

National Primary School Swimming Framework



**Scottish
Water**

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Foreword

In a country with more than 30,000 inland waters and one of the longest coastlines in Europe, it is imperative that every child in Scotland has the opportunity to learn to swim. This begins with learning basic aquatic skills, which I remember learning as a young child, to give children the core competences they need to be safe in, on and around water. Swimming is one of those unique activities that can be accessed from birth to old age so learning the basics through school swimming and this Scottish Water National School Swimming Framework is essential. I am excited to be the ambassador not only for community learn to swim programmes but for school swimming in order to encourage all children to have opportunities to access swimming in Scotland.



Duncan Scott

Olympic, World and Commonwealth Champion

As ambassador for learn to swim and school swimming I join Duncan in his thoughts around the importance of school swimming. Swimming reaches all abilities and ages and as a paraswimmer, who came through a mainstream learn to swim programme and club training environment, I know the benefits that swimming has on safety and confidence in and around water. This Scottish Water National School Swimming Framework will give all children the opportunity to learn the basics of swimming and master the basic aquatic skills to help them stay safe in water. I hope this Framework will be adopted by primary schools across Scotland. For some children, accessing swimming during school is the only opportunity they may have to swim, therefore it is important that all children have the opportunity to be safer and confident in, on and around water.



Toni Shaw

Paralympian, World and Commonwealth Champion



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National Primary School Swimming Framework

Introduction

National Primary School Swimming Framework

Scottish Swimming's vision is **Everyone Can Swim**. The ability to swim is an important life skill that every child in Scotland should have. Providing better access and prospects for every child to become a confident, safer and competent swimmer is essential for the safety of children in Scotland. School Swimming is the ideal opportunity to provide this for the children of Scotland whilst supporting national outcomes including education, health and stronger communities.

The development of the National Primary School Swimming Framework in partnership with Scottish Water aims to support education authorities and schools to both fill in the gaps with School Swimming provision and enhance the existing School Swimming experience. The Framework is linked to Scottish Swimming's education qualifications and CPD courses to aid the development and quality of delivery.

The Framework, key principles and resources have been designed to be flexible and adaptable to meet the many different challenges and circumstances faced by local authorities and schools when delivering quality School Swimming provision across Scotland.

The Framework has a clear focus on water safety and basic aquatic skills delivered through both water-based and classroom activities. This provides the opportunity to complement and enhance other areas of work focussing on water safety currently being developed and promoted by partners via Water Safety Scotland.

National Primary School Swimming Framework has four levels:

Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3 and Aquatics for Life

Each level of the School Swimming Framework has:

- **An overall aim**
- **Clearly defined objectives**
- **Broadly defined swimming outcomes**
- **Linked Curriculum for Excellence Outcomes for Health and Wellbeing (HWB)**

Stage 1

Aim

Develop confidence in the water and introduce basic aquatic skills

Objectives →

- Introduce non-swimmers to the aquatic environment and establish an understanding of safety in and around the water
- Develop water confidence
- Develop balance, buoyancy and early propulsion through a variety of activities

Swimming Outcomes →

- 1 Enter and exit the pool safely without assistance**
- 2 Demonstrate movements across shallow water**
- 3 Display aquatic breathing with full submersion (blow bubbles)**
- 4 Demonstrate flotation with an aid**
- 5 Kick on front OR back aided for 10 metres**
- 6 Experience deep water**

Health & Wellbeing Experiences & Outcomes →

Physical education, physical activity and sport

- I am learning to move my body well, exploring how to manage and control it and finding out how to use and share space [HWB 0-21a](#)
- I am developing my movement skills through practice and energetic play [HWB 0-22a](#)
- I am aware of my own and others' needs and feelings especially when taking turns and sharing resources. I recognise the need to follow rules [HWB 0-23a](#)
- By exploring and observing movement, I can describe what I have learned about it [HWB 0-24a](#)

Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing

- I am learning to assess and manage risk, to protect myself and others, and to reduce the potential for harm when possible [HWB 0-16a](#)
- I know and can demonstrate how to keep myself and others safe and how to respond in a range of emergency situations [HWB 0-17a](#)
- I know and can demonstrate how to travel safely [HWB 0-18a](#)
- I am developing my understanding of the human body and can use this knowledge to maintain and improve my wellbeing and health [HWB 0-15a](#)

Stage 2

Aim

Increase competency of basic aquatic skills

Objectives →

- Progress water confidence and ability to perform basic aquatic skills unaided
- Have a clear understanding of safety in and around the water

Swimming Outcomes →

- 1 Demonstrate flotation without an aid**
- 2 Kick on front OR back unaided for 10 metres**
- 3 Swim 10 metres**
- 4 Enter and exit deep water**

Health & Wellbeing Experiences & Outcomes →

Physical education, physical activity and sport

- I am discovering ways that I can link actions and skills to create movement patterns and sequences. This has motivated me to practise and improve my skills to develop control and flow [HWB 1-21a](#)
- I am developing skills and techniques and improving my level of performance and fitness [HWB 1-22a](#)
- I can follow and understand rules and procedures, developing my ability to achieve personal goals. I recognise and can adopt different roles in a range of practical activities [HWB 1-23a](#)
- I can recognise progress and achievement by discussing my thoughts and feelings and giving and accepting feedback [HWB 1-24a](#)

Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing

- I am learning to assess and manage risk, to protect myself and others, and to reduce the potential for harm when possible [HWB 1-16a](#)
- I know and can demonstrate how to keep myself and others safe and how to respond in a range of emergency situations [HWB 1-17a](#)
- I know and can demonstrate how to travel safely [HWB 1-18a](#)
- I am developing my understanding of the human body and can use this knowledge to maintain and improve my wellbeing and health [HWB 1-15a](#)

Stage 3

Aim

Use basic aquatic skills to enable safer pupils

Objectives →

- Develop awareness and feel for the water through a variety of basic aquatics skills
- Achieve Scottish Swimming's Basic Water Competency Award

Swimming Outcomes →

Pupils should be able to perform **Scottish Swimming's Basic Water Competency Award** in one continuous sequence.

- 1 **Jump into deep water/fall in entry* and recover to surface**
- 2 **Float on back for a minimum of 10 seconds**
- 3 **Rotate to vertical and tread water for a minimum of 20 seconds, occasionally waving hand**
- 4 **Rotate to horizontal and swim 15 metres**
- 5 **Climb out of pool**

* This is to try to simulate a real life scenario

The **Basic Water Competency Award** is the minimum standard pupils should reach ideally by Primary 5. This award recognises progression but to become a safer and more competent swimmer, pupils should be encouraged to complete a community Learn to Swim programme.

Health & Wellbeing Experiences & Outcomes →

Physical education, physical activity and sport

- As I encounter new challenges and context for learning, I am encouraged and supported to demonstrate my ability to select, adapt and apply movement skills and strategies, creatively, accurately and with control [HWB 2-21a](#)
- I practise, consolidate and refine my skills to improve my performance. I am developing and sustaining my levels of fitness [HWB 2-22a](#)
- While working and learning with others, I improve my range of skills, demonstrate tactics and achieve identified goals [HWB 2-23a](#)
- By reflecting on my own and others' work and evaluating it against shared criteria, I can recognise improvement and achievement and use this to progress further [HWB 2-24a](#)

Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing

- I am learning to assess and manage risk, to protect myself and others, and to reduce the potential for harm when possible [HWB 2-16a](#)
- I know and can demonstrate how to keep myself and others safe and how to respond in a range of emergency situations [HWB 2-17a](#)
- I know and can demonstrate how to travel safely [HWB 2-18a](#)
- I am developing my understanding of the human body and can use this knowledge to maintain and improve my wellbeing and health [HWB 2-15a](#)

Aquatics for Life

Aim

Build on basic skills and water safety to enable progression in all aquatic sports/activities

Objectives →

- Build on basic skills and water safety to enable progression in all aquatic sports/activities.
- Enhance the skills and learning from **Stage 3**.

