

NPTCBC Water Safety
Programme with support
from RLSS UK

Water Safety Programme – with support of RLSS UK

We are working in collaboration with the RLSS UK to deliver the Water Smart Schools programme, a free, award-winning water safety initiative specifically designed for primary schools.

At the core of the programme is a PSHE Health and Wellbeing curriculum-based approach. Through structured, age appropriate water safety lessons, pupils develop essential knowledge, skills, and understanding to help them stay safe around water, make informed decisions, and show responsible behaviour.

The lessons encourage collaborative learning, stimulate pupil inquiry, and create opportunities for whole-school involvement, including School Councils, parents, carers, and the wider community. The adaptable, classroom-ready materials are designed to support sustained learning, rather than one-off safety messages.

Why This Matters

RLSS UK's Child Drowning Report highlighted a 46% increase in accidental child drowning fatalities in 2022, with 35 children losing their lives tragically equivalent to an entire classroom. This programme helps address these risks by ensuring primary school aged pupils gain access to vital, potentially life-saving water safety education.

Curriculum Contribution

The Water Smart Schools programme aligns closely with:

- PSE Health and Wellbeing PSHE curriculum aim
- Development of decision-making, awareness, and personal responsibility
- Cross-curricular learning opportunities
- Parent and community engagement

Accreditation Pathway

Primary schools can work towards RLSS UK Water Smart School accreditation, progressing at a pace that suits them:

- **Bronze** – Introduction to water safety and delivery of core lessons fully aligned to the Water Safety Code.'
- **Silver** – Increased pupil leadership, wider school involvement, and extended activities
- **Gold** – A sustained whole-school and community approach demonstrating long-term impact

Accreditation is awarded at bronze, silver, or gold level, with each award valid for two years, supporting schools to continually develop and strengthen water safety education.

Achieving RLSS UK Water Safety Smart Status in Schools – Accreditation Levels

Bronze Level-

- ✓ Whole school involvement – initially through a whole school assembly (provided), delivered by volunteers, Student teachers or teaching staff
- ✓ Delivery of Health & Wellbeing based water safety lessons as a minimum, in line with stated objectives
- ✓ Monitoring - pre and post levels of knowledge and understanding recorded
- ✓ Field trip (either teacher-driven at a local body of water, or to a partner organisation such as Canal and River Trust or similar to give context to the educational experience
- ✓ Parental / wider community involvement
- ✓ Awareness and delivery of First Aid education, appropriate to Key Stage objectives (at Primary level, this is likely to mean teaching about calling 999 and knowing what to say)
- ✓ Commitment to engage with RLSS UK's Drowning Prevention Week
- ✓ Commitment by school to administer programme in a sustainable manner after accreditation
- Dedication to participating in the school's swimming program

Silver Level-

- ✓ Whole school involvement – initially through a whole school assembly (provided), delivered by volunteers, Student teachers or teaching staff
- ✓ Delivery of Health & Wellbeing water safety lessons as a minimum, in line with stated objectives
- ✓ Monitoring - pre and post levels of knowledge and understanding recorded
- ✓ Field trip (either teacher-driven at a local body of water, or to a partner organisation such as Canal and River Trust or similar to give context to the educational experience
- ✓ Parental / wider community involvement
- ✓ Awareness and delivery of First Aid education, appropriate to Key Stage objectives (at Primary level, this is likely to mean teaching about calling 999 and knowing what to say)
- ✓ Commitment to engage with RLSS UK's Drowning Prevention Week

- ✓ Commitment by school to administer programme in a sustainable manner after accreditation
- ✓ Dedication to participating in the school's swimming program

In addition, to achieve Silver you need:

- ✓ School Council /peer learning or involvement

Gold Level-

- ✓ Whole school involvement – initially through a whole school assembly (provided), delivered by volunteers, Student teachers or teaching staff
- ✓ Delivery of Health & Safety lessons as a minimum, in line with stated objectives
- ✓ Monitoring - pre and post levels of knowledge and understanding recorded
- ✓ Field trip (either teacher-driven at a local body of water, or to a partner organisation such Canal and River Trust or similar as to give context to the educational experience
- ✓ Parental / wider community involvement
- ✓ Awareness and delivery of First Aid education, appropriate to Key Stage objectives (at Primary level, this is likely to mean teaching about calling 999 and knowing what to say)
- ✓ Commitment to engage with RLSS UK's Drowning Prevention Week
- ✓ Commitment by school to administer programme in a sustainable manner after accreditation
- ✓ School Council /peer learning or involvement
- ✓ Dedication to participating in the school's swimming program

