

Gunnamatta Surf Life Saving Club
Nippers Education Program 2023/24

Parent / Guardian handbook



CONTENTS

A note from the President	3	Participation requirements	13
Nippers key info	4	Swim standards	14
About Lifesaving	5	Session check list	15
Life Saving Victoria	6	Sun Safety	16
Introduction to Gunnamatta SLSC	7	Parent involvement & volunteering	17
Nipper Education Program overview	9	Junior / Youth opportunities with LSV	18
Nippers program calendar	11	Safety at Gunnamatta SLSC	19
Nippers activities	12	Club Code of Conduct	21



A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Welcome to Gunnamatta SLSC for season 2023/24. As President of the Gunnamatta SLSC it is my honour to have you as part of our Club. The Gunnamatta Nippers program celebrated its 30th season last year and continues to grow and provides valuable water skills for young people.

Over the years of the program, our young Nippers are able to “read’ the Surf, spot the rip, ride the waves, swim the gutters and progress to being our next generation of Lifesavers. Nippers also develop very strong bonds among their groups and it has been extraordinary to see those bonds continue for well into later life. It is a privilege to have every one of our Nippers and parents as part of this incredible progression. I look forward to seeing you on the beach and at our many social events.

Welcome aboard,
David Stogdale
President Gunnamatta SLSC



WELCOME TO NIPPERS

Welcome to the 2023-24 Gunnamatta Surf Lifesaving Nippers Education Program. We look forward to seeing you and your nipper(s) at Gunnamatta Back Beach and the many GSLS social events throughout the season.

Please take the time to review our comprehensive **nippers calendar** outlining our program dates. Follow our Instagram account <https://www.instagram.com/gunnamattaslsc/> and website <https://www.gunnamattaslsc.com.au/> to stay up to date with news and events. From time to time, the scheduled program may incur changes which you will be notified of via email & text.

Important reminders:

- All parents assisting the Nippers program must have a valid working with children card. For more information or to check your status head to - <https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>
- Volunteer parent roles - we ask for your support with at least one volunteer shift per Nipper during the season
- Uniforms should be ordered prior to the season, age group managers (AGM's) will hand these out on day 1 of Nippers; caps will be supplied by the club in the Nippers pack that you can pick up at the Nippers welcome night on 2nd December (or on day 1 of the program).
- We encourage all Nippers to have a wetsuits for the colder sessions, try [Trigger Brothers](#) (discounts for members)
- Swimming assessments must be completed prior to the commencement of the Nippers season; these can be arranged through your swimming club or MSAC (28/10/23)
- Extra resources can be found here - <https://clubs.lsv.com.au/areas/107>

ABOUT LIFESAVING

The primary mission of Victorian Life Saving Clubs is to provide a safe and enjoyable aquatic experience for all visitors to our beaches. Over the summer period (November through to Easter) Life Saving Clubs provide volunteer beach patrols at over 50 Victorian beaches on weekends and public holidays.

Life Saving Clubs train volunteer lifesavers in aquatic rescue and resuscitation techniques as well as offering water safety education to the general beach-going public. Over 30,000 volunteer club members ensure that all visitors to Victoria's patrolled coastal and inland waterways are provided with a safe and enjoyable aquatic experience.

Since the early 1900's Life Saving Clubs have been an integral part of Australia's coastal and inland waterways, providing the iconic 'Swim between the red and yellow flags' patrolled areas. Life Saving Clubs harness the support of local communities and use a network of support services such as Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter, Rescue Water Craft and Marine Search and Rescue boats to ensure the safety of the nation's waterway users.

LIFE SAVING VICTORIA

Life Saving Victoria (est. 2002) is an initiative of the Royal Life Saving Society Australia Victoria Branch (est. 1904) and Surf Life Saving Victoria (est. 1947). Operating as a social enterprise, LSV is an independent company that is limited by guarantee. Life Saving Victoria is a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and has Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status with the Australian Taxation Office.

Life Saving Victoria's is forging new lifesaving and water safety initiatives while respecting the proud traditions and programs of Royal Life Saving and Surf Life Saving National organisations.

Mission

Life Saving Victoria's mission is to prevent aquatic related death and injury in all Victorian communities and has the vision that all Victorians will learn water safety, swimming and resuscitation and be provided with safe aquatic environments and venues.

Vision

All Victorians will enjoy (our) aquatic environment after learning water safety, swimming and resuscitation

Values

- Positive & respectful relationships (cultural & intergenerational).
- Being open, welcoming & inclusive.
- Personal development through commitment to lifesaving.
- Developing healthy lifestyles.
- Taking personal responsibility for betterment.
- Being relevant in today's & tomorrow's society.
- Efficient & appropriate use of available resources.
- Building stronger & safer communities.

GUNNAMATTA SURF LIFE SAVING



Gunnamatta 'Gunn' Surf Lifesaving Club (GSLSC) is a passionate and family orientated club with a rich tradition created out of years of service to the Gunnamatta beach community. From early days of its existence, GSLSC has provided lifesaving services that protect beach goers as well as enhance the lives of our members through skills development and life experiences that few can obtain elsewhere.

