



MRS LC Handbook

Club Handbook

Margaret River Surf Life Saving Club

Updated August 2021



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Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to the Margaret River Surf Life Saving Club. The club's goals are to build on both adult and junior participation in surf sports, lifesaving and the social fabric of the club, whilst continuing to raise the standard of our training and education around lifesaving activities.

Surf Life Saving is Australia's major water safety, drowning prevention and rescue authority and is the largest volunteer organisation in Australia. Our movement is a part of the history, framework, future and culture of this country. Surf Life Saving protects life, saves life and promotes the value of life.

We create a safe environment on, and around, our beaches through patrols and education and training programs—promoting a 'can do' attitude to life.

We hope you and your family will be active and enjoy the benefits of being members of this great club. If at any time throughout the season you have a question, please feel free to approach any member of the board listed [on the website](#).



Mission. Vision and Values

Mission

Margaret River Surf Life Saving Club share's Surf Life Saving Australia's (SLSA) mission to save lives, personnel development and build better communities. Specifically, it is the Club's mission to be a respected, locally run club, providing lifesaving services and skills based at Gnarabup and servicing surrounding areas.

The ERT (emergency response team) group provide a jet ski fast response service that is integrated with the police, ambulance, professional lifeguards and SES services. This is supplemented with IRB team and craft-based personnel that provide water safety services for large scale events in the cape-to-cape region including the Busselton Jetty Swim, Triathlon Ironman and Half Ironman and Adventure races. Water safety services are also supplied for local events such as Nipper training and the Gnarabup Swim. The club provides trained personnel for professional lifeguard positions to service the demand in the cape-to-cape region over the summer period on the many beaches in the region. The local ocean conditions are some of the most challenging in the world and lifesavers trained in this area will be highly competent and will be able to operate anywhere in the world.

Vision

The Club's vision is to provide a club where its members can obtain essential first aid, water and beach safety skills that will be beneficial to the entire community and its tourists. The core values underpinning the club's operations are a commitment to activities that are positive, inspirational, caring, and inclusive.

Club Values

- Excellence in everything we do
- Communicate and involve all our stakeholders effectively
- Respect and value all individuals
- Encourage innovation and creativity
- To operate as a team
- Foster family values and a sense of belonging.

Objectives

- Provide a safer Margaret River.
- Create a positive Club environment.
- Provide social, recreational and sporting opportunities
- Positive engagement with the wider community
- Membership growth
- Organisational sustainability

Committee Structure

The management of the club is made up six directors and two accessory directors. Each director performs a role within the club. The current directors and their roles are on listed on this [website link](#).



Registration & Fees

*MEMBERSHIP IS DUE AND PAYABLE BY THE FIRST DAY OF THE SEASON.

Membership Categories

Becoming a member of the Margaret River Surf Lifesaving Club is, we hope, the beginning of an enjoyable journey as a part of an iconic Australian movement. We value our members and have a membership structure that is designed to reflect ways of engaging with the club.

Junior/ Woodside Nipper members cannot join the club on their own. Membership rules specify that at least one parent or guardian become a member along with their child. Please also note that when registering, children under 18 years that intend to compete, will need to provide proof of age (Birth Certificate or Passport).

Most of our members sign up under the **Family** category, whereby both parent's kids obtain membership.

We are also seeking to recruit **Active** members that permit them to provide water safety and patrol. This membership category is the 'life blood' of the club as we strive to fulfil one of the pillars of the movement as Surf Lifesavers.

Surf Lifesaving attracts many supporters and has many members that look upon their membership fee as a means of ensuring sustainable club operations.

Regardless of your membership category we ask that you volunteer 10 hours over the course of the season. There are a variety of ways to help such as: cooking the BBQ, serving food and drinks, set-up and pack-away. Please offer to help, don't wait to be asked.

Membership categories and their fees are [on this link](#).



Member Information Protection

SLSWA has a member information protection policy, which establishes how members should be safe from harm, harassment, bullying or sexual abuse. MRSLC, in the interest of the safety of all members, has adopted this policy in full and, as such, employs a 'Zero Tolerance' approach, whereby, any volunteer that can and may be in contact with a child, is required to undertake a Working with Children check (WWC). Parent exemptions do apply, where a member's child (under 18) is also a club member.