The **Aquatics for Life** stage does not contain any swimming outcomes, instead it includes suggested session plan thoughts. **Aquatics for Life** provides the opportunity to highlight the different aquatic opportunities and pathways available to pupils.

Health & Wellbeing Experiences & Outcomes →

Physical education, physical activity and sport

- As I encounter new challenges and context for learning, I am encouraged and supported to demonstrate my ability to select, adapt and apply movement skills and strategies, creatively, accurately and with control [HWB 2–21a](#)
- I practise, consolidate and refine my skills to improve my performance. I am developing and sustaining my levels of fitness [HWB 2–22a](#)
- While working and learning with others, I improve my range of skills, demonstrate tactics and achieve identified goals [HWB 2–23a](#)
- By reflecting on my own and others' work and evaluating it against shared criteria, I can recognise improvement and achievement and use this to progress further [HWB 2–24a](#)

Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing

- I am learning to assess and manage risk, to protect myself and others, and to reduce the potential for harm when possible [HWB 2–16a](#)
- I know and can demonstrate how to keep myself and others safe and how to respond in a range of emergency situations [HWB 2–17a](#)
- I know and can demonstrate how to travel safely [HWB 2–18a](#)
- I am developing my understanding of the human body and can use this knowledge to maintain and improve my wellbeing and health [HWB 2–15a](#)
- I make full use of and value the opportunities I am given to improve and manage my learning and, in turn, I can help to encourage learning and confidence in others [HWB 2–11a](#)

