

Update: proposed re-commencing of school swimming

In line with government advice during the COVID pandemic, school swimming lessons were suspended early in 2020, although some leisure swimming pool facilities have since reopened under certain restrictions.

We are keen to restart swimming lessons as early as safely possible. With this in mind we are undertaking health and safety assessments and presenting a business case to reopen pools in schools and commence the programme of swimming lessons.

I hope the work necessary to bring pools out of the state of closure to full operation will be possible between the reopening of schools after the Christmas break and February half term. This is not a quick process and involves staff from a number of DCC services, and these will need to be co-ordinated safely and effectively.

In line with advice from national bodies (such as Swim England, 'Returning to the Pool' -2020), there will be some differences: changing room capacities, transport logistics, hygiene and cleaning regimes will all be affected.

We will continue to review guidance and I trust we will be in a position to resume the delivery of Durham County Council's National Curriculum School Swimming and Water Safety program after February half-term 2021.

While we still need to be prepared for unforeseen changes, I hope this will allow schools the time to adjust their PE curriculum for the spring term. As updated information emerges this will be provided to schools.

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