To make understanding the policy as simple as possible, any member, over the age of 18, who is either an Active or Community member, without a child / child who hold a Club membership, should complete a WWC check and provide proof of this to the registrar. It is not a complex application to make, and a club officer is authorised to sign the application, which needs to be lodged at the post office, along with a 100-point identity check. In order to take any part in the clubs' weekly activities, we will need either a WWC authority or proof that an application has been lodged.

We cannot stress how highly we value your adherence to this policy; it underpins our values and ensures we are creating a safe and nurturing environment for our young members.

The [Member Protection Information Officer](#) will seek to resolve any issue raised or relay it to the appropriate person or authority. All information will be treated with confidentiality and will not be passed to a third party unless member consent is provided.

Working With Children's Card

To help safeguard all of our younger members in our club. All volunteers who do not have a child registered with the Woodside Nipper Program are required to have a current Working with Childrens Card. The card number also needs to be recorded with Surf Lifesaving Australia through the Surfguard system.

Application forms can be obtained through the club or from our club administrator - Kyann Costar. The cost of the Card for volunteers is \$13 and the cost of the card will be reimbursed by the club with receipt of application lodged.



Woodside Nippers Aims and Objectives

The aims of the Margaret River SLSC Junior Program are to:

- Develop surf awareness
- Increase confidence and skills in beach-related activities
- Offer training to those wanting to pursue competition or awards
- Encourage enjoyable and healthy participation
- Progress the members towards surf awards for relevant age groups
- Promote a positive non-threatening environment

Age Groups

Age groups are set by SLSWA with all clubs sharing a common age group cut-off being 30th September, which determines the age group in which a child will participate throughout the season, regardless of having a birthday during the season. Where a child wishes to remain with a group of friends of a similar age, they will be able to join that age group, but must compete in the age group of their birth year.

Coloured caps are used to identify the age groups and must be worn while involved in activities and training sessions. The caps are designed to:

- Help identify our nippers in the surf for their safety.
- Easy organisation and tracking of participants.
- Help familiarise members with wearing a cap, which they will when competing or patrolling.

Please remember, for safety reasons—NO CAP, NO Woodside NIPPERS.

Group	Cap Colour
Under 6	Pink
Under 7	White
Under 8	Yellow
Under 9	Green
Under 10	Light Blue
Under 11	Purple
Under 12	Dark Blue
Under 13	Red

An age group cap will be provided to each child along with the Woodside Nippers pack once membership payment has been received. This cap must be worn at all surf events. Children are unable to participate in any activities without a cap.



Evaluation and Participation

SLSWA requires nipper participants to demonstrate proficiency within 2 weeks of commencement with club activities. This is intended to show a base level of competency before they are permitted to enter the ocean. This is generally done at the first event of the season at the Margaret River Swimming Pool.

Nippers from Under 8 and above, are required to meet a minimum level, as follows:

Age	Preliminary Evaluation	Competition Evaluation
Under 6	From a standing position in waist deep water, perform a front glide and recover to a secure position. Perform a back or front float holding a buoyant aid and recover to a secure position.	Not Applicable
Under 7	From a standing position in waist deep water, perform a front glide, kick for 3m and recover to a secure position. Perform a back or front float for a few seconds and recover to a secure position.	Not Applicable
Under 8	25 metre swim (any stroke) 1 minute survival float	Minimum 100m open water swim in 9 minutes
Under 9	25 metre swim (any stroke) 1 minute survival float	Minimum 100m open water swim in 8 minutes - <i>Under 10 Team Events ONLY.</i>
Under 10	25 metre swim (freestyle) 1.5 minute survival float	Minimum 150m open water swim in less than 12 minutes
Under 11	50 metre swim (freestyle) 2 minute survival float	Minimum 288m open water swim (competition course as stated in competition manual) in less than 9 minutes.
Under 12	100 metre swim (freestyle) 2 minute survival float	Minimum 288m open water swim (competition course as stated in competition manual) in less than 9 minutes.
Under 13	150 metre swim (freestyle) 3 minute survival float	Minimum 288m open water swim (competition course as stated in competition manual) in less than 9 minutes.

* **State Carnival** competitors will need to have completed a timed swim to be eligible. (This does not include club or local area carnivals). The open water swim will approximate a competition swim course.

