with no armbands.

All bar one parent / guardian saw an improvement in their child's confidence in the water and all bar 3 parents / guardians saw an improvement in their child's ability, unfortunately these parents / guardians didn't leave any qualifying comments but did feel their children enjoyed the lessons and were more confident. Overwhelmingly though of all the parents / guardians who did complete the post lesson evaluation, 98% saw an improvement in their child's swimming ability. The below comments help bring to life some of the experiences from the week.

The lessons had a really positive impact on future propensity to swim with 77% of parents / guardians expressing an interest in joining swimming lessons and 97% said they will bring their child swimming more following the intensive lesson programme.

Parent / Guardian Comments

"The course has gone way past my expectations, I was hoping she would be able to swim with only 1 armband by the end of the week but instead she is swimming in the big pool with no armbands, brilliant!"

"I'm very proud of the progress Ethan has made, on Monday he needed a support teacher, he had 2 armbands on and now he doesn't need the support teacher and is using only 1 armband on each arm and has come on a long way and is enjoying it"

"This week has been great. The swimming lessons have been really good and have encouraged my daughter to do more. Hopefully there will be more funding for this in the future"

"The funding has been very beneficial to my child because during these lessons he gained confidence in the water and basic skills that he will use in his future swimming. Also he has enjoyed it and had fun"

"I think its been a great idea. Alan has been fantastic with my daughter, giving her encouragement and confidence. She can now swim at least a width whereas on day 1 she wouldn't take her feet off the ground"

"My child has amazed me this week with the confidence she has displayed in her lessons. She can now swim a length without stopping and is not afraid to do so"

"This is absolutely wonderful, brilliant time to see my son doing so great. I will suggest to Salford CCG that they carry out more of this kind of programme so every child reaches their full potential "

"I'm so pleased the lessons were offered to Jake, I can't believe the improvement in his swimming ability. Its amazing how much he has grown in confidence, he now really enjoys swimming and can't wait to do more lessons"

"Joshua and Gabrielle have really enjoyed this week and have loved everything they have been taught. Big improvements since they both started a week ago"

"I can really see the change in his confidence and ability in just one week, the teacher has been great and pushed him to do more"

"This has been a fantastic week and I would recommend others to sign up"

"The lessons have been very good, one full hour every day for 5 days encourages real improvement. My daughter has been much more confident and has really improved"

"Great idea and should never stop as it gives kids a skill for life"

“The sessions have been really well delivered, the staff are superb and all the children seem to have improved. Should these sessions be held again we would definitely like to attend”

“I think the funding has been a fantastic idea”

Case Study

Ethan, a 7year old boy attended the intensive lessons at Fit City Worsley. Ethan turned up on day 1 with his mum and he was clearly petrified of the water and unhappy about joining the lesson. He sat on the side of the pool with the rest of the children in his class and refused to get in when the rest of the class started the lesson. With the help of a support teacher who was available to help on the first day and his mum, Ethan finally entered the water with 2 armbands on and the support teacher in the water with him. He spent the majority of the first lesson holding onto Lauren the support teacher and did not engage with the rest of the lesson. Ethan’s mum expressed a concern that the support teacher would not be available on day 2 but she was adamant Ethan would continue and learn to swim.

Ethan turned up for lesson 2 on Tuesday morning and very gradually started to join in with the rest of the lesson. Throughout the rest of the week, Ethan improved in ability and confidence each day and even managed to swim a length in the big pool with a smile on his face.

At the start of the week his mum said she would like ‘Ethan to learn to swim a bit’, at the end of the week she was understandably proud of how far Ethan had come and she booked him straight onto weekly swimming lessons so he can continue to learn.

February Half Term

The programme of intensive swimming lessons will be delivered again in February half term.

Appendix

Table 1: Demand and uptake by pool

Pool	Number registered	Number who took part
Fit City Broughton	28	25
Fit City Clarendon	26	32
Fit City Eccles	28	21
Fit City Irlam	31	28
Fit City Pendlebury	46	39
Fit City Worsley	55	51
Total	214	196

Table 2: School attended

School	Places Reserved	Number attended
All Hallows	0	1
Barton Moss	12	10
Boothstown	0	1
Bretnall	17	9
Broadoak	1	0
Cadishead	4	6
Christ Church	0	1
Clarendon Road	3	2
Clifton	0	1
Dukesgate	14	13
Fiddlers Lane	2	3
Harrop Fold	0	4
Home Educated	0	2
Irlam Endowed	12	8
James Brindley	0	3
Lark Hill	0	3
Monton Green	0	2
Moorside Primary	53	32
Mossfield	2	1
North Walkden	3	5
Primrose Hill	4	3
Rlverview	6	0
St Andrews	12	7
St Augustines	0	2
St Edmunds	10	8
St Georges	0	3
St Johns	1	1
St Josephs	7	4
St Lukes	3	4
St Mary's	0	2
St Pauls	5	3
St Pauls Crompton	5	1

Street		
St Peters	0	1
St Teresas	4	3
St Thomas of Canterbury	0	2
Summerville	12	8
The Deans	17	15
Willow Tree	5	3
Not answered	0	19
Total	214	196

Table 3: Ethnicity of participants

Ethnic Origin	Broughton	Clarendon	Eccles	Irlam	Pendlebury	Worsley
African	5	5	1	0	4	8
Any other Asian Background	0	0	0	0	1	0
Bangladeshi	0	0	2	0	0	0
Black British	1	0	0	0	0	0
Caribbean	0	3	0	0	1	0
Chinese	1	0	1	1	0	0
Indian	1	0	0	0	0	0
Iranian	1	0	0	0	0	0
Other Asian	0	0	1	0	0	0
Other Mixed Background	0	1	0	0	0	0
Other White Background	1	0	0	0	1	1
Pakistani	4	0	0	0	0	0
White and Black African	0	0	0	0	1	0
White and Asian	1	2	0	0	0	0
White British	4	19	15	25	31	39
Not answered	6	2	1	2	0	3