



# freshwater nippers

FRESHWATER SLSC  
HANDBOOK  
Season 24-25





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# WELCOME!



A very big welcome back to the 2024/25 Nippers season at Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club!

Welcome back to all returning members and their families / carers again this year. For anyone joining or interested in joining - we welcome you to the club!

Our commitment to you is that we will provide a fun and inclusive experience for everyone. Whether you are a competitive Nipper who takes part in the carnivals and extra coaching, or you are just here to learn surf safety on Sunday morning Nippers, everyone is valued and supported.

Our mission at Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club is "to ensure no lives are lost while on patrol, assist members achieve their full potential and support the community". We are here to educate our Nippers to be competent and safe at the beach. We start with Under 6's where the focus is on play, participation and fun - and we go all the way through to U14's who complete their Surf Rescue Certificate and commence patrols.

To achieve our mission, our main goal is to ensure both Nippers and their parents/carers have fun at Nippers and enjoy coming back week after week.

For those children who would like to improve their surf skills through competition, we provide additional coaching for both water and beach events. Our coaches are enthusiastic, engaged and supportive of Nippers at all levels.

For parents and carers, there are lots of opportunities to get involved - whether volunteering to be an Age Manager, Water Safety or Competition Official - or just getting involved each week. We need your support!

We hope the information in this booklet provides some quick and easy information about our club and this Nippers program for the 2024/25 season.

For up-to-the-minute news and updates regarding Nippers, it is essential you join Stack TeamApp (under Freshie Nippers) which is our main communication platform. We also encourage you to follow us on social media by joining our Facebook page (Freshwater Nippers) and our Instagram page (Freshwater\_SLSC).

Here's to a great 2024/25 season!

Regards,  
Tony Wessling,  
Chair, Freshwater Junior Activities Committee



# OVERVIEW OF OUR CLUB



You are a member, and this is your club!

Freshwater SLSC has a proud history stretching back over 100 years. Our club continues to be one of the most influential in developing and promoting Surfing and Surf Life Saving in Australia.

Freshwater is one of the most popular of Sydney's 21 beaches on the Northern Beaches. It is great for families, surfers, bathers, locals and visitors alike. With around 3,000 people on the beach and in the water on a busy Summer's day we are kept very busy!

Surf Patrols are conducted by our volunteers during the Patrol season from September to April each year.

**Our Mission:** To ensure no lives are lost while on patrol, assist members to achieve their full potential and to support the community



# FRESHWATER SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

*PREMIERS OF AUSTRALIA, 1952/53  
NEW SOUTH WALES PREMIERS, 1952-53 \* METROPOLITAN PREMIERS, 1952-53*



We are a member based organisation, playing an important role in the Freshwater and Northern Beaches community. We welcome members of all ages, and provide opportunities to get involved - from being a Nipper through to being a regular Patrolling volunteer.

At Freshwater SLSC Nippers, our aim is to promote an interest in Surf Lifesaving activities. We teach children water safety and encourage them through fun, education, and healthy competition.

Nippers is an activity based program run to educate young children about surf safety and surf awareness when visiting the beach. The Nipper program also offers participants the opportunity meet a new set of friends while being challenged in activities controlled within a safe learning environment.

The Nipper program runs from October through to March, each Sunday morning.

The focus on junior development starts with Nippers and continues on to learning skills through courses such as Surf Rescue Certificate and Bronze Medallion as the base qualifications. It is the opportunities we provide and the loyalty of our members that allows a long term approach to development ensuring the sustainability and success of the club.

# WHY JOIN NIPPERS?



With over 180,000 members and 315 affiliated Surf Life Saving Clubs, Surf Life Saving Australia represents the largest volunteer movement of its kind in the world!

Surf Life Saving Clubs like Freshwater save lives, create great Australians and build stronger communities. The Nippers program promotes learning valuable skills and knowledge about the beach in a safe, stimulating and fun environment.