Competitors for beach events only, do not need to have completed the timed swim.



General Information

What to bring

Please supply these items on Sunday activity days

- Age group cap and high visibility Woodside vest.
- Bathers
- Hat
- Rash vest
- Towel
- Water bottle
- Sun safe warm clothing or wetsuit

We do have club apparel available for purchase along with a limited range of merchandise.

Jewellery and Valuables

For safety and to avoid loss, rings, watches, necklaces, (except medic alert bracelet) are not encouraged. Age Group Managers will not be liable for any lost items.

Toilets

Public toilets are available at the White Elephant Cafe. Children wanting to use these toilets during club activities must be accompanied by a parent and must notify their Age Group Manager.

Parental Responsibilities

- Please be punctual
- Label your child's clothing and belongings.
- Encourage your child's group throughout activities, assist the Age Group Manager, where you can.
- Never leave the beach without your child. It is a club requirement that, a parent or guardian will always be on the beach, during club activities.
- We also ask you to volunteer 10 hours over the course of the season. There are a variety of ways to help such as: cooking the BBQ, serving food and drinks, set-up and pack-away. Without your help our club cannot operate!



Sunday Morning Activities

Club activities take place at Gnarabup Beach on Sunday mornings from 8.45 am. Younger age groups conclude around 10.30 and older age groups around 11am. From 10.45am onwards, cadets and adults are encouraged to take part in 'open' events. The Nipper activity days are generally held from early October to mid-December and then commence again in February to the end of March. State and National competitions are held in late February to Early April. The Country Carnival is held on Australia day weekend. All dates for the season are listed on the [club calendar](#) at the commencement of the season.

Parents that can commit to a role as an Age group manager at the start of the season should please forward their details to nippers@margssurf.com. Two age group managers are generally allocated to an age group at the commencement of the season so they can cover for each other. 12-14 age group managers are required for each season. Nipper numbers are between 60-80 dependent on weather and time of the year.

Age group manger training is generally held at the commencement of the season which is a 4 hour event. A curriculum is supplied to each manager at the start of the season, and this can be delivered dependent on weather conditions over the season with the help of the Nipper Manager and Safety personnel.

Parents that are confident in the water are required for water safety in near shore conditions. At the start of the season Nipper Certificate training will be conducted which requires a brief theory test and a physical test. This is held at the start of the season and generally takes one hour to complete. The reading material [is on this link](#). 12 Nipper certificate

At the beginning and end of Woodside nipper activity days numbers of nippers are recorded.

Age Group Managers need to account for every child and need to be informed if you are leaving early. Surf club activities fall into the following:

- Water based - Swimming, wading, board paddling, rescue techniques
- Beach based - Running and flag races
- Surf and lifesaving skills, education and awareness

Club Swim

The club swim is a social swim, in which all parents and juniors are encouraged to participate. We encourage you all to come prepared to 'have a go' and have a wide range of equipment suitable for adults to be able to stay fit, develop or maintain skills in the ocean.

Barbeque

Sunday activities often conclude with a sausage sizzle and other refreshments available for purchase. We encourage you to use this time, whilst your children are socialising, to do the same! Each week the parents of an age group will be asked to assist with the cooking / service of the BBQ.



Equipment Clean-Up

At the end of the morning session, we ask that each age group be responsible for the return of equipment for loading onto trailers. Training and competition equipment is expensive. It is important that these items and all other gear and equipment is handled and cared for correctly. Boards should be carried, not dragged, and should be laid fin up on the sand.

Water Safety

The safety of our members is the highest priority for the club. Surf lifesaving encourages participants to become familiar with and confident in hazardous conditions. This may require juniors to conquer their fear in challenging conditions.

To facilitate this training and education we require an appropriate number of award carrying members and parents with a Nipper Safety Certificate to provide water safety. Age Group Managers will need to ensure this is in place for water activities to proceed. The lifesaving officer on duty for the day will coordinate water safety personnel for activities.

Woodside Nipper Awards

Children in each age group are eligible to complete a surf education award. Once a child has met the preliminary swim and float criteria, they can start learning practical surf skills and the theory behind first aid and surf lifesaving practices.

