



NIPPERS HANDBOOK
SEASON 2026 - 2027

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A note from our Junior Activities Manager

Welcome to the West Beach SLSC 2026-27 Nipper season!

Whether you're returning for another summer or joining us for the first time, we're so glad to have you as part of our surf family.

Our Nippers program develops surf lifesaving skills while building confidence, encouraging friendships, and fostering a love of the beach in a safe, supportive and inclusive environment.

After a fantastic 2025–26 season, we're looking forward to another great summer. Last season, West Beach was proud to be named **Surf Life Saving SA Club of the Year** and **Junior Club of the Year**. These awards recognise the dedication of our volunteers, the support of our families, and the welcoming, inclusive culture that makes West Beach such a special club.

The 2025–26 season also looked a little different from usual due to the statewide algal bloom. Thanks to the flexibility and support of our members, we were able to keep delivering a safe, engaging and enjoyable program using a range of alternative venues and activities. While we expect a more typical season this year, we will continue to follow Surf Life Saving SA's approved water quality risk assessment process. If conditions at West Beach are unsuitable, sessions may be relocated to an approved alternative venue, with all updates communicated through Spond and confirmed the day before.

As we dive into the season, we want to remind everyone of the core values that make our club special:



Our club is more than a place to spend beach days - it's a community. Parents and carers play an essential role in making our Nippers program happen. Whether you're helping on the beach, supporting events or volunteering behind the scenes, every contribution helps create the positive, welcoming environment that our children enjoy each week.

A special thank you to our volunteer team, who have already invested countless hours planning and preparing for another great season.

Let's make the most of every session, support one another and continue to live our club values both on and off the beach. Here's to another fantastic season!

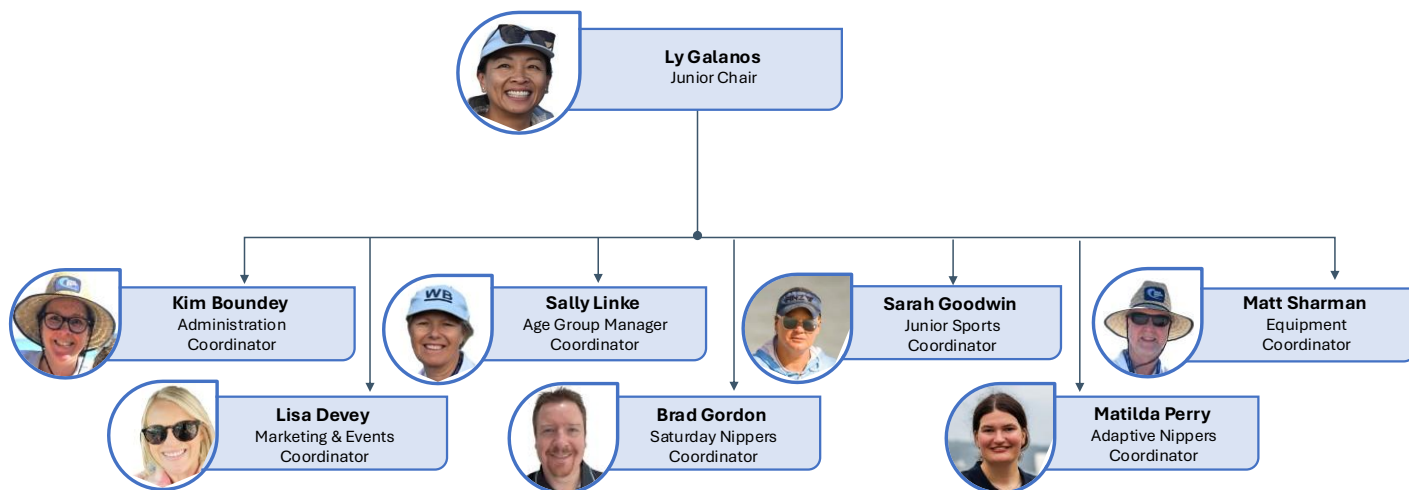
See you on Saturdays!

Ly Galanos

Junior Chair

juniors@westbeachslsc.com.au





Your West Beach SLSC Junior Committee

WBSLSC Nippers location

Following the SLSSA approved risk assessment to ensure suitable water quality:

Sessions are held on the beach at West Beach SLSC, 1a Seaview Road, West Beach (corner West Beach Rd). Please access the beach via the ramp immediately north of the SLSC (follow the flag signage).

Please meet at the age group flags in the Nippers Activity Area.

Parking (free) is available along Seaview Road and the adjacent side streets.

Where beach conditions are not favourable, we have a number of alternate locations, which may include other local beaches which meet the SLSSA approved risk assessment, Immanuel College Pool, West Beach Primary Pool, West Beach Parks, West Lakes (River) and Murray Bridge (River).

Locations and events may change based on risk assessment - please check Spond the day prior.

Communication

The Club uses a variety of tools to communicate with its members.

 **Spond** – this App is our official portal for communicating with members. Please download the App on to your smart phone. Your Age Group Team Manager will add you to your Age Group on the App.

Email – While Spond is the official portal for communicating, there will be times where we may use email. If you don't receive these emails, please update your details through the Surf Life Saving Members Area portal).

Website – Our website provides all information regarding Club news, upcoming events, training, patrol rosters etc. www.westbeachslsc.com.au

Facebook – Join our West Beach Surf Life Saving Members only and West Beach Nippers groups to receive up to date photographs and event notifications.

Membership

What your West Beach SLSC Nipper membership gives you:

- 20% discount at Surf Club Bar & Bistro
- Fees covered for carnival entries (usually \$17.50 per carnival, and \$50 for state championships)
- Subsidised competition top for carnival (\$36 instead of \$65)
- Saturday nipper day activities (and pool rescue for the older age groups in the off season)
- Fees covered for lifesaving award training (excluding manuals and equipment)
- Use of club nipper boards and equipment
- Christmas celebration day & post carnival celebrations
- Presentation of trophies & participation medals
- Insurance cover for all approved surf lifesaving & club training activities
- Additional training when available
- Opportunity to participate in competitions against other clubs throughout SA
- Discounted camp fees for Under 12 and Under 13

Age groups

Nippers are placed in an age group that is determined by the child's age as at 30 September each year.

