

# Swimming and water safety education in schools Years 1 to 6 - policy

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Read this policy with the Department of Education and Training's (department);

- Swimming and water safety education in schools Years 1 to 6 - guidelines
- Excursion policy, guidelines and procedures
- School swimming, water safety programs and aquatic activities policy and procedures
- Program statement: Swimming and water safety education in schools Years 1-6.

## 1. Policy summary

Through structured swimming and water safety education every student in Years 1 to 6 in a Northern Territory (NT) school will be provided opportunities to develop and achieve the competencies of level 7 of the Royal Life Saving Australia (RLSA) Swim and Survive program by the time they complete their primary school education.

## 2. Purpose

The swimming and water safety in schools initiative provides for the delivery of quality swimming and water safety education so that all students in Years 1 to 6 in the NT have the opportunity to learn how to swim and develop lifelong skills in water safety to reduce their risk of drowning and injury.

## 3. Scope

This policy applies to all gazetted government and registered non-government schools and other department school sites providing education to students in Years 1 to 6.

## 4. Policy

### 4.1. Reporting requirements

Records of government school student swimming ability must be recorded in the Student Administration Management System (SAMS) at the conclusion of each swimming and water safety education program within 10 business days of receiving the data from Royal Life Saving NT (RLSNT). Refer to School swimming, water safety programs and aquatic activities procedures for instructions on SAMS data entry.

Swim and Survive Partners who deliver the Swim and Survive programs will advise RLSNT of student swimming levels at the conclusion of each program.

The department and RLSNT have an agreement for schools to use the Swim and Survive program and for RLSNT to report the student data to the department. Information is reported regularly by RLSNT to the department's Teaching and Learning Services division in accordance with the conditions of the agreement.

The national benchmark of the RLSA's Swim and Survive program level 7 achievement in primary schools is reported to the NT Government as part of the NT Water Safety Strategy 2030.

## 4.2. Special considerations

There may be circumstances that prevent a student from participating in the Swim and Survive program such as injury, illness or cultural requirements. Schools will need to provide alternate programs for students in these instances. Where a student is unable to participate, or consent is not provided this information is to be noted on the online acquittal of the excursion activity. Refer to Swimming and water safety education in schools Years 1 to 6 - guidelines for details.

For special schools and students with disability, swimming programs should have adjustments made to meet student need.

## 4.3. Delivery models

It is recommended that each student complete at least 5 hours of in-water instruction annually to fulfill the minimum standard of the Swimming and water safety education program. To meet the minimum requirements, it is expected that schools will provide a swimming and water safety program every year. There are 3 main delivery models for the Swim and Survive program:

- **Urban schools** will select from the list of Swim and Survive Partners and organise 7 to 8 swimming lessons at 45 minutes per lesson over 7 to 8 weeks at the closest pool appropriate for their students.
- **Remote schools within close proximity** to a swimming pool will select from the list of Swim and Survive Partners and organise 7 to 8 swimming lessons at 45 minutes per lesson at the closest pool appropriate for their students.
- **Remote schools not within close proximity** to a swimming pool will undertake an excursion to a location where a swimming program will be incorporated with lessons over 2 or 3 full days. Additionally, water safety lessons can be provided without a pool and further work will occur with RLSNT to design a program on a location-by-location basis.

School participation in the Swim and Survive Program is not limited to these models. The department, through Teaching and Learning Services and RLSNT will work with schools that require a differentiated approach based on their individual needs. This includes adjustments to support students with disability.

The list of the list of Swim and Survive Partners is available on the department's website.

## 4.4. Duty of care

A variety of staff may be involved in the instruction of swimming and water safety education, however, only school-based teaching staff can hold the duty of care for students. A teacher cannot delegate their duty of care responsibilities to anyone during swimming and water safety education.

The duty of care requires taking practical steps to protect the student against risks of injury or harm that are reasonably foreseeable. It is the responsibility of principals to ensure that all teachers are aware of their duty of care responsibilities.

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

### 5.1. Teaching and Learning Services

Teaching and Learning Services is responsible for:

- working collaboratively with RSLNT and schools that require a differentiated approach based on their individual needs
- monitoring and reviewing this policy and associated supporting documentation
- supporting delivery of swimming and water safety education programs for students in Years 1 to 6
- managing the Community based education organisation agreement between the department and RLSNT
- reporting, as required, on participation by schools in swimming and water safety education programs by students Years 1 to 6.

### 5.2. Strategic Policy, Programs and Performance

Strategic Policy, Programs and Performance is responsible for:

- managing the agreement between the department and non-government school sector heads in relation to funding for swimming and water safety programs for students Years 1 to 6.

### 5.3. Principals

Principals are responsible for:

- implementing and complying with this policy
- ensuring timetabling allows for compliance with the requirements of this policy including staff ratios and suitable time allocations for the delivery of the learning activities
- supporting teachers to deliver and report on swimming and water safety education, and where interested to become a qualified instructor
- ensuring teachers understand their duty of care requirements
- provide feedback to the department when required.

Government school principals are also responsible for:

- working with Teaching and Learning Services, Regional Services and School of Sport Education NT to ensure the successful delivery of swimming and water safety education in their school
- ensuring data received from RLSNT is entered into the Student Administration Management System (SAMS) for the department's data collection responsibilities
- ensuring online excursion applications and acquittals are completed for each swimming and water safety program for Years 1 to students.

## 5.4. Teachers

Teachers in government schools are responsible for:

- providing duty of care during swimming programs
- understanding and complying with this policy.

## 6. Definitions

Term	Definition
Swim and survive program	Nationally accredited RLSA swimming and water safety program that focuses on the development of swimming, personal survival, basic rescue and lifesaving skills.
Swimming and water safety education	Formal learn to swim and water safety education within structured school swimming and water safety programs based on skill development and assessment of student ability.

## 7. Acronyms

Acronyms	Full form
NT	Northern Territory
RLSA	Royal Life Saving Australia
RLSNT	Royal Life Saving Northern Territory
SAMS	Student Administration Management System

## 8. Related legislation, policy and resources

### 8.1. Legislation

- *Education and Care Services (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011* - <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/en/Legislation/EDUCATION-AND-CARE-SERVICES-NATIONAL-UNIFORM-LEGISLATION-ACT-2011>
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (NSW)* - <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653>

### 8.2. Policy and procedures

- Swimming and water safety education in schools years 1 to 6 guidelines - <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/policies/3538>
- School swimming, water safety programs and aquatic activities policy and procedures - <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/health-safety/swimming-and-water-safety>
- Excursions policy, guidelines and procedures - <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/school-operations#excursions>
- Managing water hazards in preschool policy and procedures - <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/early-childhood-education-and-care/preschool-specific-policy>
- Program statement: Swimming and water safety education in schools Years 1-6 - <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/policies/6458>

### 8.3. Resources

- Royal Life Saving Australia, Guidelines for Safe Pool Operations - <https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/Aquatic-Risk-and-Guidelines/guidelines/GSPO>
- List of Swim and Survive Partners - <https://elearn.ntschoools.net/policies/3538>

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