

# School Aquatic Education Programmes and Pools

**Executive summary prepared for  
Water Safety New Zealand**

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# Executive summary

## Method

- We surveyed all state, state-integrated, private, special and kura kaupapa Māori schools in the primary and secondary sectors (2553 schools).
- We obtained a response rate of 99 percent (2525 schools).
- We analysed the data in relation to the following Ministry of Education (MOE) demographic variables: decile, school type, school size, school authority, location and region.

## Key findings

- Most schools (89 percent) offered learning to swim programmes. Slightly more than half of these schools conducted their programmes at their own school pool, and the others mainly used council or community pools. Schools' swimming programmes were mainly taught by classroom teachers.
- Out of the schools that offered learning to swim programmes, 68 percent reported that they were either very satisfied or satisfied with their current programmes.
- Overall, rural schools and schools with primary age students were more likely to offer swimming programmes. The types of schools that were least likely to offer learning to swim programmes included schools in Auckland, large schools, urban schools, and intermediate and secondary schools. The main reason schools did not offer learning to swim programmes was because the costs were too high.
- The region which had the least number of trained staff was the Tasman region, despite 100% of schools in this region having learning to swim programmes (32 percent had no staff that had been trained in the last five years). Wellington also had a high proportion of schools with no teachers that had been trained in the last five years (27 percent).
- Around two-thirds (62 percent) of all primary schools reported they had at least one school pool on site.
- The regions that had the lowest percentage of schools with pools were two large urban areas (Auckland and Wellington), and two cooler regions (Southland and Otago).
- Only 12 percent of the schools that offered learning to swim programmes said they did not need any assistance with their programmes. The lower the decile, the more likely it was that they needed assistance.
- Over half (58 percent) of schools that offered learning to swim programmes identified that they needed assistance with funding for their programmes or pools. This was the most frequently requested type of assistance.

- The majority (70 percent) of schools reported that they currently used classroom teachers to teach their learning to swim programme. Almost half (46 percent) of schools offering learning to swim programmes said they needed help training their staff to teach swimming.