All children are required to participate in their relevant age group – unless there is a recognized disability that would be better supported in another age or adaptive group. For other age groups, this exemption should be requested from the Junior Activities Manager.



NIPPER AGE GROUP REFERENCE 2026–27

Age Group	Birthdate Range	Age Group Leader/s	Team Manager	Cap Colour
Under 6	1 Oct 2020 - 30 Sept 2021	TBA	Calliope Zacharoyannis	Light Blue
Under 7	1 Oct 2019 - 30 Sept 2020	TBA	TBA	Orange
Under 8	1 Oct 2018 - 30 Sept 2019	Abby Thomas, Cameron Devey, Lisa Best	Lisa Best	Magenta
Under 9	1 Oct 2017 - 30 Sept 2018	Brad Price, Campbell Pegg, Jack Hose	Nicky Price	Light Green
Under 10	1 Oct 2016 - 30 Sept 2017	Stephen Perry, Kim Boundey	Vanessa Umoren	Dark Blue
Under 11	1 Oct 2015 - 30 Sept 2016	Luke Best, Kerry-Anne Brown, Cam Willis	Kerry-Anne Brown	Red
Under 12	1 Oct 2014 - 30 Sept 2015	Sally Linke, Dan Galanos	Keri-Ann Usher	White
Under 13	1 Oct 2013 - 30 Sept 2014	Sarah Tinkham, Matt Sharman, Zahli Milam	Sarah Price	Yellow
Adaptive	30 Sep 2021 - 30 Sep 2014	Matilda Perry	Sally Perry	Green

If children have friends in other age groups, they can socialise before and after club activities.

At WBSLSC each age group is allocated a different colour cap to wear to weekend training sessions. This is useful in helping AGM's to identify who is in their group.

Each age group has a Team Manager who is your first point of contact for information, queries and general updates on what is happening across the program.

In addition to having fun on and off the beach, each group works towards the Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA), Age Group Certificate. You can find out more about these certificates in this handbook.

Children who are not 5 on or before 30 September will be able to participate in any surf babies programs that the club runs over summer.

Week	Day	Date	Event	Age Groups	Set Up	Pack Up	BBQ
1	SAT	17/10/2026	Session held at iSwim (Immanuel College)		U13	U11	U10
2	SAT	24/10/2026			U12	U8	U9
3	SAT	31/10/2026			U11	U10	U13
4	SAT	7/11/2026	U12/U13 Camp @ West Beach Parks		U8	U9	U10
5	SAT	14/11/2026	Only U6 & U7 at WB		U7	U6	
6	SAT	21/11/2026			U10	U13	U11
JC1	SAT	21/11/2026	Local Area Carnival (TBA)		To be advised		
7	SAT	28/11/2026			U9	U12	U8
8	SAT	5/12/2026	Adaptive program starts		U8	U11	U12
9	SAT	12/12/2026			U12	U9	U13
JC2	SUN	13/12/2026	Junior Carnival (U8-U13)		Trailer/Boards = U13 Tents/Equip = U9		
10	SAT	19/12/2026	Christmas Fun Day		U12	U13	U9
		26/12/2026	No session				
		2/01/2027	No session				
11	SAT	9/01/2027	Summer morning session		U10	U8	U12
SC	SAT	16/01/2027	Champion Lifesaver State Championships (U12 & Above)				
12	SAT	16/01/2027	Summer morning session		U11	U12	U7
13	SAT	23/01/2027	Summer morning session		U7	U6	
JC3	SUN	24/01/2027	Junior Carnival (U8-U13)		Trailer/Boards = U10 Tents/Equip = U8		
14	SAT	30/01/2027			U9	U10	U6
15	SAT	6/02/2027	Club Champs (U9-U13)		U11	U13	U8
JC4	SAT	13/02/2027	Junior Carnival (U8-U13)		Trailer/Boards = U12 Tents/Equip = U11		
16	SAT	13/02/2027	Only U6/U7 session at WB		U6	U7	
Event	SUN	14/02/2027	Pink and Blue				
17	SAT	20/02/2027			U10	U9	U11
18	SAT	27/02/2027	Adaptive program ends		U8	U12	U13
JSC1	SUN	28/02/2027	2027 Junior State Championships - Day 1		Trailer/Boards = U13 Tents/Equip = U9		
19	MON	8/03/2027	Long Weekend - Monday PM Session		U13	U8	
20	SAT	13/03/2027			U9	U11	U10
Event	WED	17/03/2027	Pre-states Team Dinner @ Club	State Champs competitors & families (bookings & \$\$ required)			
21	SAT	20/03/2027	Only U6/U7 session at WB		U7	U6	
JSC2	SAT	20/03/2027	2027 Junior State Championships Day 2		Trailer/Boards = U12 Tents/Equip = U10		
JSC3	SUN	21/03/2027	2027 Junior State Championships Day 3		Tents/Equip = U11		
	SAT	27/03/2027	Easter				
Pre	SAT	3/04/2027	Nipper Presentation Night	Staggered age groups from 4pm			

For discipline specific training sessions, please check Spond for eligibility & RSVPs

Sat 21 Nov = Local Area Carnival TBA (U8-U13);
 Sun 13 Dec = Carnival 2 (U8-U13); AM start
 Sat 16 Jan = Champ Lifesaver (U12+)
 Sun 24 Jan = Carnival 3 (U8-U13); AM start
 Sat 13 Feb = Country carnival; (U8-U13); AM start
 Sun 28 Feb = Junior States Day 1 (U8-U13); times TBC
 Sat 20 Mar = Junior States Day 2 (U8-U13); all day
 Sun 21 Mar = Junior States Day 3 (U8-U13); all day

Events to be held at
West Beach SLSC
Bistro – refer details
closer to date

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Skills evaluations

Each year every nipper is required to undertake a preliminary skills evaluation to be able to undertake water activities. Those who wish to compete in water events at carnivals will need to undertake an additional competition evaluation.

Please be aware that the WBSLSC Nippers program is not a learn to swim program. We strongly encourage your nipper to attend swim lessons. Being confident swimming in a pool contributes immensely to being confident swimming in the ocean.

Full details about evaluations are available on the Surf Life Saving Association (SA) site:

<https://www.surflifesavingsa.com.au/nipper-program-resources>

Preliminary evaluation

The preliminary evaluations are in place to ensure that participants are fit and able to meet the requirements of our nipper program. In addition, it is a compulsory requirement of SLSA.

