



DIXON PARK SURF LIFESAVING CLUB

THE PARENTS GUIDE TO NIPPERS 2023/2024 SEASON

Welcome all new and returning members to Dixon Park SLSC. We hope you enjoy this upcoming 2023/24 season.

Our primary goal in the Nippers program is to educate our Nippers on surf safety and awareness. The programme is developed to help children develop enjoyment, confidence, and skills in and out of the water.

The season is all about **FUN, SAFETY, AND TEAMWORK!!!**

We aim to provide surf education, develop lifesaving skills, develop confidence and skills in the surf, and provide a safe environment as well as fun and educational activities for all nippers.

Welcome to Dixon Park Surf Lifesaving Club. On behalf of our Junior Activities committee, I would like to thank you for joining us for the new season. Our nipper's program has been running for many years and is a wonderful way for our children to be active and make new friends within the local community.

At Dixon Park, our aim is to ensure that our Nippers are gaining confidence and having fun in a safe beach environment. While your child is with us, they will learn a variety of skills and meet some great friends. Our activities are tailored to each age group, and encourage a mindset of being safe in the water, physical development that allows them to enjoy the water, and a sense of responsibility by their involvement in lifesaving.

As with any sporting club, its strength comes from the support of its volunteers. I would like to extend a thank you to the parents and guardians who volunteered in previous seasons. At Dixon Park SLSC we rely heavily on the support and involvement of our volunteers, and I would like to personally invite you to share the experience of Nippers with your child and volunteer for one of the roles that are vital to the ongoing success of our Nippers program. Nippers is for the whole family and is a great way for parents to meet new people in the community. Please see any one of our committee members or Age Managers, should you be able to help.

Our Nippers program aims to keep our children on the beach and encourage their future involvement with the club. We are looking forward to working with them during the season and seeing them having fun and developing their skills on the beach.

On the following pages of this booklet, you will find information that will help you prepare for the upcoming season. Please reach out to me or the Nippers committee if you have any questions or if there is anything that we can further help you with. You can also view our website including the Nippers section at <https://www.dixonparkslsc.com.au/>

Here's to a great season.

See you on the beach,

John Miller

Junior Activities Chairperson.

About Dixon Park

Dixon Park SLSC was founded in 1932. Our club is part of the Hunter Branch, which is made up of 13 clubs stretching from Hawks Nest in the North to Catherine Hill Bay in the South.

The Mission statement of the Dixon Park SLSC is to provide a safe beach and aquatic environment on Dixon Park Beach and surrounding areas, as well as a healthy environment for members, family, and friends to enjoy.

Objectives of Dixon Park SLSC

The objectives of Dixon Park SLSC are to:

- To supply services on Dixon Park beach to minimise danger and prevent the loss of life or injury in a beach and aquatic environment.
- To raise the skills and knowledge of surf life savers to meet the needs and changing demands of the community.
- To be recognised as the local authority on matters relating to safety and management of Dixon Park beach and surrounds.
- To provide members with the skills and opportunity to learn and excel at surf sports.
- To provide a social environment that is both safe and friendly to people of all ages and backgrounds

Values of Dixon Park SLSC

At Dixon Park SLSC our Values include:

- Respecting all people whether members or members of the club or the community.
- Respecting each other and our individual contributions.
- Acting with integrity and honesty.
- Working together as a team.
- Welcoming and embracing our families' friends and the members of the community.
- Continuing to improve our services to the community and to ourselves.
- Remembering and honouring our history and tradition.

Junior Committee Structure

- Chairperson – John Miller
- Registrar – Cassie Criss
- Secretary – Vacant
- Age Manager Co-Ordinator- Lachlan Pearse
- Water Safety Manager – Alan Cross
- Merchandise – Caitlin Byrnes
- Social Coordinator – Vacant
- Gear Steward / Beach Setup – Vacant
- Fundraising and Sponsorship Coordinator – Tim Wilkinson

Registrations

Registrations usually open in August and close the week prior to the first Sunday. The Nipper season runs from October through to end of February / early March, with a break over Christmas and January. Our calendar is regularly updated and published on TeamApp. We usually have a twilight session early February, to enjoy nippers in the late afternoon, followed by a picnic on the grass and coldies in the bar upstairs.