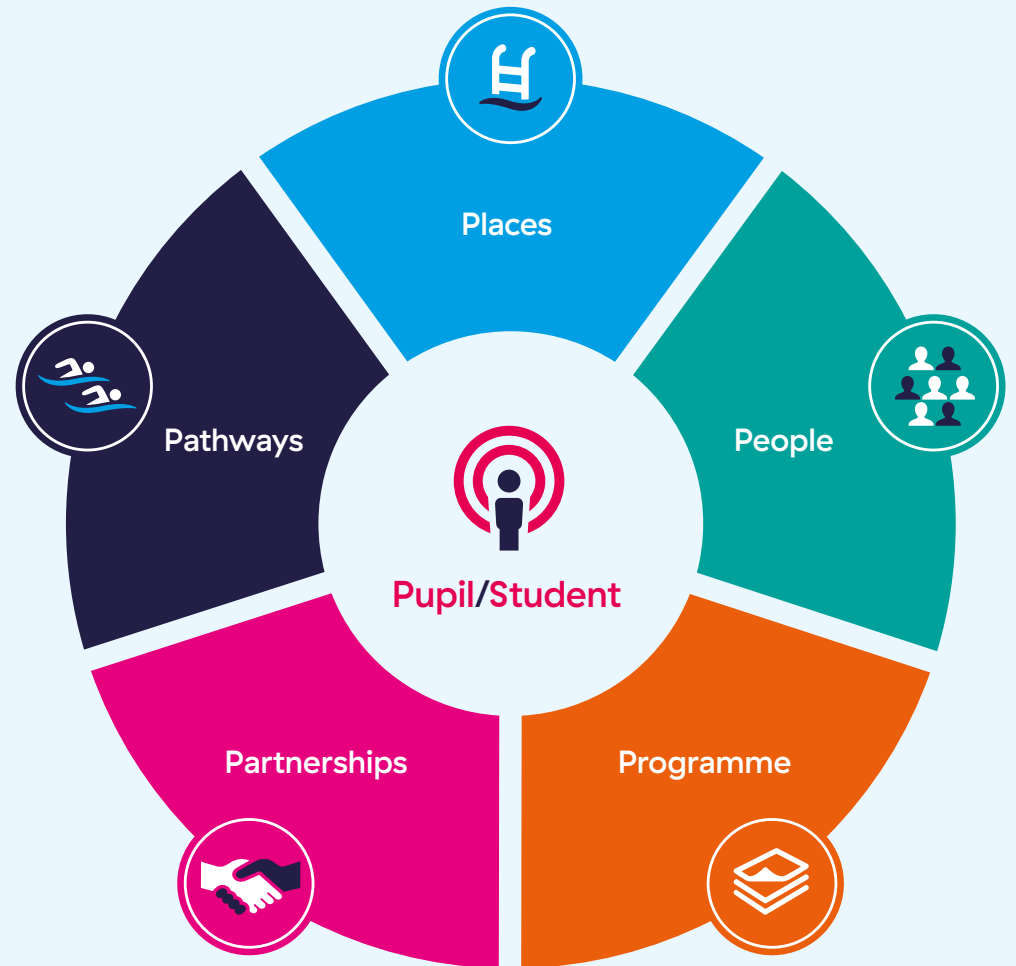
Session plan thoughts →

- **Stay in Stage 3** Remain with **Stage 3** class but improve/become even more competent in Scottish Swimming's Basic Water Competency Award, ensuring they also receive all the key water safety messaging
- **Peer review** Remain within the **Stage 3** class but undertake peer reviewing throughout the session
- **Aquatic Sports** Introduce this group to our different aquatics sports and set them up for lifelong participation
- **Swim test/fitness**

An effective School Swimming Environment

The following diagram highlights five components identified as being key to delivering an effective School Swimming environment. School Swimming providers should consider their priorities and resources within each component of the wheel when establishing their delivery model.

School Swimming providers should review their programmes, priorities and resources on an annual basis to ensure they are providing an effective School Swimming environment and reach out to Scottish Swimming for support on delivering an effective School Swimming environment.



Programme Delivery Methods

The following example delivery models have been developed to support schools to understand and consider different School Swimming approaches and models of delivery. This allows education authorities and schools to help educate and provide opportunities for children across Scotland to experience the water in a safe, fun and inclusive environment.

Scottish Swimming would recommend a minimum 7.5 hours of curriculum swimming delivery (e.g. 10 × 45minute sessions) complimented with classroom water safety education as outlined by Water Safety Scotland.

Delivery Method One →

Universal Approach

All children in a primary school receive a block(s) of quality School Swimming provision during the school day.

Example:

All pupils in a primary five class receive a twelve-week block of 40-minute sessions.

Scottish Swimming believes the best age for School Swimming delivery is P4/5, as it's likely children have developed the physical literacy skills that can be transferred to the aquatic environment, and before social stigma and other factors become a barrier to participation.

We are aware of School Swimming programmes that have more provision and we would encourage this to continue, the following should be a minimum for school swimming delivery.

Aspirationally, there should be three interventions through a pupil's primary school journey; Nursery/P1, P4/5 and finally at P7.

Delivery Method Two →

Targeted Approach

All children in a primary school receive an 'assessment' of swimming ability during the school day. A targeted approach identifies non-swimmers who then receive a block(s) of quality swimming session provision during the school day.

Example:

All children in primary four are 'assessed'. All those who are identified as non-swimmers then receive a 10-week block of 45-minute sessions.

Programme Delivery Methods

Delivery Method Three →

Holistic Approach

A combination of the universal and targeted approaches but a more holistic and sustainable method for areas that have access to their own swimming pool. A collaborative approach working with key stakeholders (Active Schools, Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and Learn to Swim Providers) where senior secondary pupils complete the SSTQ course and help or lead the block of primary School Swimming sessions alongside an experienced teacher.

Example:

All pupils in a primary four class attend their local cluster high school where they receive a 12-week block of 40-minute sessions delivered or assisted by senior secondary school pupils who have or are currently completing their SSTQ course.

Delivery Method Four →

Rural Approach

A model designed to reduce the delivery challenges experienced in rural settings where schools increase the wet pool-time and/or introduce a dry land-based education session, reducing the number of visits and maximising the time spent at the venue.

Example:

All pupils in a primary five class, receive an eight-week block of 60 minute sessions, followed by 45 minutes of dry-land based education on water safety.