The evaluations consist of a floatation, submersion, propulsion and continuous skills to a standard appropriate to their age (see the table below).

Nippers are unable to participate in water activities at the beach unless they have completed their preliminary evaluation. The outcome of this evaluation will determine the level of supervision required for that participant.

Nippers will need their bathers and goggles to participate and can choose to wear a swimming cap.

STAGE ONE: UNDER 6, UNDER 7, UNDER 8

Aquatic Play and Fundamental Aquatic Skills (FAS)

Minimum depth of safe aquatic environment – 1 metre

MINIMUM AQUATIC SKILL	U6	U7	U8
Floatation	Back or front float for minimum 5 seconds, recover to stand.		
Submersion	Submerge to retrieve object from bottom of water with hands (e.g. dive ring).		
Propulsion	Push and glide from wall (distance 1-2 metres) recover to stand.	Push and glide from wall, kick (distance 2-3 metres) recover to stand.	Swim on front any stroke (distance 20 metres) followed by swim underwater (distance 2-3 metres).
CONTINUOUS SKILL SEQUENCE	Wade through water (distance 5 metres) float on back or front (5 seconds) recover to stand, submerge to retrieve object from bottom of water with hands, recover to stand.		Swim on front through water any stroke 20 metres, followed by back or front float (5 seconds) followed by submerge to retrieve object from bottom of water with hands (do not recover to stand in between each task).

STAGE TWO: UNDER 9, UNDER 10, UNDER 11

Applied aquatic skills

Minimum depth of safe aquatic environment – 1.5 metres

MINIMUM AQUATIC SKILL	U9	U10	U11
Floatation	Front to back float or back to front float – 5 seconds each side. Tread water and/or sculling for minimum 1 minute.		Front to back float or back to front float – 5 seconds each side. Tread water and/or sculling for minimum 2 minutes.
Submersion	Submerge to retrieve object from bottom of water with hands (e.g. dive ring).		Submerge to perform forward or backward roll/somersault underwater, recover to surface, retrieve object from bottom of water with hands (e.g. dive ring).
Propulsion	Survival stroke(s) breaststroke and/or sidestroke and/or back sculling for minimum 50 metres.	Swim on front through water any stroke for 25 metres followed by survival stroke(s) breaststroke and/or sidestroke and/or back sculling for minimum 50 metres.	Swim on front through water any stroke for 50 metres followed by survival stroke(s) breaststroke and/or sidestroke and/or back sculling for minimum 50 metres.
CONTINUOUS SKILL SEQUENCE	Swim on front through water using combination of breaststroke, sidestroke, freestyle for 50 metres, followed by tread water and/or sculling for minimum 1 minute, followed by submerge to retrieve object from bottom of water with hands (do not recover to stand in between each task).		Swim on front through water using combination of breaststroke, sidestroke, freestyle for 50 metres, followed by tread water and/or sculling for minimum 2 minutes, followed by submerge to retrieve object from bottom of water with hands (do not recover to stand in between each task).

STAGE THREE: UNDER 12, UNDER 13, UNDER 14

Junior/trainee lifesaver – pathway to SRC

Minimum depth of safe aquatic environment 1.8 metres

MINIMUM AQUATIC SKILL	U12	U13	U14 (SRC)
Floatation	Front to back float or back to front float – 5 seconds each side. Tread water and/or sculling for minimum 3 minutes.		
Submersion	Submerge to perform forward or backward roll/somersault underwater, recover to surface, retrieve object from bottom of water with hands (e.g. dive ring).		Submerge to perform forward or backward roll/somersault underwater, do not recover to surface, retrieve object from bottom of water with hands (e.g. dive ring).
Propulsion	Swim on front through water any stroke for 100 metres followed by survival stroke(s) breaststroke and/or sidestroke for minimum 50 metres.		Swim on front through water any stroke for 100 metres followed by survival stroke(s) breaststroke and/or sidestroke for minimum 100 metres.
CONTINUOUS SKILL SEQUENCE	Swim on front through water using combination of breaststroke, sidestroke, freestyle for 100 metres, followed by tread water and/or sculling for minimum 3 minutes, followed by submerge to retrieve object from bottom of water with hands (do not recover to stand in between each task).		Swim on front through water using combination of breaststroke, sidestroke, freestyle for 200 metres, followed by tread water and/or sculling for minimum 3 minutes, followed by forward or backward roll/somersault underwater, recover to surface, followed by submerge to retrieve object from bottom of water with hands (do not recover to stand in between each task).

Competition evaluation

To maintain safety and lifesaving standards, SLSA has set a minimum standard of proficiency that all nippers must achieve before being eligible to compete in carnivals (see table below).

Age Group Leaders will arrange these competency tests at the beach as the swim has to be conducted in open water.

Age Group	Competition Skills
Under 6 & 7	Nil
Under 8	Min 150m open water swim (any recognised stroke)
Under 9	Min 150m open water swim (any recognised stroke)
Under 10	Min 150m open water swim (any recognised stroke)
Under 11	Min 250m open water swim (any recognised stroke)
Under 12 & 13	Min 250m open water swim (any recognised stroke)

Saturday nipper sessions

Our nipper surf season typically runs from mid-October to March with sessions usually held on a Saturday afternoon. These sessions involve nippers rotating through a range of age and skill appropriate activities and games. The emphasis is on fun activities whilst teaching beach and water safety.

We understand that families are busy so the program doesn't require 100% participation, but your nipper will benefit from regular attendance and will need to meet a minimum competency to compete.

Carnivals for U8-U13

Date	Details	Notes
Sun 14 Nov 2026	Local Area Carnival – Venue TBC	More details to come
Sun 13 Dec 2026	Junior Carnival 1 – Venue TBC	More details to come
Thu 14 Jan 2027	Champion Lifesaver State Champs – Surf Central	U12+, CPR component 4pm -8pm
Sat 16 Jan 2026	Champion Lifesaver State Champs – Venue TBC	U12+, Theory & Physical
Sun 24 Jan 2027	Junior Carnival 2 – Venue TBC	All day (U6/7 normal session @WB)
Sat 13 Feb 2027	Junior Carnival 3 – Venue TBC	All day (U6/7 normal session @WB)
Sat 27 Feb 2027	R&R State Championships – Venue TBC	Half day, Nipper session as normal
Sun 22 Feb 2027	Junior State Championships Day 1 – Venue TBC	All day
Sat 20 Mar 2027	Junior State Championships Day 2 – Venue TBC	All day (individual events)
Sun 21 Mar 2027	Junior State Championships Day 3 – Venue TBC	All Day (team events)

Activities

The actual program and activities always depend on the surf conditions on the day. If the conditions are favourable, more time will be spent in the water than on the beach and vice versa should water conditions be adverse.

