



# SwimVAC

## Customer Handbook



**ROYAL LIFE SAVING**  
NEW SOUTH WALES

# Royal Life Saving NSW SwimVAC Holiday Program

Welcome to the SwimVAC program, proudly operated by the Royal Life Saving Society – New South Wales.

We believe that every child has the right to be given the opportunity learn how to swim. In Australia, drowning remains one of the leading causes of preventable death among children. Our goal at Royal Life Saving NSW is to change this statistic by offering our customers high-quality programs that provide great value for money.

Our SwimVAC program has been specifically designed for children aged of 3 to 14 years old. Through our comprehensive curriculum, we aim to teach a wide range of knowledge and skills, particularly around water safety, survival swimming and basic rescue techniques. Our overall objective is to cultivate strong, safety-conscious young swimmers who show respect for all aquatic environments and water safety initiatives.

## Contact us:

### Email:

[swimandsurvive@royalnsw.com.au](mailto:swimandsurvive@royalnsw.com.au)

### Phone:

(02) 9634 3700

## Our Commitment to You

At Royal Life Saving, we are passionate about preventing drowning and promoting healthy, active lifestyles by equipping all Australians with swimming and water safety skills. We are committed to consistently delivering great service, high-quality programs and a safe, clean facility that meets and exceeds your expectations.

## Our commitments include:

- Providing valuable water safety education tailored to your needs and those of the community.
- Acting with honesty and integrity, ensuring fairness and equal treatment for everyone.
- Providing clear answers to your questions and keeping you informed about your SwimVAC enrollment
- Supporting you in achieving your child's goals in learning to swim.

## How you can help us:

- Keep up to date with communications regarding the SwimVAC Program.
- Provide feedback to ensure that we meet your needs and expectations.
- Ask us if you have a question and please inform us immediately if you have any concerns.

## The Importance of Swimming and Water Safety Lessons

Swimming lessons are a fundamental part of a child's education. In Australia, with our abundance of beaches, pools inland and open waterways, having the ability to swim and handle aquatic situations safely is essential, as water-based recreation is deeply embedded in our culture.

Swimming is not only a life skill, but also a skill for life. It offers numerous physical and mental health benefits, including improved endurance, coordination, balance, and immunity, while also providing potential career opportunities. These fantastic benefits extend into later years, enhancing overall health and well-being.

The risk of drowning is highest among children aged 12 to 24 months. However, the real impact of swimming skills on drowning prevention becomes evident during the teenage years, when kids are more likely to swim with friends rather than under adult supervision. By ensuring children develop strong swimming and lifesaving skills, such as being able to swim more than 50 meters before leaving primary school or gaining a Bronze Medallion in secondary school, they are better equipped to stay safe as they grow into young adults.

It is crucial for children to continue swimming lessons throughout their school years, to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to safely enjoy a range of inland and open water environments throughout their life.

## Our Team

At Royal Life Saving NSW, we are committed to providing essential swimming and water safety education and take pride in the expertise and quality of our team. We invest significantly in training to stay ahead of the latest advancements in swimming and lifesaving instruction.

All our teachers and coaches undergo comprehensive training in specialised skills, such as stroke development, and are qualified to instruct diverse groups, including infants, preschoolers, adults, and individuals with disabilities. We continuously focus on the professional growth of our staff through ongoing training and development to ensure we deliver the highest standard of instruction.

## Requirements from our Teachers

All Royal Life Saving SwimVAC Teachers must hold the following qualifications to be eligible to conduct the program:

- RLS Swim Teacher, Austswim or Swim Australia Swim Teacher license
- CPR resuscitation qualification
- Working with Children Check through NSW Office of Children's Guardians or equivalent

# Our Swimming and Lifesaving Programs

## SwimVAC Program Goals

Royal Life Saving NSW is proud to partner with aquatic facilities around the State to conduct the SwimVAC program each year during the during the January School Holidays.

Each season, the program caters for children from 3 – 14 years of age, progressing from PreSchool level learn to swim, right through to School-Aged Advanced classes that teach higher level swimming and lifesaving skills. Each program is facilitated in collaboration with local councils and pool operators to address the specific the needs of the community's children.

## The National Swimming and Water Safety Framework

The National Swimming and Water Safety Framework is designed to help individuals acquire the skills, knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and behaviors necessary for leading safe and active lives in various aquatic environments.