In addition, to achieve Gold you need:

- ✓ Link with a local lifesaving and / or Swimming Club
- ✓ Link with **Neath Port Talbot PASS** to create a swimming/lifesaving gala

Our Water Safety Programme **Parent & Guardian Itinerary – What Your Child Will Learn**

Children in Reception to Year 2 will take part in an introductory water safety presentation and practical, age-appropriate activities to help start them on their water safety journey.

The more in-depth six-week water safety sessions will be delivered to Year 3 to Year 6 pupils only, allowing for sustained learning and the development of deeper understanding and skills around staying safe in and around water.

This six-session programme helps children develop lifelong water safety awareness. It focuses on knowledge, decision making, and calm responses, rather than swimming ability. At its core is the Water Safety Code, 4 simple messages, that are designed to guide people's safe participation in, on and around the water and what to do if they or someone else gets in to trouble. The Water Safety Code is delivered across England and Wales by many organisations involved in water safety.

When planning to do something in, on or around the water

Stop and Think

Stay Together

In an emergency:

Float – *If you fall in, Float to Live*

Call 999 – *Phone, Float, Throw*

Session 1: Stop and Think – Planning your Activity

Inland Flags & Water Awareness

Beach Flags & Water Awareness

Recognising water hazards and knowing how to react to them before entering the water

In the first session, children are introduced to the Water Safety Code, with a focus on stopping and thinking before going near water.

Your child will learn:

- That water can be enjoyable but unpredictable
- Why it is important to stop and think before entering water
- The meaning of the four UK beach safety flags (red & yellow – Lifeguard supervised swimming and bodyboard area, red – Danger do not enter water orange windsock – Always check wind direction, Bland and White Quartered rather than chequered - for hard craft such as stand-up paddleboard, surf boards and kayaks Water sports only
- Why swimming between the red and yellow flags is safer
- The importance of following lifeguard advice

Children take part in interactive activities such as colouring and identifying flags, helping them recognise safety messages they may see at the beach or seaside

Session 2: Stop and Think **Stay Together – Dangers in Waterways**

Recognising Hazards in Rivers, Canals, Lakes, and Quarries

This session helps children understand that open water is very different from a swimming pool.

Your child will learn:

- Common dangers found in inland waterways such as:
 - Cold water
 - Strong currents
 - Hidden objects beneath the surface
 - Slippery or unstable banks
- Why many people get into trouble by underestimating the hazard of the water.
- The importance of staying together with friends and adults
- Why jumping into open water is extremely dangerous e.g. from high, bridges, rockfaces, cliffs.

Children practice “spot the dangers” activities using real-life images, learning how to identify risks before something goes wrong.

Session 3: Call 999 – Getting Help in an Emergency **Knowing Who to Call and What to Say**

In this session, children learn that getting help quickly can save lives.

Your child will learn:

- When and how to call 999
- What information emergency services need
- Which emergency service responds to different situations (Coastguard, Fire & Rescue, Police, Ambulance)
- That they should never put themselves in danger to help someone else

Children complete matching activities to reinforce which service is needed in different emergencies, building confidence and understanding.

Session 4: Float to Live Staying Calm in Water

What to Do If You Fall into Water

This session introduces a vital lifesaving concept: Floating – Expanding on the concept of and hazard of cold water and cold-water shock and swim failure (discussing times of year) when open water is likely to warmup.

Your child will learn:

- That falling into water unexpectedly can cause panic – the effects water and cold-water shock might cause you to gasp, hyperventilation and panic
- Why staying calm helps the body float- as it reduces muscle tension and allows for better buoyancy.
- The Physics of Floating
- Floating is primarily governed by the principle of buoyancy, which states that an object will float if it displaces a volume of water equal to its weight. The human body has a density that is nearly equal to that of fresh water, which allows most people to float naturally. However, several factors influence this ability, including body composition, lung capacity, and muscle tension.