There is no pressure placed on any Nippers to compete at carnivals. You don't need any equipment - just yourself, a Nippers cap and Nippers high-vis vest.



By joining, your Nipper will:

- Develop the knowledge and skills to enjoy our beaches and waterways
- Contribute to the local Freshwater community
- Make new friendships
- Participate in a healthy and active lifestyle
- Develop leadership skills
- Develop decision making and problem solving skills
- Interact with a wide variety of people

The club offers opportunities to join in broader activities - such as Patrolling, First Aid, Surf Sports, Coaching, Age Managing, and a range of social and community activities for the whole family.

We welcome everyone, no matter your experience in the water or on the beach.

As long as your Nipper has turned 5 by September 30, you are good to join!

# HOW TO JOIN



Registration is now open for the 2024/25 season and will close on September 30, 2024

- Membership is via the SLS Australia Members Portal
- New members:
  - Go to [https://members.sls.com.au/SLSA\\_MembersOnline/public/join/member-join](https://members.sls.com.au/SLSA_MembersOnline/public/join/member-join)
  - NEW members provide a copy of their ID showing their date of birth either in person, or to [admin@freshwaterslsc.com](mailto:admin@freshwaterslsc.com) (this is a requirement of SLSA)
  - This means a photo ID such as license or passport for parents / carers plus proof of date of birth for Nippers (birth certificate or passport)
  - Your registration will not be finalised until payment and IDs are received for both Nippers and parents / carers.
- Existing members:
  - Renew membership via [https://members.sls.com.au/SLSA\\_Online/modules/login/index.php](https://members.sls.com.au/SLSA_Online/modules/login/index.php)
- One parent / carer from each family is required to join as a "General" member -- but we encourage you to join both parents where there are two!
- Payment of registration fees must be made at time of joining / renewal
- We welcome the use of Active Kids Vouchers

Membership Type	Membership Fee
Nippers (U6-U14)	First Nipper: \$130 Second Nipper: \$100 Third Nipper: \$30 Fourth+ Nipper: \$30
General Members	\$50 each



# NIPPER AGE GROUPS



In accordance with regulations from Surf Life Saving NSW, a child must have turned 5 prior to 30 September 2024 for the upcoming season to be eligible to join. Children are registered in their age groups according to the age of the child on 30 September.

For example, if your child is 11 on 30 September, the child will be in U12s.

Competition and carnival participation is strictly by age group.

Age on 30 September	Age Group
5	U6
6	U7
7	U8
8	U9
9	U10
10	U11
11	U12
12	U13
13	U14





# PROFICIENCIES



Swimming is an important part of the Nipper program and all surf clubs must ensure children have the appropriate swimming ability in order to participate in Nipper activities safely. The focus of Nippers is to introduce surf skills and awareness, however we are not a 'learn to swim' school.

If your Nipper is not a competent swimmer, that is okay. For U6 and U7, most of our activities are beach based.

For U8 and above, where water based activities become more extensive, Nippers who are not competent swimmers can still participate in water activities alongside their parent / carer . However, we recommend that they take regular swimming lessons as having basic swimming skills is essential for surf and beach safety. Improving swimming skills will ensure your Nipper can enjoy all Nipper activities and participate to their fullest with confidence.

There are many nearby swim schools that offer excellent programs across all levels. Those from outside the Northern Beaches area should enquire with their local pool as to what programs are available.

For U8 and above, as a minimum children must demonstrate basic levels of proficiency based on their age group prior to being able to participate in the program. Opportunities to demonstrate their proficiencies are provided early in the season.

## Junior Skills Assessment:

Preliminary skills evaluation for U8 and above must be completed by all Nippers to participate in regular Nipper water activities. The preliminary evaluation includes:

- A front-down swim over a set distance, within a set time, relative to age group as per table below. This must be completed in a continual sequence without a break or standing between.
- A 5-second back float
- Submerging to retrieve an object from the bottom of the pool

Competition skills evaluation is completed only by Nippers wishing to participate in inter-club Carnivals. This constitutes an open water swim of varying distances.