Prompted by drowning prevention research and the National Swimming and Water Safety Framework, Royal Life Saving have developed the SwimVAC program to directly align with the developmental stages and benchmark measures outlined in the framework. Our goal is to provide more children with access to essential swimming lessons, minimising barriers and helping them achieve the age-based benchmarks set by the framework.

## Guiding Principles of the Framework

Everyone should have the opportunity to engage in swimming and water safety education.

- Entry and progression through the framework can occur at different stages and rates, with the framework being adaptable to support individual achievement.
- While structured programs are crucial, aquatic play and recreation also play a significant role.
- Learning should extend skills and knowledge across various aquatic environments and water-based activities.
- The framework uses clear and accessible language to ensure it is understandable for all facilitators, educators, and parents.



## National Benchmarks for Swimming and Water Safety

The Australian Water Safety Council has established three National Benchmarks for Swimming and Water Safety Education to ensure essential competency standards for all Australians. These National Benchmarks guide the development of teaching programs and help teachers to assess student progress.

In the Royal Life Saving NSW SwimVAC program, the benchmarks are for 6-year-olds and 12-year-olds.

Children will achieve these National Benchmarks at different rates and ages. Therefore, during the SwimVAC program, children will be assessed based on their swimming ability, rather than age.

More information about the framework and developmental milestones can be found here: [National Swimming and Water Safety Framework | Royal Life Saving](#)

### Every Australian at the age of 6 years should be able to:



Identify rules for safe behaviour at aquatic environments at or near the home



Submerge the body and move through an obstacle



Enter and exit shallow water unassisted



Identify people and actions to help in an aquatic emergency



Float and recover to a standing or secure position



Perform a survival sequence to simulate an accidental entry



Move continuously for 5 metres

### Every Australian at the age of 12 years should be able to:



Understand and respect safety rules for a range of aquatic environments



Surface dive, swim underwater and search to recover an object from deep water



Enter and exit the water for a range of environments



Respond to an emergency and perform a primary assessment



Float, scull or tread water for 2 minutes and signal for help



Rescue a person using a non-swimming rescue technique with non-rigid aids



Swim continuously for 50 metres



Perform a survival sequence wearing light clothing

## SwimVAC Levels

The SwimVAC program consists of five levels, each corresponding to a specific class. There is one level for parent/carer classes, one for preschoolers aged 3-5 years of all abilities, and three levels for school-aged children aged 5 and up.

Each level has been designed according to the strands and developmental milestones outlined in the National Swimming and Water Safety Framework.

The five levels on offer are:

- Parent / Carer
- Preschool (all abilities)
- School Age Beginner
- School Age Intermediate
- School Age Advanced

Not all facilities offer every level, as councils and pool operators schedule classes based on community needs. Please check our booking site to see what your local pool has available.

Each child will attend the program for 5 consecutive days, from Monday to Friday. The program is available over 2 weeks to provide additional flexibility and accessibility for families during the holiday period.

Unsure which level is best for your child or need more details on how the levels align with the National Swimming and Water Safety Framework? Check out the SwimVAC Level Information Guide on our website to find out more.

## Pricing Structure

The below pricing details outline the price per child, per 5-day program.

SwimVAC Level	Price (Per 5-day program)
Parent / Carer	\$40.00
Preschool	\$40.00
School Age Beginner	\$50.00
School Age Intermediate	\$50.00
School Age Advanced	\$50.00

If you wish to book your child in for two consecutive 5-day programs, please select both weeks when completing the booking.

The cost for 10-day program will be twice that of the 5-day program.

## Booking Information

Bookings for all SwimVAC programs will become available in early October in the year prior.

To book head to the SwimVAC Home Page on our website.

If you are a new customer, you will be prompted to create a family account. Returning customers will be able to log in with their past account details.

If you have any troubles with your booking, please contact [swimandsurvive@royalnsw.com.au](mailto:swimandsurvive@royalnsw.com.au)

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## What do I need to bring to swimming lessons?

To ensure that your child gets the most out of their lessons, we ask that all children come prepared for their lessons with the following:

**Fitted swimwear made from lycra or nylon**

**Towel**

**Quality pair of goggles**

This will not only help your child see underwater, it will also make them feel more comfortable to participate.