All four methods can be delivered on an intensive basis where pupils attend sessions every day for a period of time

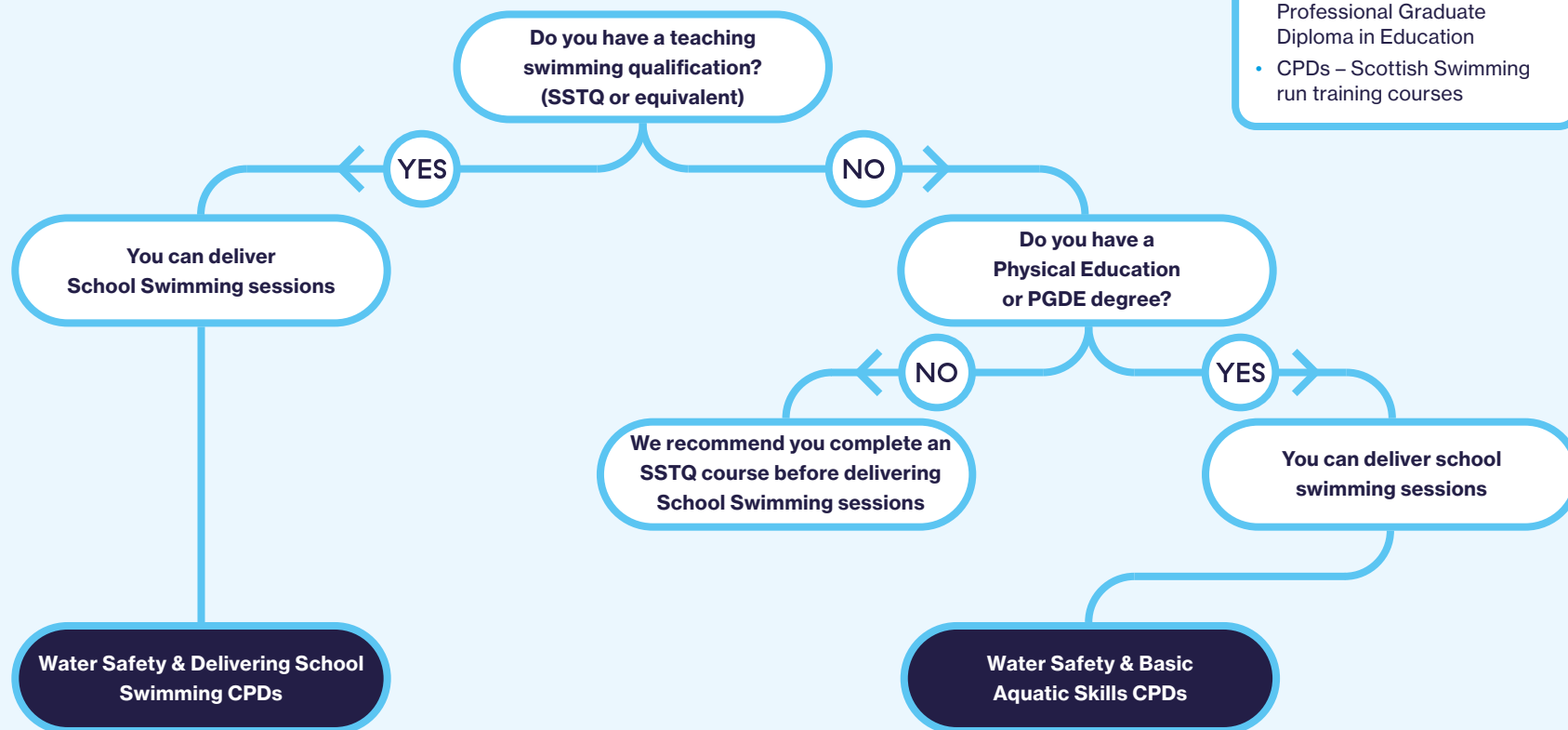
Example:

Monday–Friday 5×45mins for either consecutive weeks or with a gap depending on timetabling. This approach has not been evaluated, but Scottish Swimming see value in considering this approach.

Who can deliver School Swimming sessions?

School Swimming Training and Education

- The following flow diagram highlights the Scottish Swimming training and education available to School Swimming session providers
- A School Swimming provider's decision on who physically delivers the sessions should be based on their area and risk assessment
- The following flow diagram highlights Scottish Swimming's recommendation in order to deliver quality School Swimming



Inclusion

The National Primary School Swimming Framework is an inclusive programme that develops opportunities and provides a progressive pathway for people with a physical, sensory or learning impairment. Scottish Swimming supports School Swimming providers to ensure inclusion of children with a disability in their mainstream sessions.