Saturday activities will generally include a mixture of:

- Beach sprints, relays and beach flags
- Board paddling, rescues and relays
- Games and fun activities with a focus on team spirit, confidence building and social interaction
- Surf safety education
- Wades and wade relays
- Surf swims and surf swim teams

As your nipper progresses through the age groups, optional extra training sessions are available.

The Junior Club Swim is part of our nipper sessions. This activity is available for nippers who have completed their preliminary evaluation, and have either obtained their competition evaluation, or are preparing to do so. Parents should discuss their child's suitability for completing this activity.

For each Saturday session nippers need to:

- Assemble on the beach at the flag that matches their cap colour 10 minutes before the session
- Be ready for activities wearing the age group cap and plenty of sunscreen
- Listen for their Age Group Leaders to call a roll so they can be mark off on attendance

Each week the responsibility for beach/venue set-up/pack-up and the BBQ will rotate between age groups. Your Team Manager will share that information with you.

The club offers a BBQ sausage sizzle most Saturday afternoons with funds raised going back to the club. Families are invited to stay at the West Beach Surf Club Bar and Bistro after sessions for some food or drink.

What to wear or bring

- Nippers are to wear their age group colour cap (available from uniform shop)
- **A hi-vis Lycra vest during water activities is compulsory** (available from uniform shop)
- Bathers & rash vest (or suitable attire to wear in the water)
- Broad brimmed hat (or legionnaires style)
- Sunscreen (applied before getting to the beach), towel and water bottle are essential
- Long sleeved t-shirt (WBSLSC Nipper top available from uniform shop)
- Goggles (optional but recommended)
- Medication (if required)

Parent/carer should also be SunSmart (i.e. hat, sunscreen, clothing). Please ensure items are labelled.

The club provides all equipment including boards for nippers to use during sessions.

Uniform For Carnivals

- Navy or Club bathers, Nipper long sleeve top (subsidised), Club comp cap, Broad brim hat, Hi-vis vest.

Club uniforms and apparel can be purchased from our uniform desk before Saturday nipper sessions.

Lost property

Please label your children's belongings with a black permanent marker.

There is a lost property container in the nippers trailer.

Parental involvement and support

We are a family club and we need the help of every family to share the workload so that we can continue to maintain a high standard and an enjoyable environment for everyone.

Running a successful club only comes from the ongoing commitment of volunteers and help offered by parents and carers, including:

- Remaining on the beach at all times during Saturday activities and mid-week training sessions if your nipper takes part in these. Your child remains your responsibility. Medication, trips to the toilet and the individual general welfare of each child on West Beach is the responsibility of the parent / guardian. U6 and 7 Nipper parents need to be with the age group at all times.
- At all times, abide by the [Member Code of Conduct](#) (Member Protection Policy 6.05)
- It is club policy that at least one parent registers as a member. You are then able to assist with beach and water-based activities.

How can you help?

- There's always room for more volunteers!
- Please consider putting your hand forward to assist with these important functions as outlined in the Organisational Chart.
- Please contact your Team Manager, any Nipper committee member or the Junior Activities Manager for more details.

Duty roster

All parents/caregivers are required to assist with non-water activities to ensure that we can facilitate our nipper program, excluding those in key Saturday roles i.e. uniform shop; age leaders and water safety persons.

The roster is available NOW on the previous page. Please put these dates into your diary and your Team Manager will remind you when you are scheduled to help.

We understand that some families may only have one parent/carer who comes to each session, and may have multiple nippers to look after. We ask you to please communicate amongst your group, and work out which BBQ session you can support, whether that's by sharing load on the beach with another parent, or asking a grandparent or friend to support the sessions you are supporting a BBQ duty.

Scheduled assistance includes:

Set up duty (3x per season)	All families from rostered age group 12.45pm - 1.30pm (8.45am-9.30am for morning sessions) Meet at the trailer on the beach for allocation of set up jobs: • Arrive at the beach 45 minutes before the scheduled start of the session • The nipper trailer will be delivered to the beach area for you • Near the nippers trailer on the beach, set up the age group flags 5 metres apart, and corresponding buckets • Set up the water and beach areas in accordance with weekly schedule • Cans/buoys/string line should be placed along the shore, assist IRB crew • Set up the area flags for each water area • Set up the 2 x 3x3m shade tents
Pack up duty (3x per season)	All families from rostered age group 3.30pm - 4.15pm (11.30am-12.15pm for morning sessions) Meet at the tent on the beach for allocation of pack up jobs: • Return all equipment onto the trailer. This includes the buckets, flags, sprint track ropes, flags, shade tents • Wait on the shore for IRB crew to bring in the Cans/buoys/string line • Check for any lost property • Help the relevant driver to hitch the trailer on to the Ute
BBQ duty (2-3x per season)	Team Manager Officer will roster families from the age group: • Report to the BBQ trailer at 2.30pm (or 10.30am for morning sessions) • 5 helpers required to run the BBQ for 2hrs – including cooking, set up, serving and taking money • All to assist with cleaning and packing up • We recommend each family group commits to one BBQ session across the year to share the load
Pack Board Trailer/clean boards for carnivals	Under 8 to Under 13 age groups as required, refer to Spond event
Set up tents and Equipment for carnivals	Under 8 to Under 13 age groups as required, refer to Spond event

Note: Under 6 and 7 families are not required to set up for the entire nippers cohort, as their session times are limited to 2pm-3pm. Please support your Age Group Leaders to set up your session as directed. Under 6 and 7 families will have BBQ duty across the season.

Keeping nippers safe

Parent/ carer responsibility

While the club provides water cover and coaching, it is your responsibility as a parent or carer to remain on the beach/surrounds throughout the session and be on hand to assist your child in the event of an incident or injury.

Please reinforce the following with your nipper.