We would love to put on a couple of social events during the year, but this has not happened over the past two years due to covid and a vacant social events role. If you are interested in organising an event, please get in touch with us, we would love your help.

Proficiency

Before any participation in water activities on Sunday mornings all Nippers must complete the Junior Preliminary Skills Assessment (pool proficiency) as per their age group guidelines.

There are two levels of proficiency:

- Junior Preliminary Skills Assessment (Pool Proficiency) - This is compulsory and is the minimum requirement for all Nippers.
- Junior Competition Skills Assessment - This is compulsory for all Nippers that wish to participate at carnivals and includes a timed pool swim and an ocean swim. We encourage all our Nippers to attempt the Competition skills assessment.

You will find proficiency swim information on our website:

<https://www.dixonparkslsc.com.au/nippers/proficiency-requirements/>

Our pool proficiency was conducted in September. If you didn't make the proficiency date, you can head to any public pool, such as Arnold's at The Junction, and they can assess your child and sign them off. The guidelines and form is also available on our website.

Age Groups

Nippers must be in the age group in which their birthday falls. Nippers cannot go up or down an age group. This is a Hunter Branch rule.

The age group for the season is determined as at midnight on the 30th of September at the commencement of that season.

- [See our website for details](#)

Proof of age, (original or certified birth certificate or Passport) must be shown for all new children joining nippers. Identification must also be provided for the Parent. These requirements are for insurance purposes. We mark as sighted in our database and do not share this information with anyone else. You will need to send copies to: nippers.registrar@dixonparkslsc.com.au

U/6 Membership: A child may join nippers as soon as he/she turn 5 years of age. **Children cannot be registered until they reach five years to comply with insurance requirements.** A child who reaches five

years of age after 30th September 2023 may join Nippers at that time however, this child will be required to stay in the U/6 age group for the next season.

What to Bring to Nippers?

- Sun protection, Swimmers, Water Bottle, Towel and Goggles (if needed). *Please put the name of your nipper on all items*
- Dixon Park Skull Cap – U6 and U7 have high vis skull caps
- Pink HI VIS Rash shirt or Pink HI VIS Vest for all age groups

A typical Sunday morning

- 8.30am - Nipper desk will open for sale of merchandise, general queries, and carnival registrations
The desk will open at 8am for the first two weeks for sale of merchandise
- 8.45am - Beach set up. This will usually be on a rotating roster, refer to TeamApp
- 9.00am - Age Manager briefing
- 9.10am - Nippers to be seated on the grass in their age groups, ready for the morning address
- 9.20am – Morning briefing and start
- 11am - Nippers ends - Off the beach and to the BBQ!

Nippers must be signed- in by the Age Managers at the beginning of each session. This is usually done once Nippers are seated on the grassed area. All Nippers must be signed- off by parents before they can leave the beach. We expect Nipper parents to stay on the beach, however if you do leave the beach area, please ensure you are back by 10.45 or earlier if weather conditions change. We will not leave your child unattended, but it is your responsibility to ensure they are signed out promptly at the end of the session.

Weather and Water Conditions

Our Club and Water Safety team take the responsibility of safety very seriously. Each Sunday the team will check the weather conditions and surf and will decide on the day's activities with safety the number one priority. This may mean that water events may not be possible, or some age groups may miss out. Nipper's may also be cancelled if the weather is severe. We do not enjoy cancelling and disappointing our nippers but will make the call to cancel if conditions are miserable.

We will notify you of cancellations via TeamAPP and facebook as soon as possible.