We provide education, resources and guidance to ensure a child-centred approach is taken allowing every child the opportunity to join, progress and thrive in a quality School Swimming environment.

Direct consultation should take place between the swimming teacher and the parent/carer or school teacher to determine the specific needs of the pupil **prior to the start of the sessions.**

By adopting a collaborative approach between pupils, parents, schools and the community, we can help ensure every child has access to education about how to be safe in, on and around water.



Reporting

Monitoring and reporting is an essential part of the Framework to better understand if, and where, impacts are being made. The following information will be collected from School Swimming providers on an annual basis per primary school:

- Year group
- School postcode
- Pupil starting level (overall number)
- Pupil finishing level (overall number)
- Disability/Health Problems

However, as we develop, the more granular the information we can collect on pupils and their swimming ability, the better the understanding we have of School Swimming across Scotland. Scottish Swimming encourages School Swimming providers to collect and share as much information as possible.

When reporting on the Curriculum for Excellence Experiences & Outcomes benchmarks, effective practice is to have a GTC registered teacher on poolside.



Conclusion

School Swimming is just one component of achieving our vision of Everyone Can Swim. The Framework's focus on water safety and basic aquatic skills creates safer and better educated pupils who can experience the water in a fun and safe environment.

Community Learn to Swim through the National Learn to Swim Framework continues to be the recognised pathway for learning to swim and aquatic sports.

The Primary School Swimming Framework has a clear focus on water safety and should not be used as a replacement for the Community Learn to Swim Pathway. Following a block of School Swimming sessions, pupils should be signposted to the wider aquatics opportunities locally available to them where they can continue their journey.



Wider Aquatic Opportunities & Key Contacts

Wider Aquatic Opportunities →

Public & family swimming sessions

Contact your local swimming pool to find out when their public swimming session times are.

Community Learn to Swim

A list of Scottish Swimming Learn to Swim providers can be found [here](#). Find your nearest provider to sign-up for weekly community swimming sessions.

Aquatic Clubs

There are a number of different aquatic sports pupils can get involved in including Artistic Swimming, Diving, Open Water, Swimming and Water Polo. To find the nearest aquatic club to you, click [here](#).

Other Aquatic Sports

There are number of other sports to participate in such as triathlon, kayaking, the Royal Yachting Association etc.

Key contacts →

Scottish Swimming – scottishswimming.com

Scottish Water – scottishwater.co.uk

Water Safety Scotland – watersafetyscotland.org.uk

Education Scotland – education.gov.scot

Scottish Disability Sport – scottishdisabilitysport.com

sportscotland – sportscotland.org.uk



Water Safety Code

Scottish Swimming have been working closely with Water Safety Scotland on their Drowning Prevention Strategy. Collectively we want to promote the importance of Water Safety and ensure there is consistent messaging across Scotland.