- U6s & U7s One carer must remain on the beach & with their child (i.e. carers must come prepared to go in the water) with the age group AT ALL TIMES
- Under 8 and above: one carer must remain on the beach
- Nippers must stay with their age group leader at all times, unless coaches take over for a specific activity
- If a nipper must leave their group (to go to the toilet etc.), the age group leader must be informed prior to them leaving and they must be accompanied by a parent or guardian
- Nippers are not to enter the water unless authorised by the age group leader
- At the end of the session, nippers are again **checked off** the attendance roll after all equipment and boards have been packed away into the shed
- Nippers are not to leave the club / surrounds until collected by an adult and checked off the attendance roll. This is important as failure to sign your nipper out may result in the closure of the beach and a search being carried out to find them
- Once your nipper has been checked off the attendance roll, they need to remove their age group caps.
- After your nipper has been checked off the attendance roll and removed their Club caps, they are the responsibility of the parent / guardian even if they re-enter the water

Water Safety Supervisor (WSS)

In line with Surf Life Saving requirements, the club has an appointed nippers Water Safety Supervisor. Prior to each nippers session, the WSS conducts a risk assessment and determines the conditions, and associated ratios required to safely support nippers in the water. The water patrol team reports to the Water Safety Supervisor.

Water cover ratios are 1:5 (1 Bronze Medallion/ SRC qualified personnel to 5 nippers). Water patrol must include a minimum of 50% Bronze cover). 1:10 in flat conditions. The Nipper Rescue Certificate personnel are in addition and can't be counted in ratios, but useful with younger/ less skilled nippers to assist with wade, board and swim activities.

Water safety

Water safety personnel mainly spend their time monitoring nippers in the water/shoreline on nipper days and/or carnivals either on rescue boards or swimming with tubes/fins.

Water safety personnel aim to:

- Minimise nippers losing their craft
- Minimise nippers bumping into each other
- Ensuring the nippers ability can handle the conditions
- Encourage and guide members in the water
- Attend to any incidents if needed

West Beach SLSC maintains a dedicated beach and IRB (inflatable rescue boat) patrol during Saturday club days to monitor safety for all age groups.

These volunteers are all Bronze Medallion qualified or hold a Surf Rescue Certificate and are focused on assisting the AGM's in providing a safe environment for all participants. On Club days parents who are suitably qualified are required to provide assistance in the water activities. Please ensure you make the AGM aware that you are available to assist. The club must have water safety to provide aquatic activities for the children.

You will need to have either a current Nipper Rescue Certificate (NRC), Surf Rescue Certificate or Bronze Medallion to provide water safety. These awards need to be requalified at the Club Proficiency each year.

The Nipper Rescue Certificate (NRC) is a great introductory few hour course designed for under 6-8 parents or older siblings who would like to provide water safety for West Beach SLSC nippers!

Safety signals – Nippers

West Beach SLSC Nippers can give this “thumbs up” signal to Water Safety personnel to tell them they are OK after an incident or while completing a course/task. 

Surf Life Saving Australia Hand Signals

The below signals are used in the West Beach SLSC nippers program. If you have any concerns over the safety of your child, please see our Water Safety Coordinator

Signals



Beach to water signals



1. Attract attention



2. Pick up swimmers



3. Proceed further out to sea



4. Go the right or to the left



5. Remain stationary



6. Message understood, all clear



7. Pick up or adjust buoys



8. Return to shore

Water to beach signals



9. Assistance required



10. Shore signal received and understood



11. Emergency evacuation alarm



12. Submerged victim missing



13. All clear/ok



14. Powercraft wishes to return to shore

To view more SLSC training resources, refer to the SLSC Members Area Document Library June 2019.

Age Group Leadership teams

Each age group is led by a team of volunteers who work together to deliver a fun, skill development program for our nippers.

All of our leadership team hold relevant clearance checks (e.g. Working with Children), and have undertaken their Age Group Leader qualification through Surf Life Saving.

Age Group Manager (AGM'S)

Each age group is allocated an AGM who is responsible for organising and conducting various activities as per the programs developed by SLSSA. Further details about the role of the Age Group Manager and the program for each age group are available here: <https://www.surflifesavingsa.com.au/nipper-program-resources>

The responsibilities of an AGM include:

- Encouraging the nippers in their age group to participate, enjoy, co-operate and compete in all activities of the club
- Keeping weekly attendance and education records
- instructing the nippers in their age group towards the requirements of the Surf Education Program
- Organising nippers at competitions, which includes recording attendance, assisting in team selections and marshalling the nippers for their allocated events
- Instructing nippers of the correct techniques for events the children participate in
- Keep the children and parents informed of the requirements of the age group and of Club information
- Ensure the children in the age group are aware of and encourage sun protection

Age Group Manager Assistants (AGMAs) will support AGMs to facilitate the nipper program.

Team Manager (TM)

The Team Manager is your first port of call with any questions. It is important that our Age Group Manager and Assistant Age Group Managers can concentrate on ensuring the safety of the children in their care. In addition to running the Saturday session, the AGM has to undertake administration activities to ensure that proficiencies and education training sessions are recorded for each child.

To help our AGM and Assistant AGM keep our nippers safe, please seek out your Team Manager with any questions. Other activities the Team Manager undertakes:

- Greeting new families in the group
- Ensuring members have access to the Spond app
- Communicate relevant information through Spond
- Assisting with roll call at beginning of session
- Facilitate team duties

Nippers Surf Education Program

An important part of our Saturday nipper program is the delivery of an education program, comprising four key learning areas.

Surf awareness: Not only are surf skills required in conquering conditions, but a knowledge of where the dangers are and how to read the surf are essential ingredients in keeping safe at the beach.

Individual safety: with a focus on recognising the potential risks faced when visiting the beach, and in life in general.

Lifesaving skills: where nippers are introduced to the role we hope they undertake as they grow and develop into future lifesavers.

Surf sports skills: nippers learn a variety of skills to help them develop confidence, competence and capability in surf lifesaving's various surf sport events, such as swimming, board racing and beach flags, to name a few.

The majority of surf education will be provided on the beach, not in a classroom or formal environment (except the Surf Rescue Certificate/Resuscitation course for the older age groups). The best way to teach surf safety is through physical demonstrations, drills/exercises and visual aids (such as spotting a rip).