This is a structured program culminating in the Surf Rescue Certificate, which can be completed at age 13 and the Bronze Medallion at age 15. The program is a season-long process, and to complete it satisfactorily the nipper will need to attend at least 50% of Club Sundays during the season. Practical skills and knowledge are tested by the age group manager to sign off on the relevant surf education award.

Age Group	Surf Education Award
Under 6	Surf Play 1
Under 7	Surf Play 2
Under 8	Surf Awareness 1
Under 9	Surf Awareness 2
Under 10	Surf Safety 1
Under 11	Surf Safety 2
Under 12	Surf Smart 1
Under 13	Surf Smart 2
Under 14+	Surf Rescue Certificate



Code of Conduct

Woodside Nippers and their parents should read and discuss the Code of Conduct together:

- Compete within the conditions and rules of the Club as stated.
- Never argue with the Coach's, Beach Official's or Water Safety Officer's decision(s).
- Listen and observe all instructions from my Age Manager(s).
- Work equally hard for the Club and myself, the Club's performance will benefit as will my own.
- Be a good sport. Cheer all good performances whether our club's or that of other clubs.
- Always act in a responsible and sensible manner, when representing our Club.
- Remember the goal of Nippers is to have fun, improve lifesaving skills and feel good.
- Co-operate with the coach, teammates and officials, for without them, we cannot compete.
- Have Fun!!!
-



Local & SLSWA Carnivals

Margaret River SLSC encourages and supports its members wanting to compete at Local, State and National carnivals. We also encourage our members to enjoy surf sports socially and there is no expectation that anybody participating in surf sports will go on to compete. For those that do wish to, we aim to support you to the best of our ability.

Please forward your interest to lifesaving@margssurf.com for senior members and nippers@margssurf.com for junior competitions.

Intra club competition

Club Championship

The club championship competition to determine the age group champions is generally held over two days at the end of the season. This allows the Woodside Nippers to show the skills they have learned over the season.

Male and Female age group championship points are determined to determine the Champion in each age group. Competition is for all age groups from U8 and above. Children may only compete in an age group as specified by SLSWA.

Competitors in the first four places will be awarded points as per below, along with a point for participation:

Position	Points
1 st Place	10 points
2 nd Place	7 points
3 rd Place	5 points
4 th Place	3 points
Participation	1 point

Championship points from the two competition days will be accumulated and totalled after the last round. First and second place winners, male and female, from each age group, U8 to U13, will receive a trophy or medallion respectively, provided they meet the required 50% of club day attendance throughout the season and have attended a minimum of two competition days.

The carnival rounds will consist of the following individual, male and female events:

- Surf Race (Swim) *
- Board Race *
- Beach Sprint
- Flag Race
- Iron Man (under 11 and above)

*The swim and board events are modified for the younger age groups.



Club Marathon

On the last day of the season an overall club marathon is held. All nippers are allocated a handicap and the first person over the line wins.

Interclub Carnivals

In the southwest there are generally three Interclub Carnivals a season which include the Busselton, Margaret River and Smiths Beach clubs. These carnivals are informal and allow nippers to get a taste of what is required in a competitive environment with other clubs. If they are comfortable with this, then they can go on and compete on a state level.

SLSWA hosted Carnivals

Junior members from U8 to U14 age groups can compete against children from other clubs at Junior Interclub Carnivals. U8s and U9s compete in 'Little Nippers' whilst the older age groups compete in 'Nipper' events. There are typically three metropolitan carnivals and one country carnival throughout the season, culminating with the State Championships, held in March.

Adult and young adult members, from U14s to Master may compete in up to five rounds, including the Country round and similarly, the season culminates with the Master, Country Club and State Championships, also in March. SLSWA has also introduced the Surf League, now in its second year, which is a team based 'open' age group event.

The club can help our members navigate the carnival program and understand what events they can nominate for and assist with the process. Entries must be done through the Club admin, so please get in touch if you wish to compete.

SLSWA carnivals contain both individual and team events. The team events are a good way to get a taste for a carnival and include:

- Surf Teams (Swim)
- Board Rescue
- Sprint Relays
- Cameron Relays
- Wade Relays (Little Nippers)

Competition Requirements

To compete in SLSWA carnivals, competitors are required to have the following items

- MRS LC Club competition cap
- Club branded bathers or black bathers
- Long-sleeved shirt or long-sleeved rash vest
- Broad brimmed hat or peaked cap
- Sun screen
- Competition vest

Water Safety

Clubs are expected to provide water safety at carnivals, requiring at a minimum either the Surf Rescue Certificate (SRC) or Bronze Medallion (BM).



