



# Mernda Primary School 0488

## WATER SAFETY POLICY

### RATIONALE

To ensure that all school swimming and water safety programs are safely conducted and to provide students with the knowledge and confidence to participate in water and aquatic activities.

### AIM

Swimming and Water Safety Programs and activities should include a sequence involving:

- swimming
- water safety
- survival techniques
- rescue and emergency procedures

### IMPLEMENTATION

- BASC coordinator must ensure that all relevant requirements are met for:
- supervision levels
- staff and/or instructor qualifications
- other health, emergency and safety precautions

BASC will use as a basis of all Water Safety programs, the Australian Water Safety Council Priority Area One – Taking a Life Stages Approach.

Taking a life stages approach is the first Key Priority Area of the Australian Water Safety Strategy 2012-15 (See References). Epidemiologically, life stages are used to differentiate between complex drowning risk factors and exposure to hazards based on age. These vary naturally throughout a person's life, along with the physical, emotional and social developmental stages. The three key life stages targeted in this Strategy are: Children 0-14 years, Young People 15-24 and People Aged 55+.

### Swimming Venues and Water Based Activities

There are three categories of swimming venues:

**Type 1:** Swimming pools and shallow, calm, confined swimming areas at natural venues such as lakes, dams and non-surf beaches. A shallow, natural-water venue is defined as a venue where the maximum depth of the water is no greater than shoulder height for any of the students involved in the program. The swimming area at natural venues must be clearly defined and surrounded by safety barriers such as the shoreline, piers, jetties or floating ropes.

**Type 2:** Open deep-water venues include deep and/or flowing water at non-surf beaches, lakes, channels, rivers and dams. Additional hazards associated with this venue type mean that the swimming area should be divided into appropriate group teaching stations, each with recognisable boundaries such as banks, shorelines, flags, piers or floating ropes.

**Type 3:** Surf beaches include all beaches with direct access to ocean waters. Where possible, programs should be conducted at patrolled beaches.

BASC includes as an additional category;

**Type 4 Water based Activities**, which include:

- Water play, i.e. filling, emptying, splashing, spilling, measuring
- Science experiments
- Water based play supplies may include:
  - bowls, buckets, recycled containers of different sizes and shapes, small plastic cups, measuring cups, measuring spoons, scoops, funnels, troughs and plastic dishes.

All Water based activities will be supervised and implemented within an 'arm distance' of all educators and children.

## Qualifications

This table describes the qualifications requirements by activity type. Last Updated: October 2015

### Activity

All swimming programs

### Requirement

All supervising staff must be capable and have the knowledge and skills:

- to teach swimming and water safety
- for emergency rescue and cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

**Note:** Appropriate levels of competence are the rescue and CPR requirements specified in the certificates for:

- AUSTSWIM Teacher
- Life Saving Victoria
- Surf Life Saving Victoria Resuscitation.

At a swimming pool or a natural water shallow and confined venue

One staff member must hold an AUSTSWIM Teacher of Swimming and Water Safety Certificate and, where possible, a second staff member should hold the same certificate.

At an open deep water venue

All staff must hold an AUSTSWIM Teacher of Swimming and Water Safety Certificate and at least one staff member must hold a current:

- Patrol Bronze Medallion of the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia
- Community Surf Lifesaving Certificate of Life Saving Victoria.

At a surf beach

All staff must hold an AUSTSWIM Teacher Water Safety Certificate, one staff member must hold one of the following, a current:

- Patrol Bronze Medallion of the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia
- Community Surf Lifesaving Certificate of Life Saving Victoria.

Recreational swimming

For staff qualifications and staff-student ratios see: Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors website, including the recreational swimming activity guidelines within Department resources below.

**Note:** Recreational swimming sessions occur where the learning of swimming or water safety is not the prime purpose.

## EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on

18<sup>th</sup> November 2015