The Junior Development program is delivered through three stages:

- Stage 1: Under 6, Under 7, Under 8
- Stage 2: Under 9, Under 10, Under 11
- Stage 3: Under 12 & Under 13

Details of each of the programs are available via the SLSSA website

<https://www.surflifesavingsa.com.au/nipper-program-resources>

Additional training

The WBSLSC nippers program includes access to additional training. A schedule of expected training is below. Please note that this may be updated across the season.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning						Multiple Discipline	
Evening	Boards	Nippers Swimming	Running		Nippers Swimming		Nippers Swimming

Parents/ carers are expected to attend training sessions with their child. Training sessions offered include:

Board training

Additional training is available on a Monday night at West Beach. The sessions are available to all U8s to U13s who have achieved their **preliminary evaluation**. Be aware that the conditions of the day will also influence who is able to participate.

Parents are expected to bring their Nipper to the coaches and they or nominated adult are to remain on the beach during water activities for safety reasons or their nipper will be unable to participate. Parents and nippers are also expected to wash the boards after and help pack up.

Swimming training

Additional swim training is held at Immanuel College iSwim, with discounted sessions for WBSLSC nippers.

Rescue & Resuscitation (R&R) training (Refer to Spond during the season for training details)

R&R is one of the traditional surf club events and is based on the simulated rescue and resuscitation of a patient. It combines resuscitation skills, marching and drill, with teams judged against set criteria. It is open to the U10 - U13 age groups.

March Past (Refer to Spond during the season for training details)

Another traditional surf club event, March Past involves a team of 12 nippers marching in formation around a set course in time with music. The team includes members carrying a reel, wearing a belt and carrying the West Beach Club flag. Training involves marching to improve individual and team technique and learning the various commands and movements associated with the event.

Running training (Refer to Spond during the season for training details)

Regular running training assists members with overall fitness, as well as beach competition events.

Champion Lifesaving (Refer to Spond during the season for training details)

For seniors and Under 13s only. This event provides an individual the competitive opportunity to demonstrate the physical and mental skills required to be a surf lifesaver, including a surf lifesaving question paper, resuscitation, surf race, surf board race, beach sprint and a rescue tube race.

Competition and carnivals

The nipper surf sports program offers a wide range of competition events for under 8's and up culminating in a state championship competition each year. Details regarding surf sports disciplines is available on the SLSSA website here <https://www.surflifesavingsa.com.au/surf-sports>

Should you have questions about the Surf Sports program, you can link in with your Team Manager Officer, or our Junior Sports Coordinator nippersports@westbeachslsc.com.au

Competition is designed to provide an environment to enhance the lifesaving skills used for patrols.

We recognise that not all nippers want to be involved in competition and there are pathways the club provides in lifesaving and other activities.

West Beach SLSC runs a program that encourages every member to achieve their own competition goals. Our coaching programs are designed to support nippers in all aspects of competition by practicing the skills they learn in groups at Saturday trainings suitable to their ability.

There are a range of carnivals that members can enter throughout the year and your AGM and Team Manager will communicate with your age group regarding nominations.

The SLSSA competition calendar is available via TeamUp – accessible via this link or by downloading the TeamUp app <https://teamup.com/kshnqhm3iktcekeohg>

Who can compete at Carnivals?

U8-U13s who have completed their competition evaluation. **In order to compete at state championships, a nipper must have completed their Surf Education Award.**

<https://www.surflifesavingsa.com.au/nipper-program-resources>

Competitors need to wear the WBSLSC nipper high vis vest, club bathers and their club cap (comp cap which is pale blue with dark blue stripes)

What to bring to Carnivals?

- Uniform (Club bathers, Club comp top, Club comp cap, Broad brim hat, Hi-vis vest) – all available from our uniform shop
- Sunscreen (reapply during the day), Towel, Goggles, thongs / beach shoes
- You will require plenty of water and good nutritional food to last the day
- Your board and surf wax if you own your own board
- West Beach tents are provided for use by our members and families

Parents/carers are welcome to bring your own umbrella/tent/chair and sit nearby

Team Selection Process

Under 8 to Under 13 Junior members are welcome and encouraged to compete in individual and team events at surf life saving carnivals. The Nippers program aims to provide young individuals with valuable surf lifesaving skills, ocean awareness, and physical fitness while promoting inclusivity, fair competition, and personal growth.

Objectives

The primary objectives of the Nippers team selection process are as follows:

- a) Inclusivity: The selection process will ensure that all interested and qualified participants have the opportunity to participate, regardless of their background, skill level, or previous experience
- b) Fairness: The selection process will be conducted in a transparent and equitable manner, without bias or favouritism
- c) Skill Development: The selection process will aim to foster the development of a range of skills, including swimming, running, paddling, and surf awareness
- d) Performance and Growth: Team selections will consider each participant's demonstrated ability to compete safely and effectively at the highest level appropriate to their current skill development and experience.
- e) Safety: Participants selected for the Nippers team should possess the necessary swimming skills for the relevant conditions and ocean awareness to ensure their safety during training and activities

Eligibility

All individuals who meet the following criteria are eligible to participate in the Nippers team selection process:

- a) Age: Participants must be within the specified age range determined by Surf Life Saving SA. Participants with a recognised disability may be eligible to apply compete in an alternate age group. The request must be submitted by the Junior Coordinator to Surf Life Saving SA at least 2 weeks prior to the event.

- b) Membership: Participants must be registered financial members of the West Beach Surf Life Saving Club.
- c) Skills: Participants must have completed the competition skills assessment and surf education relevant to their age group before the relevant event entry date.
- d) Any other criteria set by Surf Life Saving SA.
- e) The Age Group Manager, Carnival Team Manager and Director of Junior and Youth Development may refuse entry in an event to a competitor for individual or team events if there are concerns about their ability to safely participate in that event at a carnival.