Surf Education Awards are made based on participation at a minimum number of Sunday Nipper sessions and apply to all age groups.

The Preliminary Skills assessment and Competition Skills assessments are overseen by qualified bronze medallion members.

Minimum requirements are stipulated by Surf Life Saving Australia to ensure the safety of all Nipper participants.

Nippers who have NOT completed the Preliminary Skills evaluation at the start of the season can still attend Sunday Nippers. While this is not uncommon, our preference is for all Nippers to be water proficient. Non proficient Nippers will need a parent, carer or dedicated Water Safety representative in order to participate in all water activities until such time the evaluation requirements are met. Parents should come prepared to enter the water if their Nipper has not passed the evaluation.

We will be running multiple proficiency sessions in September and October - and will notify you of these dates through TeamApp and the website.

Competition evaluation will take place the first couple of Sunday Nipper sessions and involves a Run-Swim-Run including 200 metre ocean swim

If your Nipper does not pass the pool swim or competition proficiency on the first try, there will be further opportunities to pass the evaluation in the first few weeks of Nippers. It is important that they regularly practice swimming laps before attempting the evaluation again.

If your Nipper is not a strong swimmer, we recommend regular swimming lessons, or time in the pool with mum and dad, practicing to swim the distance needed confidently.

Age Group	Prelim. Requirement	Competition Requirement	Surf Award
U8	25m swim (no time limit) Front or back float 15 seconds Submerge to touch bottom with hands	Nil	Surf Aware 1
U9	100m pool swim (continuous) , < 5 mins Front to back float 5 secs each side Submerge to touch bottom with hands	Min 150m open water swim	Surf Aware 2
U10	150m pool swim, < 5 mins Front to back float 5 seconds each side Submerge to touch bottom with hand	Min 150m open water swim	Surf Safe 1
U11	200m pool swim, < 5 mins Front to back float 5 seconds each side Submerge to touch bottom with hand	Min 200m open water swim	Surf Safe 2
U12	200m pool swim, < 5 mins Front to back float 5 seconds each side Submerge to touch bottom with hand	Min 200m open water swim	Surf Smart 1
U13	200m pool swim, < 5 mins Front to back float 5 seconds each side Submerge to touch bottom with hand	Min 200m open water swim	Surf Smart 2
U14	200m pool swim, < 5 mins Front to back float 5 seconds each side Submerge to touch bottom with hand	Min 200m open water swim	Surf Rescue Certificate (SRC)

# UNIFORMS AND WHAT TO BRING



## NIPPER CAPS

(Compulsory for all Nippers)

Under 6's = TBA

Under 7's = White

Under 8's = Pink

Under 9's = Royal Blue

Under 10's = Red

Under 11's = Yellow

Under 12's = Lime Green

Under 13's = Mid Blue

Under 14's = Quarter Cap

## PINK HI VIS RASH VEST

(Compulsory from U8's) :

Hi Vis rash vests are compulsory for Nippers from U8's when entering the water. No Nippers will be allowed to enter the water without one.

## DRINK BOTTLE

Water is a must and great way to wash out sand that may find its way into little eyes.

## SUNSCREEN

Your child will be exposed to the sun so sunscreen application is essential.

## WETSUIT

Your Nipper is welcome to wear a wetsuit, especially in the first few weekends when the water and air temperature can still be quite cool. If U8 and above, they must wear their hi vis vest on top of the wetsuit when the water and air temperature can still be quite cool.

## GOGGLES

It is much easier to swim in the ocean if you have goggles. Please ensure your child has a pair of well fitting goggles that will withstand swimming through the waves.

