

School Swimming Communication

Scottish Swimming is delighted that the Scottish Government has committed new funding to support school swimming provision across Scotland. This investment represents an opportunity to enable children to become more confident and safer in, on and around water.

Since the Budget announcement, there has been discussion with Scottish Government and COSLA to develop a shared understanding of the policy intent. The intention of this policy is to build water confidence within one primary school year group, with Primary 5 as the core cohort for delivery, aligned to Scottish Swimming's National Primary School Swimming Framework.

It is proposed that a three-year phased approach is taken, with full national delivery intended by year three. Phasing reflects current levels of school swimming provision, local authority readiness, and the need to build system capacity in a sustainable way. The programme will be designed with flexibility to suit local need. It is not a one size fits all approach as the Framework recognises geographic and demographic differences.

COSLA has sought further clarity on the policy intent, alongside assurances that the approach is fully costed and funded, to inform Leaders' consideration as delivery of the commitment remains subject to agreement by COSLA Leaders.

Subject to agreement by COSLA Leaders in April, there will then be detailed work on cost modelling, funding mechanisms, workforce implications, and the practical planning required to enable safe and effective delivery at local level. This will be informed by local engagement and supported by Scottish Swimming where appropriate.

From May, the Scottish Government, COSLA and Scottish Swimming will convene a group of key stakeholders to progress this opportunity. This will build on the development, piloting and evaluation of the Primary School Swimming Framework, launched in June 2024, and the phased implementation plan proposed.

There is recognition across all stakeholders involved, in the positive opportunity this offers to children across Scotland. We will share further details on the implementation approach at the earliest appropriate point, ensuring you have the clarity required for effective planning and delivery. We appreciate your patience and continued collaboration while discussions are ongoing.