

Swimming and water safety education in schools Years 1 to 6 – information for families

Policy statement

The Northern Territory Government has committed to support free swimming lessons for all primary school students in years 1 to 6. \$3 million is being provided to enable Territory schools to deliver swimming and water safety lessons for all students in years 1 to 6. Learning how to swim and develop lifelong skills in water safety aims to reduce risk of drowning and injury. The funding also supports Government's commitment to lowering the cost of living for families.

Frequently Asked Questions

How will swimming and water safety education in schools be paid for?

\$3 million will be provided to enable Territory schools to deliver swimming and water safety lessons for all students in Years 1 to 6 from Term 1 2025.

Do parents need to contribute?

No. Swimming lessons are being provided at no cost to families.

Can the NT Sports voucher be used?

No, the program is provided in addition to the Sports vouchers.

If a child is under 5 years of age and not enrolled in school, parents are able to access two \$100 Learn to Swim vouchers each year.

For more information about the swim vouchers and other activities, go to the [Northern Territory Government Sport and Recreation website](#).

What if there isn't a pool near our school?

The department has developed a list of pools and their proximity to schools.

There will be travel and logistics support provided to deliver on this commitment. There will also be flexible delivery models for swimming and water safety so that all primary school students have the opportunity to learn these important water skills.

What are the delivery options?

At this stage the department, in consultation with RLSNT, have proposed three main delivery models:

- Urban schools will select from registered providers 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 registered providers 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 program is not limited to these models. The department and RLSNT will work with schools to provide approaches based on their individual needs.

Are there appropriate safety measures in place?

The department takes the safety of students and staff seriously. Schools are already familiar with duty of care responsibilities associated with excursions and the department will ensure appropriately qualified staff and safety measures are in place.

Prior to any excursion, a comprehensive and carefully considered risk assessment must be undertaken.

What about children in Transition?

The commitment does not include Transition students however schools can continue to offer swimming and water safety education to Transition students in the same way they currently do.

What if I don't want my child to participate?

Families have the right not to consent for their children to engage in the program. Schools will then make arrangements for those students in the same way they do for any excursion where a parent does not provide consent.

Are students with additional needs required to participate?

Students with additional needs should have the same opportunity to engage in swimming and water safety education. In some instances, there will be students with disabilities who are not able to participate in the program. In these instances, alternate education provision will be provided in line with current practice.

What exceptions are there?

Schools must provide the opportunity for students in years 1-6, in some instances there may be individual students who are injured, ill or for family circumstances or cultural reasons are not able to participate in the program. In these instances, alternate education provision is provided in line with current practice.

What is the qualification requirement for instructors?

The qualification required to deliver the program is S1SSS00132 - Swimming and Water Safety Teacher. The skill sets for this qualification are:

- SISCAQU020 - Perform water rescues

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- SISCAQU023 - Plan swimming lessons
- SISCAQU024 –Teach water familiarisation, buoyancy and mobility skills
- SISCAQU025 - Teach water safety and survival skills
- SISCAQU026 – Teach swimming strokes
- HLTAID009 - Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

The instructor must also have a current Working with Children Clearance.

Find out more about the Swimming and Water Safety Teacher skill requirements at [training.gov.au](https://www.training.gov.au).

Note: The units listed above reflect the current standards but are subject to change.