



Policy Name	Water Based Activities Policy
Related Policies and Legislation	Risk Management Policy Duty of Care Policy First Aid Policy Swimming Excursions Procedure
Policy Category	Student Wellbeing & Safety
Relevant Audience	All Treetops Community
Date of Issue / Last Revision	22 September 2011 08 June 2015 – Re-Formatted
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Person/s Responsible for Review	Treetops Administration

Water Based Activities Policy

While instructors and/or assisting adults may be involved in the activity, responsibility for the welfare and safety of students remains with the teaching staff **at all times** while the students are in their care.

The duty of care provided by the teacher in charge of the activity extends to:

- Student capabilities.
- Qualifications of adults involved.
- Adult/student ratio.
- Assessing the risk.
- Establishing guidelines for the activity.
- Identifying students with medical and physical conditions before the activity (the inclusion of such children may alter the staffing ratios and the location).

The teacher in charge may insist that all students involved be able to complete minimum targets as set out by the Royal Life Saving Society Australia.

At least one **adult** involved must hold a current life saving qualification.

For Closed Water Activities: RLSSA Bronze Medallion, SLSWA Bronze Medallion or SLSWA Surf Rescue Certificate.

For Open Water Activities: SLSWA Bronze Medallion, SLSWA Surf Rescue Certificate, RLSSA Bronze Medallion (for flowing river and waterway).

Preparation for the activity should include thorough consideration of:

- Venue safety.
- Student requirements during the activity.
- Activity and equipment safety.

When possible, the teacher in charge should visit the area prior to the activity in order to gain firsthand knowledge when assessing the risk.

Adult/Student Ratio

At least 2 supervisors at all times, one appropriately qualified. *Lifeguards on duty at a public facility are **not** considered as part of the supervisory team.* The ratio is dependent on:

- Student ability.
- Medical or physical conditions of students.
- Supervisor's ability and experience.
- Age of students.
- Location and type of activity being undertaken.
- Weather.

Closed Water (swimming pool, sheltered coastal area or river, dam, waterhole inland water body)

Minimum requirement is: One qualified supervisor for every 32 children or part thereof and one supervisor for every 12 students or part thereof (inclusive of qualified supervisor) for 11-15 year old students, one supervisor for every 10 students or part thereof (inclusive of qualified supervisor) for 8-11 year old students, one supervisor for every 6 students or part thereof (inclusive of qualified supervisor) for 5-8 year old students.

Open Water (surf beach, flowing river or waterway, tidal coastal waters)

Minimum requirement is: One qualified supervisor for every 16 children or part thereof and one supervisor for every 8 students or part thereof (inclusive of qualified supervisor) for students aged 8 years and above. It is not recommended that students under the age of 8 participate in open water activities.

Establishing guidelines for the activity.

It is essential that all participants are aware of all guidelines before an activity commences. Supervisors must be aware of their individual supervisory role including where they are to be positioned, which area is theirs when scanning for students and what the safety check systems are e.g. buddy system where swimmers are paired and regularly checked.

- Teacher/assisting adult to test the area prior to students being allowed to enter.
- Continually evaluate the area for changes, e.g. weather conditions.
- Ensure that all the staff members responsible for safety are ready to enter the water.
- Carry out regular roll calls/head counts. Ensure that a correct class list is available at the activity.
- Ensure area is in clear view of staff member responsible for safety.
- Clearly mark the activity area for all open water activities.
- Describe to students the communication methods to be used e.g. whistle.
- Ensure that the emergency plan can be executed at all times – mobile phone, flotation devices.