**ESSENTIAL ITEMS** Freshwater SLSC swimwear and accessories are available to purchase via our online store. We advise purchasing essential items such as Nipper Age Caps and Hi Vis vests in the pre-season purchase period. You can then have all of your essentials on hand and ready to go for the first day. In can be very busy in the first few weeks of Nippers - and long queues! So be prepared and turn up ready to have fun! Just jump online and purchase your items - these can be collected from the office or pre-packed for pick up on Sunday mornings in the first few weeks.

Shop: <https://shop.freshwaterslsc.com/>



# PARENT & CARER INVOLVEMENT

We need your help! We'd love you to join in! Our Nipper program is entirely run by volunteers and we rely on parent enthusiasm, participation and assistance.

It is a requirement at registration that at least one parent is registered as well.

One parent/carer must be present at the beach while their Nipper is participating in Sunday sessions. You cannot drop your Nipper and leave.

We need active involvement from ALL parents in our Nippers Program. This enables us to provide a fun environment but most importantly, a safe environment. The more helpers we have, means we can deliver the best possible experience for our kids. Please do not hesitate to contact any of our Age Managers or Club Committee members if you have any questions or would like to understand how you can get further involved.

We need your help to fill important roles:

- Age Managers and support
- Water Safety
- Set-up and pack down crews
- Occasional support for barbecue and events
- General Sunday activities support
- Officials at carnivals

We ask you to please be willing to actively participate in Sunday sessions. This means be dressed for the beach and be prepared to get wet with your child. This enhances the experience for yourself and your nipper

In addition many parents are past or current members of Life Saving Clubs and serve as Patrolling Members. In our experience the more you get involved, the more you and your child will enjoy Nippers! Freshwater SLSC provides all the necessary training to be an Age Manager, Water Safety, Official or a Bronze Medallion Patrolling member. There are a multitude of training activities that also cover IRB crew and drivers, First Aid, and Advanced Resuscitation. Our patrols always welcome new patrolling members and this is a great way to give back to the club and our community while making new friends and supporting the great volunteering spirit of SLS Australia.

Please see details below on who to contact to find out more information on our Education program.

Role	Requirement	Job Description	Contact Name
Age Manager / Assistant	Working With Children Check, 2x online modules	Run / help run an age group for Sunday morning Nippers, delivering the prescribed SLS curriculum and teaching beach safety	Kathy Lowes kathylowes@hotmail.com
Official	Working With Children Check, online module, face to face session	Officiate for Freshwater at carnivals and Club Champs	Toni Cadden toni.cadden@gmail.com
Water Safety (Bronze Medallion)	Approx 6 week course Working With Children Check	Water safety	Jacinta Herd cintaherd@gmail.com

# WHAT TO DO ON THE FIRST DAY!

## START TIMES

**U6-U9's: 8.15am marshal for 8.30-9.30am session**

**U10-U14's: 9.15am marshal for 9.30-11.00am session**

- Ensure you arrive early to allow time for parking as our beach can get extremely busy in the summer months and parking can be difficult.
- Make sure your Nipper arrives ready to go with all their gear already on: Swimmers/wetsuit on, hi vis vest, Nipper cap (with first name marked on the cap), suncream pre-applied.
- Head down to the beach 15 minutes prior to session kickoff. Age Group Flags will be set up on the beach in front of the Surf Club. Head to your Age Group flag where your Age Manager will be marking off names on the attendance sheet.
- If your Nipper's name is not on the attendance sheet, this means there is an issue with their registration. This is most likely related to the fact that your family has not provided ID or proof of DOB. Please check all emails from the club prior well in advance to the first session of Nippers. Any questions related to registration can be forwarded to [admin@freshwaterslsc.com](mailto:admin@freshwaterslsc.com)



# COMMUNICATION



All Nipper communications are via Stack TeamApp.  
It is essential that you download and join this app to stay informed throughout the season.  
If you don't have TeamApp you will miss out on important notices about Nippers, Training, Carnivals, Changes to schedules, Events and weather cancellations.