Competition Officials

To participate in SLSA Carnivals, each club is required to provide one competition official for every ten juniors competing. Club officials are critical to running of SLSA carnivals. Training will be provided for Official Accreditation.

SLSWA Members Insurance Information

Participating in lifesaving activity can be risky and sometimes hazardous. During times where members are unfortunately injured during participation in authorised activities, SLSWA maintains a Personal Accident Insurance policy on behalf of members.

The purpose of the policy is to offset some of the losses a member may suffer as a result of being injured. Losses can be medical costs relating to treatment and rehabilitation, or loss of income as a result of not being able to complete occupational duties for an extended period of time. However, not unlike private health insurance SLSWA Personal Accident Policy does not provide members with 100% coverage on the potential losses and SLSWA and Clubs are unable to cover these gaps on behalf of members. Federal legislation prevents this type of payment or intervention.

As an organisation, we have a strong partnership and are generously funded by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) but are not an agency of them. As a result, we are not afforded the opportunity to be covered by Risk Cover in the same way that other volunteer member emergency service organisations, who are agencies of DFES.

The Personal Accident Policy maintained on behalf of SLSWA members is the best SLSWA can purchase on the open market. SLSWA highly recommends that members take out private health insurance and consider their personal situation, such as additional insurances, like income protection prior to undertaking authorised activities with the Club or SLSWA.

For further information regarding member Personal Accident, visit [this link](#) or contact Corporate Services on 08 9207 6666.



Awards and Qualifications

Parents can assist in club activities on the beach. To provide water safety, they will need to obtain an award. The minimum requirement is a Nipper water certificate which can be completed at the start of the season before the start of the Nipper training. Training is provided free of charge as part of your club membership. Please lodge your interest with the [lifesaving officer](#).

Members wishing to obtain a qualification should register their interest with the education [officer or president](#).

Provide First Aid - This is a good background for further training.

Nipper Rescue Certificate - NRC, for parents confident up to shoulder height, in heavy conditions.

Surf Rescue Certificate - SRC, nationally recognised award covering rescue, first aid, resuscitation. The Surf Rescue Certificate enables the member to become part of an active beach patrol.

Bronze Medallion - BM, like the above, but taking on additional skills with radio communications and demonstrating a higher level of competency. The Bronze Medallion provides a pathway to obtain other higher awards such as IRB Crew or Driver, Silver and Gold Medallions, Advanced First Aid, Advanced Resuscitation and Spinal Management—to name a few.

Club By-Laws

The following By-laws are intended to ensure activities are undertaken in a safe, fair manner and in keeping with the club's objectives. The [By Laws are listed in the club website](#).

Sponsorship and Fundraising

The club is hugely grateful to its donors and supporters, made up by local government, community organisations, businesses, and individuals. This support allows the club to run effective programs and deliver the four pillars of the movement, namely, Surf Lifesaving, Education and Training, Surf Sports and Community Development. To our supporters, we say a huge 'thank you!!'

If you would like to support the club, we'd love to hear from you. We believe that we can offer value back to our supporters in many ways. To discuss this opportunity please contact president@margssurf.com If you have ideas or suggestions that you think would help, please don't hesitate to get in touch.



Contact Information

General enquiries

Email: media@margssurf.com

Address: P.O Box 1066 Margaret River 6285 Western Australia

Equipment Shed: Lot 300 Walcliffe Road Gnarabup

Phone: 0402517590

Website and Social Media

Website: <https://margssurf.com> is home to a wealth of information regarding the MRSLS club. Please ensure you check the [calendar page regularly](#) for upcoming events.

The [Facebook page](#) and [Instagram Page](#) is an easy way to stay informed, so please 'like' our pages to stay in touch. We'd love you to contribute to telling our story, please share your pictures and stories with us. Send pictures and stories through to media@margssurf.com.

Social Activities

Social get togethers help develop the 'family' atmosphere that is at the heart of every surf club and a great way to get juniors and parents together. Social activities will be coordinated in both the on and off season and everybody is welcome.