Selection Process

- a) Parents/ guardians must notify their Age Group Manager which events their child would like to participate in by the requested due date.
- b) The relevant Age Group Manager, in consultation with sport specific coaches, will submit team selections and rationale to the Director of Junior and Youth Development by the requested date.
- c) The focus of team selection for local carnivals will be team member participation.
- d) The focus of team selection for state championship events will be based on ability and performances at training, carnivals and club championships. Performance and skills in specific surf conditions will also be taken into account.
- e) Due to the complexities of the Board Rescue event, teams are selected on their ability together. Board Rescue competitors are encouraged to train and compete in their potential teams from early in the season to develop combinations.
- f) Substitutions in teams may be made on the day of the carnival by coaches and the Team Manager in consultation with the relevant Age Leader. Any changes must be made in accordance with SLSA rules and will be communicated to the Team Manager and nippers at the earliest opportunity.
- g) Participants will be notified of their team allocations through the LiveHeats app prior to the event. Surf Life Saving SA is responsible for the release of this information.
- h) Team Composition: Team selections will be made to ensure that participants compete at the highest level appropriate to their ability. When selecting teams, the overall collective ability of the group will be considered to create balanced and competitive teams, rather than concentrating stronger competitors in lower divisions. This approach promotes fairness, development, and representation across all teams.

Appeals Process -

- a) Participants or their parents/guardians who believe that the selection process was conducted unfairly or incorrectly can submit in writing an appeal to the Junior Sports Coordinator who will aim to resolve the dispute.
- b) If the dispute cannot be resolved a Selection Review Panel (SRP) will be formed.
- c) The appeal will be reviewed by the Selection Review Panel (SRP). This panel will consist of at least three members, drawn from the following: the Director of Junior and Youth Development, the Junior Age Group Manager Coordinator, the Junior Sports Coordinator, and the relevant area coach. The SRP will review all submitted information and provide a formal determination on the appeal.

d) The Selection Review Panel's decision will be final.

e) Appeals re team selection will only be accepted for State Carnivals.

Note: It is inappropriate for parents to approach Age Group Managers or other competitors with complaints about team selection or negative comments about any competitor's performance. Such behaviour will not be tolerated by West Beach SLSC. Member conduct must be inline with club Values at all times.

Review and Updates

This process will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Changes and updates will be made as necessary, with input from coaches, participants, parents/guardians, and relevant stakeholders.

Pre state title dinner

In the week leading up to state titles, competing nippers are invited to a midweek dinner.

At this session nippers will find out information about the competition and hear from guest speakers.

Junior Club Championships

About the event

West Beach SLSC Junior Club Championships are an annual internal individual competition day, held at West Beach for age groups Under 9 to Under 13.

Event disciplines

Under 9 and Under 10	Under 11 - Under 13
• Theory paper (10 questions) • Flags • Sprint • Long distance run • Surf (swim) race • Board race • Wades	• Theory (10 questions) • Flags • Sprint • Long distance run • Surf (swim) race • Board Race • Iron

Event scoring

- Scores are calculated for the male and female club champion in each age group.
- One point is awarded for each correct answer in the theory paper component.
- For all other events: points are allocated according to number of competitors, and place. If there are 10 competitors, 1st Place gets 10 points, 2nd place gets 9 points, 3rd place gets 8 points, etc.
- If some competitors do not participate in certain disciplines, the point score will still be according to the overall number of competitors in the age group, not the particular discipline. For example, if there are 10 males in an age group, but only 7 compete in the board race, 1st place in the board race will receive 10 points.

- In the event of a tie for Club Champion, placing will be determined based on the results of the theory paper. The highest scoring theory paper will receive the higher place. In the event of a tie after the theory paper, placings will be awarded as a tie.

End of Season Awards

End of season Nippers awards are given to recognise and celebrate the outstanding achievements of our junior members.

Awards are selected by Age Group Manager, and submitted to the Director of Junior and Youth Development. All recommendations will be provided to the Board of the West Beach Surf Life Saving Club for ratification.

Under 6, Under 7 & Under 8

Award Title	Criteria
Surf Education Certificate	Successful completion of the relevant Surf Education program (see Surf Life Saving SA website for details)
Participation award	Participation in nippers sessions

Under 9, Under 10, Under 11, Under 12 & Under 13

Award Title	Criteria
Surf Education Certificate	Successful completion of the relevant Surf Education program (see Surf Life Saving SA website for details)
State Championship Participation	Competitor in the West Beach Surf Life Saving Club Junior State Championship Team
Most improved	Improved throughout the season Attitude has remained positive throughout the season Continually has the effort and desire to improve
Team spirit	Demonstrates respect, friendship, supports team members, upholds the values of the Club
Surf Sports (One male and one female)	Achieved outstanding results in surf sports competitions Embodies the values and sporting behaviour expected of West Beach SLSC members
Club Champion Male and female 1 st to 3 rd	Awarded on points gained at Junior Club Championship event

Nipper of the Year Selection

The Nipper of the Year Award is presented to an outstanding Nipper member (U13), as nominated by their club in recognition of their achievement in all areas of Surf Life Saving, including actively participating in the Surf Life Saving community and for being excellent role models. The Nipper of the Year award recipient should serve as a role model for all participants, embodying the spirit of surf lifesaving and contributing positively to the growth and reputation of the Nippers program and the wider surf lifesaving community.

Eligibility

Surf Life Saving SA criteria:

- Must be a current registered Junior Activities member in good standing with the club
- Must be from the Under 6 to Under 13 age groups (2026-27 season)

- Must hold the relevant Junior Preliminary evaluation and Surf Education award for their current age group
- Must be a member of good standing in the Club

Selection Process

The Under 13 Age Group Manager/s will consider the following criteria in selecting 1 x male and 1 x female Nipper of the Year:

Commitment and Attendance	• Regularly attends Nippers training sessions, activities, and events. • Demonstrates a consistent and reliable commitment to the program throughout the season.
Skill Development	• Shows significant improvement in swimming, paddling, running, and other relevant skills over the course of the season. • Actively engages in skill development opportunities and training provided by the club.
Positive Attitude	• Displays a positive and enthusiastic attitude toward learning and participating in Nippers activities. • Encourages and motivates teammates to perform their best and maintain a positive outlook.
Sportsmanship	• Demonstrates excellent sportsmanship, both in victory and defeat. • Respects coaches, teammates, competitors, and officials at all times.
Leadership and Teamwork	• Exhibits leadership qualities by helping and guiding teammates, fostering a sense of camaraderie, and leading by example. • Collaborates effectively within the team, showing respect for diversity and inclusivity.
Ocean Awareness and Safety	• Displays a strong understanding of ocean conditions, hazards, and safety protocols. • Acts responsibly and safely during beach and ocean activities, setting an example for others.
Contribution to the Community	• Engages in community service activities and initiatives organized by the club. • Represents the Nippers program and the surf lifesaving community positively in public events and activities.
Personal Growth and Character	• Demonstrates personal growth, self-discipline, and a willingness to learn from challenges. • Upholds the values of integrity, respect, and responsibility in all interactions.
Recommendations and Feedback	• Receives positive feedback and recommendations from coaches, fellow participants, parents, and other stakeholders. • Demonstrates a receptive attitude toward constructive feedback and implements suggestions for improvement.