**Step 1: Download Stack Team App from your favourite app store – it's free!**

**Step 2: Sign-up within the app**

**Step 3: Log into the app, search for Freshie Nippers and request to become a member.**

**Step 4: Request to be part of the 'Nippers Families' access group plus your Nipper's relevant age group, eg 'U6 Families 2024/25 Season'**

**Step 5: Wait patiently while the admins approve**

**Step 6: Enable notifications**

**Step 7: Check in regularly to the app to be across all communications**

## **Social Media:**

**Freshwater SLSC Facebook pages:**

**[facebook.com/groups/FreshwaterNippers](https://facebook.com/groups/FreshwaterNippers)**

**[facebook.com/freshwaterslsc](https://facebook.com/freshwaterslsc)**

**Instagram: [@freshwater\\_slsc](https://instagram.com/freshwater_slsc)**



# KEY DATES 24/25 SEASON



**7 September - Nipper Open Day**

**30 September - Registration closing date**

**13 October - Under 6 Orientation (8.30-9.30am)**

**20 October - First Day of Nippers**

**24 November - Freshwater Bennett Board Carnival**

**14 December - Twilight Nippers & Xmas Party**

Dates Subject to Change

**REFER TO TEAMAPP FOR FULL CALENDAR**



# CARNIVALS AND CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS



Our Nippers program at Freshwater is all about fun and learning.

Engaging in competition is a great way of building surf and beach skills, making great friends and enjoying the fun of being part of a team. We offer several options for joining in the competitive elements of Nippers and optional extra training.

## 1. CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS

- On two normal Nipper Sundays, we will run “Club Championship” days that give every nipper (in U8-U14’s) the chance to compete in Beach, Surf and Iron Person events within their age groups. Club Champs are held at Freshie beach and mimic carnival conditions so all of our
- nippers can get a taste of what a nipper carnival might be like and also test the skills they have learned throughout the season. These are fun events where the focus is on participation and cheering on your nipper mates. Points are accumulated and tallied over the club
- championship rounds and we then award our overall club champs and event champions at our presentation day at the end of season.





# CARNIVALS AND CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS



## 2. NIPPER CARNIVALS

- Competing at Junior Lifesaving Carnivals is a wonderful way to expand your nipper's experience. They are competitive but promote participation, friendship and teamwork. Carnivals are open to
- Nippers in U9's and above Northern Beaches branch fortunately offers many carnivals for our
- nippers to try out and enjoy. Carnivals are typically on Sunday mornings and held at one of the
- local beaches. Some are water events based and some land/beach events based. In order to participate, Nippers need to pass both the preliminary and carnival proficiency - but beyond that
- we welcome participation no matter the skill level We do strongly recommend that Nippers attend some beach or surf training sessions before they attend their first carnival - this gives them
- some knowledge and confidence of what to expect at the carnival and allows them to get to know the coaches and their teammates If you are interested, there is a one-off fee of \$50 to cover all carnivals for the season (the full cost is subsidised by the Club) For Nippers new to competing at
- carnivals, we will provide free carnival entry for a trial period up to (and including the Freshwater Nipper Carnival in November. Toward the end of the season, the major carnivals roll around being
- Branch Championships and NSW State Age Championships, both of which will be held on the Northern Beaches this season. In addition the Youth Australian Championships will be held on the
- Gold Coast in 2025



# EXTRA TRAINING SESSIONS



**SSSSHHHHHHH.... this is our best kept secret!**

- **Training sessions are on offer throughout the season for U9-14 nippers.**
- **Training is broken down into Surf and Beach sessions and usually occurs in the afternoons on weekdays and also Saturday morning.**
- **Training this season is set to kick-off from mid October.**
- **TeamApp will outline specific training sessions as they are confirmed for the coming season.**
- **Sessions are run by experienced coaches and aimed at preparing nippers for competition at carnivals. Our coaches are typically ex-Nippers who understand the challenges and are great at motivating the kids to improve.**
- **We welcome all nippers to trial a few sessions before committing to the sessions for the whole season which does involve an extra flat fee of approx. \$125.00. This is payable either on registration, or during the first few months of the season. Come along and try a few sessions for free!**
- **For more information contact: Robin Brenchley, Junior Sports Coordinator [robinbrenchley@hotmail.com](mailto:robinbrenchley@hotmail.com)**

# BOARD HIRE



If your nipper intends to train and compete in water events, we have foam boards (U9,U10), fibreglass boards (U11-U13) and racing mals (U14) available for hire and subject to availability.