Our purpose.

Saving lives and caring for our community.

Our vision.

Inspiring the next generation of leaders to respect our beaches, support its community whilst always being safe in the water.

Our mission.

We instill confidence in our community by shaping the future generation of life savers.

GUNNAMATTA CLUB VALUES



Safety first



Trust



Respect



Care



Integrity

SUPPORT AND SAFETY: we develop a culture of safety with our members and with the public and our local community.

TRUST: we develop trust through our actions. Protecting the beach and beach-goers by being open and honest with each other at all times.

RESPECT: people come to the beach for fun. We respect the public, the ocean and each other. We act with integrity and model respectful behaviour. Our actions demonstrate our commitment to Respect.

CARE: we support and exhibit concern for people on and off the beach. We value life and well-being. We know that we are highly visible members of the community and take pride in our service delivery.

INTEGRITY: we are compliant, accountable and deliver on the things that we say we will do. Doing what is right to keep our waters safe at all times.

INTRODUCTION TO NIPPERS

Life Saving Victoria aims to encourage all children to achieve, do their best and develop to their full potential, whilst learning new skills and having fun. We encourage participation in all activities.

The vision for Nippers is to provide a safe and friendly environment where both nippers and parents can learn and enhance their knowledge about lifesaving and to prepare our Nippers to eventually be patrolling members.

There are 12,000+ Nippers here in Victoria. Nippers start learning about surf and inland waterway awareness, and safety through the Nipper Education Program. They are also able to participate in board paddling, swimming, running, wading and other activities and games, that will assist Nippers to become future lifesavers.

Surf awareness and education is a primary aim of the program. Children are taught from the youngest age how to respect and read the surf and to use it to their advantage. This is done in an environment of fun, healthy lifestyle and camaraderie which is unique to lifesaving.

NIPPERS PROGRAM OUTCOMES

The main aims of the Nippers Education Program are to:

- Develop surf and inland waterway awareness
- Increase confidence and skills in beach related activities
- Instill and re-enforce SunSmart philosophies
- Encourage enjoyable and healthy participation
- Promote a positive non-threatening environment
- Meet new friends

What your Nipper will learn

Your Nipper(s) will learn a number of new skills on the beach and in the water, as well as key education areas and water safety.

Nipper Skills

Nipper skills builds progressively on skill development from U8-U13 in beach, water and lifesaving activities. The activities are designed to provide Nippers the skills to be safe around open water and prepare them to complete their Surf Rescue Certificate.

NIPPERS TIMETABLE

Session	Date	Time/Location
Session 1	Wednesday 27th December	9am-11.30am Rye Front Beach
Session 2	Thursday 28th December	9am-11.00am Rye Front Beach
Session 3	Friday 29th December	9am-11am Gunnamatta
Session 4	Saturday 30th December	9am-11am Gunnamatta
Session 5	Tuesday 2nd January	10am-12pm Gunnamatta
Session 6	Wednesday 3rd January	11am-1pm Gunnamatta
Session 7	Thursday 4th January	11am-1pm Gunnamatta
Session 8	Saturday 6th January	12pm-2pm Gunnamatta
Session 9	Sunday 7th January	12pm-2pm Gunnamatta



NIPPERS ACTIVITIES



BEACH ACTIVITIES

- Beach Sprints
- Beach Relays / Runs
- Beach Flags
- Nipper Games



WATER ACTIVITIES

- Wading
- Dolphin Diving
- Surf Race
- Boards
- Understanding tide changes & rips



PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

All participants that wish to be part of the Nippers Education Program must:

- be a financial club member for the current season
- be 7 - 13 years of age by midnight on December 1st 2023
- stay in designated age group, even if (their) birthday occurs during the season
- complete swimming assessment prior to commencing Nipper activities in the water

Age Groups

A nipper is appointed to a particular age group each season based on their age at midnight on 1st December 23. For example, a member turns 12 years of age on 1st December 2023, he/she will be registered as U13 for the 2023/24 season. A member turns 7 years on 1st December 2023, he/she would be registered as U9 for the 2023/24 season.

Age Group	Age by 1/12/22	Caps
U9	7 & 8 by 1/12/23	Green caps
U11	9 & 10 by 1/12/23	Yellow caps
U13	11 & 12 by 1/12/23	Orange caps
U14	13 by 1/12/23	Blue caps

SWIM STANDARDS

Being able to swim competently is an integral part of making children safe at the beach as well as allowing them to actively participate and enjoy lifesaving activities. The Nippers program is not a “learn to swim” program. We strongly encourage you to enrol your children in “learn to swim” classes depending on their current ability.

Swimming evaluations are in place to ensure that Nippers are fit and able to meet the minimum requirements for safety of the Nipper Program. The evaluations consist of a swim and survival float. Life Saving Victoria requires that all Nippers complete a swimming proficiency evaluation prior to commencing Nipper activities in the water.

