

# Skipton Primary School

## Key lessons:

- Engaging parents and the wider school community in swimming and water safety education
- Celebrating the swimming and water safety successes of students
- Delivery of swimming in a regional area

Skipton Primary School is a rural school situated in a productive farming area approximately two hours' drive west of Melbourne. The wider school community has, in recognition of the importance and value of school swimming, supported and embraced the program. The program has been running for 35 years and many of the school's parents learnt to swim through the program when they were students.



## The approach

Skipton Primary School delivers their own swimming and water safety program each year at the local outdoor pool, located within walking distance approximately 500 metres away. Skipton Primary School draws on the resources of the local school community, with two AUSTSWIM qualified teachers and two parents instructing the program.

Student ability is established prior to the commencement of the program to maximise time spent in the pool. Groupings are based on reporting from the previous year and through collaboration with parents.

New students and Preps are pre-assessed on the first day and adjusted accordingly as the program continues. Quality assessment and reporting supports this time saving measure to occur.

The first two weeks consists of a 'typical' swimming and water safety program, followed by testing and assessments in the third week (days 1-3) with the final day used for swimming sports. Parents are encouraged to attend the final day of the program.



## Year levels

The program is delivered to the whole school (Foundation – Year 6) for 3 weeks in Term 1

“It gives the students a chance to show off the new skills they have learnt”.

**Dianne Britton**, Skipton Primary School Teacher





## Venue

Skipton Outdoor Swimming Pool, approximately 500 metres from the primary school.



## Financing

Skipton Primary School funds their swimming program from a variety of sources. Each term they apply for a Sporting Schools grant, using these funds for the hire of swimming facilities and lifeguards. The DET Swimming in Schools funding allows the school to fund pool admission for those students who don't already have an annual pool membership. In addition to this, the School Council allocates a small proportion of the voluntary fee contribution to fund CPR/First Aid training and swimming PD for the qualified teachers, in addition to AUSTSWIM qualifications for new staff and parents; thereby ensuring longevity of the program.



## Timetabling

The core teaching group is responsible for delivering the swimming and water safety program, each taking on separate roles. One of these roles involves the responsibility for administration, bookings, school staff rosters and information sessions for parents, as well as recruiting new swim teachers (either current primary school teachers or parents, or people from the local community). By sharing responsibilities amongst the teachers and Principal, staff juggle the timetable for lessons, team teaching classes and walking students to and from the pool, thereby freeing up the AUSTSWIM qualified staff to be at the pool delivering the swimming program. On occasions when the Principal or a staff member is unable to attend for a day, the school calls upon a casual relief teacher to fill their place. Similarly, specialist staff are willing to work around the swimming program or take the place of a classroom teacher to walk groups to the pool. Skipton are also in the process of training two new parent members to assist in the coming years. This scheduling arrangement is discussed with all staff prior to commencement of the swim program to determine feasibility and ensure buy in.



## Assessment

The children are assessed for 1-3 days during the third week of the program, following two weeks of lessons. They are assessed in the pool in the same groups that they completed the swimming program. All students are assessed against the Swim and Survive program, whereby attainment of Level 4 is aligned to the competencies of the Victorian Water Safety Certificate (VWSC). Only the Grade 6 students are assessed against the VWSC, as the school staff believe this is a special thing for the Grade Sixes. Based on this end-of-program assessment, students are then placed into groups for the next year. On the first day of the swimming program that following year, children will be assessed again to ensure they are in the right level.

To showcase the success of their overall program and the effectiveness of the AUSTSWIM qualified instructors, Skipton have a high percentage of students attaining the competencies of the VWSC.



“Everyone helps where they can and staff are flexible with lunches and are happy to cover yard duties when required”.

**Dianne Britton**, Skipton Primary School Teacher