

1200 youngsters take plunge with Swim Ja

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There are now over 1,200 persons attending swimming lessons, according to SwimJamaica's latest edition.

Launched in January, 2005, the SwimJamaica programme, which is an initiative of the Amateur Swimming Association of Jamaica (ASAJ), continues to make rapid strides in the pool.

Unofficial figures reveals over a 200 per cent increase in individuals joining the programme in the past year.

But the growth in the programme, co-ordinated by Christian couple Peter and Catherine Moore, is due to the welcoming of "four new schools into the SwimJamaica children's programme".

In their May edition, SwimJamaica reports that "approximately 600 children are now taking swimming lessons" at the newly-built pool at Stella Maris Prep, "with SwimJamaica as part of the curriculum".

Additionally, 12 children are now taking lessons at the school's pool at Rainbow Land, while children from Creative Kids Learning Academy and Grace Hibbert Basic School have joined the programme.

After the success of their trial programme last October, SwimJamaica is also pleased to announce that their Toddler Programme will be coming on stream, starting with two venues this term.

"These lessons offer a safe and enjoyable way for two- and three-year-olds to learn to swim and gain confidence in the water," stated SwimJamaica.

"A parent accompanies each child and joins in with a range of activities and games designed to develop basic swimming skills. Participating children receive a SwimJamaica t-shirt and a certificate, with stickers to record their progression," added the organisers.

Meanwhile, Puerto Seco Beach in Discovery Bay has been the venue on the island's north coast for Level III of the children's programme.

Due to the success of the programme, led by swim instructors Joyce White and Damian Dowie, SwimJamaica had to move out of the pool at the Sea Crest Housing Scheme to find a venue that is larger and deeper.

"After marking out a swimming lane and floating a diving platform off the beach, they had the perfect venue for their lessons in the sea - a first for SwimJamaica," reported the organisers.

"The children on the programme performed extremely well - the majority have now progressed on to Level IV. (And) it is hoped that this model for lessons in the sea can be used at other coastal venues across the island."

As the Summer approaches, details of SwimJamaica's summer programme will be outlined, with three available courses expected at the Stadium Pool.