- Should your child not meet the minimum requirements, they can participate in land based activities only, and we will work with your child to meet the minimum requirements.

We do recognise that swimming in the ocean is a new experience for many children and that even competent pool swimmers can find this challenging at first. Our aim is to encourage children and to help develop their confidence and skills swimming in the ocean as well as provide surf and inland waterway education.

WHAT TO BRING TO EACH SESSION

It is compulsory that Nippers wear their Nipper pink rashie and skull cap during sessions for easy identification. Check that you have the following packed before each session:

- Nipper rashie (pre-ordered)
- Nipper cap (provided by club) - clearly named (on side of cap with waterproof texter)
- Bathers
- Wide brim or bucket style hat or legionnaire style cap
- Goggles
- Towel
- Sunscreen (SPF 50+ highly recommended)
- Water bottle (filled with water only)
- Wetsuit (optional)
- Blue caps only - Flippers

**PLEASE LABEL
ALL
BELONGINGS
CLEARLY**

SUN SMART



We aim to teach children about all aspects of waterways/beach safety, including sun protection. We encourage all participants and spectators to follow these procedures:

1. **Slip** on sun-protective clothing
2. **Slop** on SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and re-apply every two hours
3. **Slap** on a broad-brimmed hat that protects your face, head, neck and ears
4. **Seek** shade
5. **Slide** on sunglasses

Remember to think UV not heat, the UV level can be as high on a cold or cloudy day as it is when it is a hot day. The free [SunSmart app](#) tells you when sun protection is recommended for your location and shows the current UV levels.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED ?

Nippers cannot run without our parent helpers - no lifesaving knowledge is necessary as you will learn alongside your Nipper. This may include setup and pack down of the beach/activities, becoming a qualified Age Manager, becoming qualified water safety, assisting with particular nipper activities or social functions. We ask that a Nipper parent / guardian assists with **at least one task** during the season.

Please note: a nipper parent/guardian is required to be on the beach at all times, whilst the program is running.

We are actively seeking parent/guardian help with the following tasks:

- Assisting in the setting up of the beach and the carrying down of the equipment each day
- Washing off boards or helping pack up the beach equipment at the end of training
- Assist the Age Group Manager during training (e.g beach activities only)
- Volunteer to help with the BBQ each day (excluding first 2 days of Nippers)
- Assisting Nippers movie night

For more information on how you can get involved, please sign up here - <https://volunteersignup.org/9FTQ8>

JUNIOR / YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES WITH LIFE SAVING VICTORIA

There are a number of opportunities for members to get involved with Life Saving Victoria development programs. These include:

- **U13 Development Camp (5/4/24 - 7/4/24)**
- **U15 Development Camp (17/05/24 - 19/05/24)**

For more information, head to the following link:

<https://lsv.com.au/clubs-members/leadership/leadership-and-development-programs/>

SAFETY IS OUR NO# 1 PRIORITY

Safety is our first priority for all activities including beach and water activities.

Water Safety

We endorse the [Surf Life Saving Australia Water Safety Policy 1.1](#). We cannot commence any activity unless there is the correct number of water safety officers. To be a water safety officer you need to hold a current Bronze Medallion or Surf Rescue Certificate. This is a great way to become involved with your children and we require all possible assistance. We regularly run courses, so please contact us if you are interested.

Please note that parents are not to accompany swimmers unless they are qualified.

The minimum ratio for water safety for nippers is between one (1) qualified adult to five (5) children or ten (10) children for low risk activities. All water safety officers should wear an orange cap/vest during water activities and must sign the Patrol Log or Water Safety Log Book at the commencement of each nipper session.

SAFETY IN EVERYTHING WE DO

Medical Conditions

The Nippers Coordinator and Age Group Manager must be notified of any medical conditions or special needs on renewal of membership or at the commencement of the nipper education program.

Dangerous Conditions

- Extreme low or extreme high weather temperatures
- High or strong winds
- Rough or dangerous seas
- Any other condition which causes concern for the safe participation of all members

The GSLS Nipper Program will proceed regardless of the inclement conditions. Activities will be modified to take account of conditions and to ensure the safe participation of all members. In the rare event that it is deemed necessary to cancel a programmed nipper session this will be at the discretion of the Nippers coordinator, Water Safety Coordinator &/or the on duty Patrol Captain. In such a case the Nippers Coordinator will advise parents ASAP via email / text.

RESPECT AND CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Codes of Behaviour

Parents, Caregivers & Spectators' Code of Behaviour

- Remember that children participate in sport for their enjoyment and development
- Encourage children to participate, do not force them
- Focus on the child's efforts
- Encourage children to play according to the rules and settle disagreements without resorting to hostility or violence
- Never ridicule or yell at a child
- Appreciate good participation by all
- Show appreciation for age managers, volunteers and administrators
- Respect the rights and dignity of others