

POLICY

SCHOOL SWIMMING, WATER SAFETY PROGRAMS AND AQUATIC ACTIVITIES

Responsibility of: School Support Services
Effective Date: October 2013
Next Review Date: October 2015
Target Audience: All school staff

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This document should be read in conjunction with [School Swimming, Water Safety Programs and Aquatic Activities Procedures](#).

1. POLICY

The aim of this policy is to promote safe aquatic participation and minimise the risks associated with school swimming and water safety programs. Schools must follow teacher qualifications, student ratios, and 'duty of care' requirements for school swimming programs including swimming carnivals, diving, recreational aquatic activities and student resuscitation education, outlined in the School Swimming and Water Safety Programs Procedures.

Schools with swimming pools and purpose built pools on their premises must ensure they comply with the Guidelines for Water Safety – Commercial Learn to Swim and School Pools which is available from the [Royal Life Saving Society Australia](#).

2. BUSINESS NEED

This policy has been updated to ensure schools follow the DoE policy for appropriate planning, implementation and supervision of school swimming programs including swimming carnivals and recreational aquatic activities. The policy is based on the [Royal Life Saving Society Australia \(RLSSA\) Guidelines for Safe Pool Operations](#) and [AUSTSWIM Swimming & Water Safety Program Guidelines](#).

The [Australian Water Safety Council](#) recommends that by the completion of primary school education, each student should be able to satisfactorily perform all competencies equivalent to Level 4 of the RLSSA Swim and Survive Program. By year 10, each student should be able to satisfactorily perform all competencies equivalent to RLSSA Bronze Star including resuscitation and/or Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) Surf Survival including resuscitation.

In line with the [National Quality Framework](#) preschools that have a swimming pool or other water hazards on site are required under the [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#) to have a water safety policy in place.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to any water-based activity in all NT government schools in the Northern Territory including preschools.

4. DEFINITIONS

School swimming and water safety program refers to formal learn to swim and aquatic survival education within structured school swimming and water safety programs based on skill development and assessment of student ability.

School swimming carnival refers to amateur swimming competitions consisting of structured swimming events.

Recreational aquatic activities/unstructured activities refers to participation in informal aquatic activities other than the school swimming and water safety program. Such as celebration or reward days either for individual classes or the whole school, free swim time as part of an excursion, free swim time incorporated in a school swimming carnival, free swim time or pool play at a school camp or free swimming in a weekly swimming program.

Ratio refers to the required number of qualified teachers/supervisors in relation to the swimming ability and number of students participating in the designated activity/program.

Teacher in Charge refers to a DoE teacher who has overall responsibility for the safety and well-being of the group of students in their care, at a swimming and water safety program/activity. This teacher is in charge of organising the activity/program and has ultimate responsibility and therefore authority while the activity/program is in progress.

Purpose built pool refers to pools in special education and preschool settings.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (if applicable)

Refer to the [School Swimming and Water Safety Program Procedures](#).

6. RELATED POLICY, LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

Policy, Procedures and Guidelines

- [Excursions Policy](#)
- [Injury, Incident or Hazard Report Form](#) (internal staff site)
- [RLSSA Guidelines For Safe Pool Operations](#)
- [AUSTSWIM Swimming and Water Safety Program Guidelines](#)
- [Sun Safety Advice](#)

National

- [Australian Water Safety Strategy 2016-2020](#)
- [National Quality Framework](#)

Legislation

- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)

7. EVALUATION (if applicable)

The National Benchmark of Swim & Survive Level 4 Achievement in Primary Schools is reported to the Northern Territory Government as part of the [NT Water Safety Plan](#).

Records of student swimming ability are maintained in SAMS at the conclusion of each swim program/activity and reported to Royal Life Saving NT Branch. DoE and Royal Life Saving NT have an agreement for Schools to use the Swim and Survive program and report the student data to Royal Life Saving NT Branch. This information is reported annually to DoE to ensure student access to water safety is recorded and aquatic survival skills are achieved.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS (if applicable)

- [Australian Water Safety Strategy 2016-2020](#) © AWSC 2012
- [Australian Water Safety Council](#)
- [NT Water Safety Strategy 2012 - 2016](#)
- Swimming and Lifesaving Water Safety for all Australians, Sixth Edition (2010), Elsevier Mosby.
- Water Safety Guidelines for Unstructured Aquatic Activity © State of New South Wales through the Department of Education and Training