**Silicone swimming cap**

These are recommended to help keep your child's hair out of their face.

**Change of dry clothes**

All children who are not yet toilet trained are required to wear a tight-fitting swim nappy or aqua nappy.

It is also a good idea to pack a healthy snack for after the lesson.

Depending on the venue, sunscreen may be necessary.

Some classes may require a spare set of clothes for water safety activities; you will be informed in advance if this is the case



# SwimVAC Terms & Conditions and Policies

## Shower and Changing Facilities

Please refer to the specific policies at the facility where your child is undertaking lessons. Each council or pool operator are responsible for their own policies and procedures.

## SwimVAC Program Weather Policy

In the case of uncertain weather conditions, please contact the facility that is hosting your SwimVAC program to confirm if they will be proceeding as scheduled. SwimVAC lessons will continue to run so long as the facility remains open and operating. Should the facility close due to the weather, that lesson will be cancelled, and you will receive a refund.

**Alternative options:** Royal Life Saving have developed 'dry lesson plans' for situations where the weather conditions, such as extreme heat or thunderstorms, make it unsafe to conduct lessons in their usual format. These lessons can be conducted indoors or under shelter and include activities such as dry rescues, CPR awareness and scenario-based learning.

In cases where the facility remains open but weather conditions are challenging, the SwimVAC teacher shall remain teaching in the water unless they themselves determine it is unsafe to continue. If the heat is excessive, the teacher may also choose to split the lesson time between water-based and dry land activities, depending on what they deem to be appropriate.

## Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency evacuation, please remain calm and follow the instructions provided by the facility staff. It is important that when moving through the facility that you and your children walk and do not run. If an evacuation occurs during your child's lesson, the child will remain with their class and teacher, following the emergency evacuation procedures. Please proceed to the designated assembly area to meet your child and their teacher. Your child's teacher has a duty of care to maintain responsibility for the class until they are authorised to release your child back into your care.

## Refund and Cancellation Policy

Refunds will be considered only in exceptional cases, such as major incidents, hospitalisation or serious injuries that prevent participation in more than half of the program.

Refunds will not be granted for reasons such as holidays, religious observances, general illness or absences of fewer than four consecutive lessons.



## Flotation Statement

The Royal Life Saving Swim and Survive program has made a conscious decision to not use flotation devices (such as back bubbles) during swimming lessons. The goal of the SwimVAC Program is to equip children to assist themselves and others in and around the water through activities that simulate many different aquatic environments.

We encourage parents to familiarise themselves with the use of flotation aids prior to applying them with their children.

## Child Protection / Child Safe Practices

Royal Life Saving is committed to ensuring that children and young people feel safe and to be respected. We take pride in ensuring that Royal Life Saving NSW and our SwimVAC facilities provide a safe and secure environment for all.

In alignment with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, we are committed to adhering to the 10 Child Safe Standards.

These are:

1. Child Safety is embedded in the organisation's leadership, governance and culture.
2. Children are involved in decisions that affect them and their views are taken seriously.
3. Families and communities are informed and engaged.
4. Equity is maintained and diverse needs are addressed.
5. Individuals working with children are properly vetted and supported.

6. Procedures for addressing complaints of child sexual abuse are child-centered.

7. Staff receive ongoing education and training to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to keep children safe.

8. Both physical and online environments are designed to minimise the risk of abuse

9. The implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and enhanced.

10. Policies and procedures clearly outline how the organization ensures child safety.

The Royal Life Saving NSW Child Safe Policy can be reviewed on our website.

## Complaints Handling Process

At Royal Life Saving NSW, we ensure that complaints are managed fairly and efficiently. We foster a respectful and productive workplace whereby customers, community members and staff can voice their concerns directly. Complaints can be made via the website or directly to the SwimVAC Program Manager at [swimandsurvive@royalnsw.com.au](mailto:swimandsurvive@royalnsw.com.au)

## Feedback

We welcome and encourage feedback from our customers. A survey will be available at the end of the program to gather your input, however you are encouraged to reach out at any time during the program. Send us an email at [swimandsurvive@royalnsw.com.au](mailto:swimandsurvive@royalnsw.com.au) or give us a call on (02) 9634 3700.