# FAQs – for schools

School swimming outside of school hours vouchers

## Why are the vouchers being provided?

Swimming and water safety education is part of the F-10 Victorian Curriculum Health and Physical Education.

School Swimming Outside of School Hours Vouchers are being provided to current primary school students in schools that have had challenges in scheduling their swimming lessons over the past few years due to the COVID-19 pandemic and swim teacher shortages to ensure they have the knowledge and confidence to participate in aquatic activities.

## Who are the vouchers for?

The vouchers are for current primary school students who missed out on participating in school swimming and water safety programs due to the challenges in scheduling school swimming and water safety programs between 2020 and 2022 to help build their skills and knowledge to achieve the Victorian Water Safety Certificate (VWSC) and meet the Victorian Curriculum requirements.

## Are the Year 6 students in 2022 able to use the vouchers in 2023?

Yes, it is recommended that the 2022 Year 6 cohort be given access to the School Swimming Outside of School Hours Voucher program.

This cohort of students may be particularly at risk of injury or drowning as they may not have had access to swimming and water safety programs for two-three years.

To ensure the 2022 Year 6 cohort is given access to the School Swimming Outside of School Hours Voucher program, it is recommended that parents and carers are provided the vouchers prior to the end of the 2022 school year, if possible.

## When will the swimming lessons be delivered?

Lessons will be delivered outside of school hours on days and times suitable to families e.g. after school, on the weekend or during school holidays.

For example, swim schools may offer students places in their regular learn to swim program or, alternatively, offer intensive school holiday programs and parents and carers will book lessons at a time most suitable to their needs.

## How many lessons are available for students?

Schools should liaise with their usual swim school to organise and confirm the number of student lessons available. This will be different for each school in the program and will depend on several factors including:

* available unexpended *Swimming in Schools* funding
* number of year levels accessing lessons
* number of lessons per year level
* cost per lesson
* availability of lessons outside of school hours.

Typically, the cost per student per 30-minute lesson will fall within the range of $17 to $23.

Schools can decide how many lessons should be made available to each student based on their unexpended *Swimming in Schools* funding.

## Is there an expiry date for the vouchers?

Students should be booked into the Voucher program swimming lessons before 6 April 2023 and all lessons using the vouchers must completed by the 9 July 2023.

## How will students access swimming lessons using their vouchers?

1. Schools determine which students are eligible to receive vouchers (i.e. students that missed out on participating in school swimming and water safety programs because of the challenges in scheduling school swimming lessons over the past few years)
2. Schools liaise with their usual swim school to:
	1. organise and confirm the year levels and number of swimming lessons students will be able to access
	2. decide the date from which parents and carers will be able to book swimming lessons using their vouchers.
3. Schools send letters to parents and carers of eligible students that includes:
	1. a voucher for parents and carers with the following details:
		1. name and contact details of the swim school that will provide the swimming lessons
		2. number of lessons which are available for their child(ren)
		3. date from which parents and carers can book swimming lessons using their vouchers
	2. a request form which the parents and carers sign and return to the school.
4. Parents and carers return their request forms for their child(ren) to the school.
5. Schools provide the swim school with a list of names of students for whom the request form has been returned.
6. Using the details on the voucher, parents and carers contact the nominated swim school to book swimming lessons for date/s and time/s of their choosing.
7. Swim schools check that the students’ names are on the list provided by the school and confirm the booking.
8. Parents and carers present their vouchers to the swim school when they arrive for the first swim lesson to provide validation of their booking.
9. Swim schools record which students have received swimming lessons, and how many lessons have been provided to them.
10. Swim schools submit an invoice, with sufficiently detailed reporting to substantiate the number of lessons provided, to the respective schools for payment.

## Where will students be able to use the vouchers?

Students will only be able to use their vouchers at the swim school nominated by the school as indicated on the voucher. This will generally be the swim school which the school usually engages to deliver their swimming and water safety programs.

## What if my usual swim school cannot accommodate a request to provide lessons using the vouchers?

Students should be booked into the Voucher program swimming lessons before 6 April 2023 and all lessons using the vouchers must completed by the 9 July 2023.

If the swim school indicates there is no capacity to provide lessons through these vouchers, other swim schools can be contacted.

## What happens if the usual swim school is charging more for out of hours lessons?

Typically, the cost per student per 30-minute lesson will fall within the range of $17 to $23, which may be slightly more than the cost of school group lessons.

Schools should agree to a number of swimming lessons which can be accommodated from within their unexpended *Swimming in Schools* funding.

## What happens if the information on the voucher provided to the swim school does not match the agreed arrangements between the swim school and the school?

The school should liaise with the swim school to determine the number of lessons per student and then provide the swim school with a list of students who are eligible for the program and for whom the request from has been returned.

In the event the school makes any changes to these arrangements, the swim school needs to be informed as soon as possible.

If there is a discrepancy between the information provided by the school to the swim school and the information noted on a student’s voucher, the swim school needs to liaise with the school to verify the information.

## How will swim schools be paid?

Swim schools will invoice schools in line with existing school financial procedures.

## Will students using these vouchers in 2023 impact on the provision of 2023 *Swimming in Schools* funding?

No. The vouchers are being funded from schools’ unexpended *Swimming in Schools* funding.

Schools will receive a separate allocation for their 2023 *Swimming in Schools* funding via the Student Resource Package.

Schools that have 2020, 2021 and/or 2022 *Swimming in Schools* funding not expended through the School Swimming Outside of School Hours Voucher program, can combine this with 2023 *Swimming in Schools* funding to support swimming and water safety programs in 2023.

## Can I use my school’s unexpended Swimming in Schools funding to expand the 2023 swimming program to include students that missed out in 2020, 2021 and/or 2022 instead?

Yes, this can be done. The purpose of the program is to provide swimming and water safety education.

## Can parents be charged for the vouchers?

No. The vouchers are being provided free of charge to parents and will be paid for using unexpended *Swimming in Schools* funding.

## How will schools know that students have accessed their swimming lessons?

Swim schools will be required to provide verification of students’ participation in line with existing school financial procedures.

## Should the Agreement template between the school and swim school be used for the Voucher program?

Yes. Principals and teaching staff owe a duty of care to students to protect them from any reasonably foreseeable harm. This duty extends to any school-approved activities and can extend beyond school grounds and beyond school hours. It is important to note that duty of care cannot be assigned to other parties, but it can be shared if two organisations are undertaking an activity jointly. In this situation, the intention is for the Voucher program to be a swim school led program that runs out of school hours and that the school is simply paying for. The Department of Education and Training has developed the Agreement template to ensure that in relation to the Voucher program the responsibilities and liability of the school and swim school are clearly documented.

## What are parents and carers’ responsibilities?

Parents and carers will be responsible for getting the student to and from the swim school as well as complying with supervision and any other requirements or conditions set by the swim school during their time at the swim school.

## Are swim schools required to assess students for the Victorian Water Safety Certificate?

Yes. The VWSC sets out the swimming and water safety skills and knowledge that every Victorian student should have by the end of primary school. Swimming and water safety programs provided through this program should enable students to achieve their VWSC, which is how the Victorian Curriculum requirement is met.

If students are assessed and achieve the competencies of the VWSC, swim schools should enter their details on the Life Saving Victoria VWSC dashboard so that a certificate can be issued.

## Who do I contact if I have a question about the School Swimming Outside of School Hours Voucher program?

For enquiries relating to School Swimming Outside of School Hours Voucher program contact Alison Porter, Statewide Swimming Coordinator, Targeted School Services Unit:

* phone: 03 4334 0523
* email: school.swimming@education.vic.gov.au