- a) The Under 13 Age Group Manager/s will individually submit their nomination for 1 x male Nipper of the Year, and 1 x female Nipper of the year to the Junior Activities Manager with supporting documentation via email by February 1st of the relevant season.
- b) The Junior Activities Manager will seek feedback from sport specific coaches on the Under 13 team members utilising the relevant above criteria.
- c) At the next Junior Committee meeting, the Junior Committee of the West Beach Surf Life Saving Club will vote on the Nipper of the Year award.
- d) The Junior Activities Manager will seek endorsement from the West Beach SLSC Board for the 1 x male Nipper of the Year, and 1 x female Nipper of the year.

- e) Following the decision by the Board, the Junior Activities Manager will, in accordance with the relevant SLSSA circular, submit club nominations for 1 x Male Nipper of the Year & 1 x Female Nipper of the Year to SLSSA.
- f) The male and female West Beach Surf Life Saving Club Nipper of the Year award will be presented at the SLSSA Junior State Championships.

Club Equipment

Equipment is a significant expense for our club and all nippers and parents and guardians are asked to assist in keeping it in good condition.

Our club has a range of foam and fiberglass nipper boards that can be used for both training and competitions. These boards are shared amongst nippers and age groups at each session

All nippers are responsible for ensuring the equipment is washed down, free of sand and returned to the trailer or club.

AGM's are solely responsible for allocating equipment on training days

- Nippers are responsible for reporting any damage to the equipment to their AGM or coach
- Only WBSLC nippers are permitted to use club equipment
- Equipment is only to be used during club designated activities
- Equipment is not to be removed from the club under any circumstances without prior permission from your AGM



About nipper boards

The club provides foam boards for U8-10s and fibreglass boards for U11-13s nippers to use at these sessions. The boards are shared between nippers and age groups.

There are a range of boards from various manufacturers that come in different sizes and will usually be foam or fibreglass construction and suited for different weighted nippers.

If you wish to purchase a board for your nipper (not a requirement) and would like some guidance, have a chat with your AGM or contact Junior Sports Coordinator nippersports@westbeachslsc.com.au

Member safety

The following documents related to nipper water safety can be found on [SLS Members Area](#)

Go to Document Library and search 'water safety':

- SLSA Water Safety Policy – policy 1.01 A and 101 B, and procedure
- Risk Assessment Guide (completed prior to any training/water activities)

In addition, the member protection information can be found on [Surflifesaving.com.au](#)

Go to Members, Member Protection.

Our club endeavors to provide the safest environment possible for all members participating in club activities. This is done through complying with SLSA Water Safety Policies, providing high quality water safety services and having Club contingency plans in place.

The Water Safety Coordinator or Nipper Coach will complete a risk assessment before each activity commences which will also be monitored throughout the activities by the Age Group Managers. This includes:

- **Identify hazards** - rips, shallow bank, dumping waves, debris/seaweed
- **Assess the risk** - is the surf too dangerous?
- **Determine measures** - will certain children/groups stay out of the water?
- **Review, apply and monitor** - have the conditions become worse?
- **Water Safety** - that minimum Water Safety personnel ratios are met and adhered to. *See below also.*

Safeguarding children

West Beach Surf Life Saving (SLS) as part of Surf Lifesaving SA (SLS) is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all Children & Young People (CYP) who are involved in SLS. Our policies and procedures seek to address risks to child safety and to establish child safe culture and practices in line with the National Principles for Child Safe Organizations.

If you have any concerns or issues, please contact the club Child Safe Officers in the first instance. The West Beach SLSC website provides more details on this <https://www.westbeachslsc.com.au/safeguarding-children>

We are bound by Surf Life Saving (SA) child protection policies, which can be found on [Surflifesaving.com.au](#)

Go to Members, Member Protection.

If you have concerns about a child's safety and the matter is urgent or the safety, health or welfare of a child or victim is at risk please call the Police emergency number 000.

We ask that all parents complete the online SLS – Child Safe Awareness course. It's free, takes only 15 minutes and is available on the Surf Life Saving Members Portal in the eLearning library. Refer to eLearning, Training Library, SLS Age Group Manager, SLS - Child Safe Awareness [etrainu - LMS | custom eLearning](#)

Incident response

In the event of an incident such as a missing person or emergency, there is a response that has been devised that all members should be aware of.

On Saturday nipper days, in an emergency, the Water Safety Coordinator or Patrol Captain will advise our tower to raise the alarm by sounding the siren. This is the signal for all nippers and water safety to return to shore and assemble for roll call at their age group flag.

Parents are to allow the Age Group Managers to complete roll calls then listen for further instructions.

Water Safety members are to head to the designated area and await instruction from the Water Safety Coordinator who will instigate the appropriate plan.

Continuous improvement

West Beach SLSC undertakes ongoing quality control and evaluations of all its operations to ensure standards are appropriate to the expectations of members and the community. The nipper program is constantly changing and evolving to meet the needs of the members it serves. Members are encouraged to provide feedback to the Director of Junior and Youth Development by email or phone.

Useful links

- **West Beach Surf Life Saving Club** <https://www.westbeachslsc.com.au/>
- **West Beach SLSC Board Contacts** [Contact — West Beach Surf Life Saving Club](#)
- **SLSA** (Surf Life Saving Australia) www.sls.com.au for National circulars, news, education, info
- **SLSSA** (Surf Life Saving South Australia) <https://www.surflifesavingsa.com.au/> for SA circulars (newsletters), carnival information, news, education, and general member information.
- **SLS Members Area** <https://members.sls.com.au/>
- **Bureau of Meteorology** www.bom.com.au for up-to-date weather report
- **Beach Safe** <https://beachsafe.org.au/> includes current information and conditions for every beach in Australia. It shows patrol services, hazards, facilities as well as weather, swell and tide details.

Please Note: Information in this booklet and links herewith may change. Please ensure you check dates and times closer to the events.