Code of Conduct

- Our club's code of conduct has been prepared so all participants (Nippers, Age Managers and Parents) are aware of what is expected from them when joining our club. It is our objective that all Nippers have fun and are supportive of their fellow Nippers and that positive Age Manager, Parental and Spectator behaviour will facilitate this. Please remember that the committee are all volunteers. We are more than happy to take on constructive criticism, but please be mindful that we volunteer our time so that nippers can run.

- WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US:
 - Provide surf education
 - Develop lifesaving skills
 - Develop confidence and skills in the surf
 - Provide fun and educational activities
 - Provide a safe environment

- WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU
 - Get involved where needed
 - Encourage the Nippers by providing positive support
 - No bullying or harassment
 - Supervise your child/ren
 - Follow the guidelines provided by Hunter Branch, the club, and any other relevant authorities, including NSW Health.

Communication

TeamApp is the primary method of communication between the club and parents/carers for all junior activities. TeamApp announcements will be posted to Facebook as a back-up. This includes any changes to Sunday events. Please make sure you are registered in TeamApp and have liked us on Facebook.

There will be a weekly TeamApp message and Facebook post advising of this week's conditions, schedule, and any other information.

The club also uses email and text message distributed via Surfguard for less urgent communications.

DIXON PARK NIPPERS



Age Managers/Assistant Age Managers

Age Managers are group leaders/coaches who instruct/demonstrate skills to Nippers in the appropriate area/discipline. Assistant Age Managers support Age Managers in their role as well as marking off attendance sheets and ushering nippers from activity or station.

- All age groups must have an age group ratio of at least 1 Age Manager to 10 nippers.
- Age Managers are parents and volunteers just like any other sport.
- The more Age Managers & Assistant age Managers that we have the better for everyone.

To become an Age Manager, you must be a financial member of the club, have a valid WWC number and complete an online Age Managers education modules. **The club provides all practical training for age managers on our beautiful beach.** Nippers love having their parents get involved!

Age Groups 6 and 7

In these age groups, Nippers will participate in fun beach-based games and activities such as water wades, water relays and play games in the sand and shallow water to assist with the development of motor skills, along with introductory beach and surf skills.

Age Groups 8 – 10

Nippers in these groups will rotate through activities such as Swim, Board and Beach. Combinations of age groups may happen during the season. Depending on the conditions at the beach there may be instances where Age Managers may decide to do some of the water activities at the Merewether Baths – This decision is usually made the morning of nippers and the entire age group will walk to and from the baths.

Age Groups 11-14

Nippers in these age groups will do more advanced surf skills. Nippers in the higher groups will also be offered the opportunity to complete their SRC (Surf Rescue Certificate) The SRC provides participants with an introductory knowledge of patrolling and surf awareness in order to be able to participate in basic lifesaving operations. It is the minimum lifesaving award that covers first aid, resuscitation, and rescue techniques.

Working with Children Check

We encourage all parents and guardians to complete the Working with Children Check through the office of the Children's Guardian. To Complete your application and for more information go to www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/working-with-children

Merchandise

It is compulsory for all Nippers to wear either a pink hi-vis Rashie or Singlet, plus a skull cap, and these can be purchased at the desk on Sunday mornings. Although not compulsory, other merchandise will be available for sale. This includes a fantastic range of locally designed and made club swimwear.

Carnivals

- Carnival dates and locations will be communicated on the Calendar and on our Facebook page. If your Nipper wishes to compete in a carnival you will need to put your name down so please see our Carnival Manager Lachlan Pearse for details, or find one of our committee members at the desk.

IT IS IMPORTANT that all Nippers are signed off by their parent prior to them leaving the beach. This ensures that all children are accounted for. ALL NIPPERS MUST wear their skull cap and Hi Vis Pink Vest/Rash Shirt at all times during Nippers.

Have a great season at Dixon Park Nippers this year, and remember: FUN, SAFETY, TEAMWORK!!!