

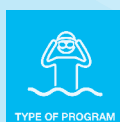
St Thomas Primary School

Key lessons:

- Celebrating the swimming and water safety achievements of students.
- Delivery of swimming and water safety education in a regional area.
- Working with aquatics facilities and swimming instructors to monitor student progress.

St Thomas Primary School is one of two Catholic primary schools located in the township of Sale. Amongst St Thomas staff and students, swimming and water safety skills are seen as valuable life skills, particularly given students' year-round access to the Gippsland lakes, rivers and coastline.

Similarly, St Thomas receives support from families who value the need for a school swimming and water safety program.

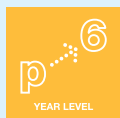


The approach

St Thomas has worked closely with Kemp Aquatics, a Gippsland based swimming and water safety education provider, for many years to build the swimming and water safety skills of their students.

Each year the students' skills are reviewed and assessed to ensure a tailored and comprehensive program is delivered, which caters for all abilities.

The school liaises with the aquatic facility staff before, during and after the program, to monitor student progress, review assessment data and provide constructive feedback in preparation for next year's program.



Year levels

All students from Foundation to Year 6 participate in swimming and water safety education.





Venue

Swimming lessons are held at the Wellington Shire Aquatic Centre in Sale, located less than a 5-minute drive from the school. Kemp Aquatics, run the swimming program, providing lessons to all students throughout Term 3.



Assessment

Kemp Aquatics assess all students based on an adapted Swim and Survive program. At the beginning of the program, all students are placed into groups based on their levels from the previous year. During the first day of lessons, students are assessed to ensure they have been placed in the correct level, and any changes to groups are made.

Further assessment takes place throughout the program and students' competencies are marked as they achieve milestones and progress through each level. All students have the opportunity to demonstrate the competencies outlined in the Victorian Water Safety Certificate (VWSC). Out of those who meet the competencies of the VWSC, only the Grade 6 students are awarded the certificate, as this is seen as a special celebration for these students who are completing their final year of primary school.

With approximately 320 enrolments, the school's commitment to swimming and water safety has been recognised by the significant number of students attaining the competencies of the Victorian Water Safety Certificate. In 2018, a record 85% of their Year 6 students achieved the certificate.

Principal, Anita Little, proudly announces the students' achievements by formally awarding the certificates at the Year 6 Graduation Ceremony in front of their parents and the school community.

Students who didn't achieve the VWSC were still provided with a swim program completion certificate from the aquatic facility. The certificates were placed in their assessment folders to acknowledge their achievement and to place value on the swimming lessons being embedded within the overall school curriculum.