

10 year planning framework

Water safety in schools



Foreword

Catherine Greaves
CEO, Life Saving Victoria



Every child should leave school with the skills, knowledge and confidence to stay safe in and around water.

Swimming and water safety education plays a critical role in supporting young people to safely enjoy Victoria's beaches, pools, rivers and waterways. Beyond drowning prevention, it supports health and wellbeing, builds confidence and resilience, and encourages lifelong participation in aquatic activity – benefits that contribute to stronger, safer and more connected communities.

The *Water Safety in Schools 10-Year Planning Framework* establishes the goals and objectives that will guide the ongoing delivery of the Water Safety in Schools initiative in Victorian government schools over the next decade. Informed by research, insights and consultation across education, aquatic safety, health, local government, community sectors and the Department of Education, the framework provides a practical and forward-looking approach to strengthening swimming and water safety education while responding to emerging needs, opportunities and challenges.

This framework identifies two key areas for future focus. The first is ensuring Victorian students continue to have access to high-quality swimming and water safety education that builds lifelong capability. The second is improving equity, inclusion and accessibility so that barriers relating to cost,

language, culture, ability or location do not prevent participation. Together, these priorities recognise that achieving strong water safety outcomes requires both educational excellence and equitable access.

A key strength of the framework is its focus on future-ready solutions. Both focus areas are supported by a shared commitment to technological innovation, digital enablement and stronger systems integration. Used well, these approaches can expand access, strengthen teacher capability, improve reporting and evaluation, support evidence-informed decision-making and enhance learning outcomes for Victorian students.

I would like to thank the many stakeholders who contributed their expertise, experience and perspectives throughout the consultation process. Their insights have helped shape a framework that is practical, evidence-informed and responsive to the needs of Victorian students and schools.

As Victoria continues to grow and change, so too must our approach to swimming and water safety education. By remaining focused on quality, inclusion, and continuous improvement, we can help ensure future generations of Victorian students develop the skills, confidence and capability they need to safely enjoy aquatic environments throughout their lives.



Focus area 1:

Swimming and water safety education

Build strong, lifelong water safety capabilities for every student in Victoria.

Provide swimming, water safety and lifesaving education for all Victorian students. Provide leading educational materials and support tools to students, teachers and families to ensure every student develops the skills and knowledge to stay safe in and around the water for life. Student competencies will align with the Victorian Curriculum F-10 Version 2.0.

Note: This focus area relates to the overall content, quality and delivery of swimming and water safety education.



GOAL

1. Enhance in-water swimming, water safety and lifesaving education

OBJECTIVE

- a. Develop best practice approaches for effective aquatic education for Victorian students.
- b. Understand the long-term impacts of water safety education and explore future program opportunities.
- c. Develop a common learn to swim curriculum for Victorian school students.
- d. Review Victorian Water Safety Certificate and possible connections with common learn to swim curriculum.
- e. Develop shared curriculum resources to support the delivery of a common learn to swim curriculum.
- f. Promote swimming and water safety curriculum requirements and delivery options.



Focus area 1: swimming and water safety education

GOAL

2. Increase opportunities for school swimming and water safety teacher development

OBJECTIVE

- Support teachers to deliver successful swimming and water safety programs.
- Support the increase of suitably qualified teachers to deliver school swimming and water safety education.
- Deliver a program of professional development opportunities for classroom and in-water educators.
- Facilitate networking between school swimming and water safety education providers to learn from one another.



GOAL

3. Improve reporting, visibility and accountability of school swimming and water safety education

OBJECTIVE

- Increase usage, usability, effectiveness and data collection of swimming and water safety benchmarks (e.g. Victorian Water Safety Certificate).
- Review reporting policies and procedures.



Focus area 2:

Equity, inclusion and accessibility

Ensure no child is excluded due to cost, language, culture, ability or location.

Ensure that swimming, water safety and lifesaving programs are inclusive and accessible to all Victorian students, removing barriers and increasing outcomes among underrepresented and diverse groups.

Note: This focus area relates specifically to improving access and inclusivity in education.



GOAL

1. Reduce structural and practical barriers to achieving successful swimming and water safety education outcomes

OBJECTIVE

- a. Ensure funding models suit the target audience.
- b. Support students at-risk of not meeting swimming and water safety benchmarks.
- c. Increase awareness of diversity and lived experience within swimming and water safety delivery, management, resourcing and pedagogies.



Focus area 2: equity, inclusion and accessibility

GOAL

2. Maximise in-water swimming, water safety and lifesaving experiences for groups most at-risk of having limited aquatic competency

OBJECTIVE

- a. Improve expertise of school swimming and water safety education teachers to cohorts at-risk of having limited aquatic competency.
- b. Develop tailored school swimming and water safety education programs to support students with diverse needs.



GOAL

3. Support improved swimming, water safety and lifesaving education outcomes in secondary school students

OBJECTIVE

- a. Develop secondary school swimming and water safety teaching and learning resources.
- b. Develop secondary school swimming and water safety teaching and learning programs.



Together preventing drowning. Together thriving around water.

A shared vision. A coordinated effort.
Safer generations to come.



Life Saving Victoria

200 The Boulevard Port Melbourne VIC 3207

03 9697 6900 | mail@lsv.com.au | lsv.com.au