Cost per season:

- Nipper Foamie (U9/U10's): \$100
- Nipper Glass (U11-U13's): \$200
- Nipper Mal (subject to availability): TBD

As part of the agreement in hiring one of our boards, the expectation is that your Nipper will attend surf training and compete for Freshie at water based surf carnivals.

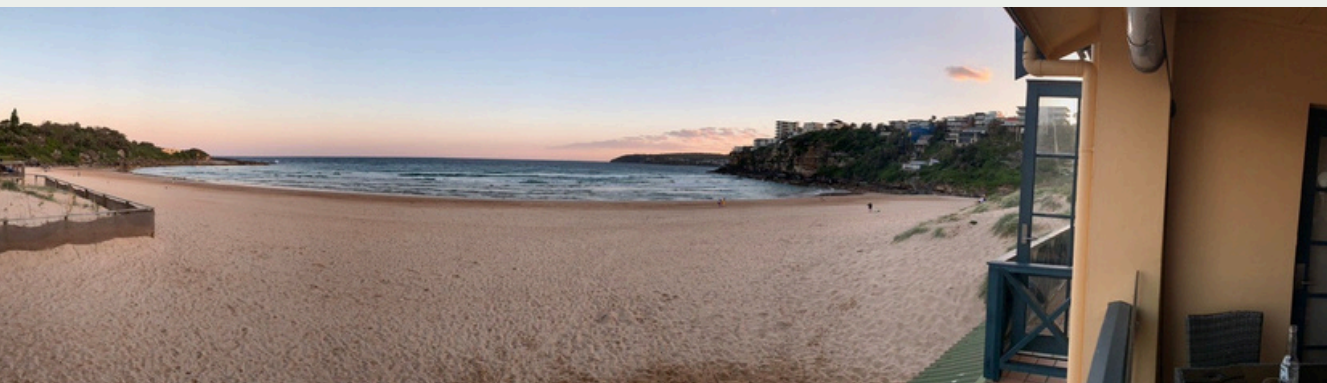
If you are interested in hiring a board:

1. Complete the board hire agreement- document located on the shop page for board hire.
2. Make a payment through our Shop
3. Please forward a copy of your payment receipt and board hire agreement to Mark Burrough- [markburrough@hotmail.com](mailto:markburrough@hotmail.com)
4. Mark will then be in touch regarding a suitable pick up time for your board from the club



# JUNIOR ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Position	Name	Contact
Junior Chair	Tony Wessling	nipperschairman@freshwaterslsc.com
Secretary	Alison Little	nippers@freshwaterslsc.com
Junior Sports Coordinator	Robin Brenchley	robinbrenchley@hotmail.com
Water Safety Superintendent	TBA	TBA
Sunday Activities Coordinator	Brent Cahill	brent.cahill@gmail.com
Boards Coordinator	Mark Burrough	markburrough@hotmail.com
Social Media Coordinator	Jacinta Herd	cintaherd@gmail.com
Officials Coordinator	Toni Cadden	toni.cadden@gmail.com
Education Coordinator	Jacinta Herd	cintaherd@gmail.com
Social Coordinator	Carla Davies	carla@encypher.net
Social Coordinator	Jvala Nolan	jmepani@me.com
Volunteer Coordinator	Jazz Tan	jasminetan461@gmail.com
Carnival Coordinator	Sarah Mandalinic	freshiesecretary@gmail.com
Age Manager Coordinator	Kathy Lowes	kathy.freshie@outlook.com



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