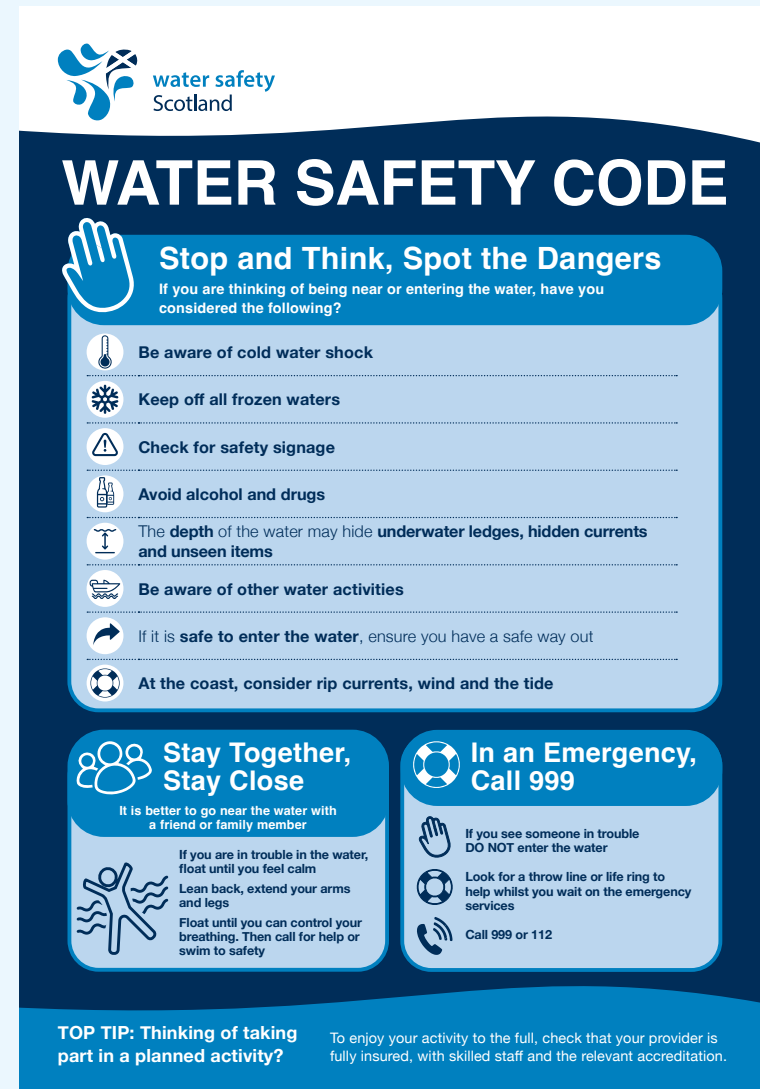
As part of the Drowning Prevention Strategy, Water Safety Scotland have produced a Progression Pathway and a number of resources for every stage of the Curriculum for Excellence, allowing school teachers to highlight the Water Safety Code and key messaging in an education setting.

The Primary School Swimming Framework utilises the Water Safety Code to provide a practical enhancement to the work already being undertaken by Water Safety Scotland.

Further information

[Water Safety Scotland Education Resources](#)

[Water Safety Code \(additional languages\)](#)



The poster is titled 'WATER SAFETY CODE' and features the Water Safety Scotland logo at the top. It is divided into several sections with icons and text. The first section, 'Stop and Think, Spot the Dangers', lists seven points: Be aware of cold water shock, Keep off all frozen waters, Check for safety signage, Avoid alcohol and drugs, The depth of the water may hide underwater ledges, hidden currents and unseen items, Be aware of other water activities, and At the coast, consider rip currents, wind and the tide. The second section, 'Stay Together, Stay Close', advises that it is better to go near the water with a friend or family member and provides instructions for what to do if in trouble. The third section, 'In an Emergency, Call 999', instructs not to enter the water if someone is in trouble, to look for a throw line or life ring, and to call 999 or 112. A 'TOP TIP' at the bottom suggests thinking of taking part in a planned activity and checking that the provider is fully insured.

water safety Scotland

WATER SAFETY CODE

Stop and Think, Spot the Dangers
If you are thinking of being near or entering the water, have you considered the following?

- Be aware of cold water shock
- Keep off all frozen waters
- Check for safety signage
- Avoid alcohol and drugs
- The **depth** of the water may hide **underwater ledges, hidden currents and unseen items**
- Be aware of other water activities
- If it is **safe to enter the water**, ensure you have a safe way out
- At the coast, consider rip currents, wind and the tide

Stay Together, Stay Close
It is better to go near the water with a friend or family member

If you are in trouble in the water, float until you feel calm
Lean back, extend your arms and legs
Float until you can control your breathing. Then call for help or swim to safety

In an Emergency, Call 999

If you see someone in trouble **DO NOT** enter the water
Look for a throw line or life ring to help whilst you wait on the emergency services
Call 999 or 112

TOP TIP: Thinking of taking part in a planned activity?
To enjoy your activity to the full, check that your provider is fully insured, with skilled staff and the relevant accreditation.



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