Role of Relaxation

- **Muscle Tension:** When your muscles are tense, your body becomes denser and may struggle to float. Relaxing your muscles decreases your overall density, making it easier to stay afloat. A relaxed body position allows for better distribution of buoyancy forces, which helps maintain balance in the water.
- **Breathing:** Proper breathing techniques can also enhance floating. Filling your lungs with air increases buoyancy, as air is less dense than water. When you relax and breathe deeply, your body naturally rises to the surface.
- **Positioning:** Floating on your back with arms and legs extended is generally the most effective position for relaxation and buoyancy. This position minimizes resistance and allows for a more stable floating experience.
- The basic steps of “Float to Live”

Lean back

- 1 -Tilt your head back submerging your ears.
- 2 - Relax and control your breathing.
- 3 - Move your hands and legs to help you stay afloat.
- 4 - Your legs may sink - that's OK everyone floats differently.
- 5 - Practise floating at a supervised location like a swimming pool.
- Spread arms and legs
- Control breathing
- Float until help arrives or they can self rescue

This session is discussion based and reassuring. Children are not expected to demonstrate skills yet only to understand the idea and purpose of floating.

Session 5: Stop and Think -Stay Away from the Edge – Making Safe Choices

Planning Ahead and Taking Responsibility

This session brings learning together and focuses on personal responsibility and preparation.

Your child will:

- Identify items that help keep them safe near water (e.g. phone, telling an adult)
- Learn what is not helpful or safe near water.
- Review key safety messages from previous sessions
- Complete a Water Safety Pledge

Children are encouraged to reflect on how their choices can protect themselves and their friends.

Session 6: Year 6 Pool Visit – Practicing Floating Safely

Applying Learning in a Real but Controlled Environment

The final session will be held at a local swimming pool by Celtic Leisure for **Year 6 Pupils** only. From September 2026, schools participating in swimming with Celtic Leisure, Freedom Leisure, or Afan Valley Swimming will include these sessions as part of their school swimming lessons. Schools that do not offer swimming lessons will have arrangements made for this session.

During this visit, your child will:

- Enter the water safely with trained staff present
- Practise floating in a shallow, controlled area
- Experience how their body can float when calm
- Build confidence using the “Float to Live” technique they have learned about

This session:

- Is not about swimming ability
- Is fully supported, with alternatives for children who feel unsure
- Helps children connect classroom learning to real-life situations.

The pool-based assessment information for sessions with KS2 at **Celtic Leisure**, very similar, those who use **Freedom Leisure** and **Afan Valley Swimming Pool**.

Outcome	Assessment information
Safe self-rescue	Learners must complete the following skills in the order indicated as a continuous activity. This can be completed in normal swimwear. It is recommended for all pupils to have the opportunity to complete the safe self-rescue activities in light clothing. It is strongly recommended that all pupils have opportunity to complete safe self-rescue skills in deep water. All activities must be risk assessed to take into account the environment and the learner.
Fall-in entry and recover to surface	Learners complete a fall in entry without floatation equipment. The learner resurfaces and rotates onto their back to commence a star float.
Float on the back with minimal movement for 60 seconds	Learners complete a star float, without floatation equipment, and with limited movement, without touching the floor or poolside for 60 seconds.
Rotate from a star float on back to a vertical position	Learners move from a star float to a vertical position without touching the pool floor or poolside.
Tread water for 30 seconds, whilst treading water, signal for help, with one arm extended above the head and simultaneously shouting for help	Tread water without floatation equipment for 30 seconds, without touching the side or bottom of the pool. The mouth remains clear of the water and body position vertical. Signal for help at least once; a controlled movement of the arm to extend it above the head and simultaneously shout for help followed by a controlled lowering of the arm.
Swim 15m to a floating object, using a recognised personal survival stroke (head up long arm front paddle or lifesaving backstroke)	Learners swim 15m without floatation equipment and without touching the side or bottom of the pool. The learners' stroke must be as strong at the end of the swim as it was at the start. The stroke must be suitable for use in a survival situation, for example head up long arm front paddle, side stroke or lifesaving backstroke. Upon completion of the 15m swim, learners retain the floating object by holding onto it and commence the Heat Escape Lessening Position/Posture (HELP).
Retaining the floating object take up the Heat Escape Lessening Position/posture for a minimum 30 seconds	Learners to hold a floating object. Learners draw the knees up to the chest with legs pressed together. The head should stay clear of the water. Arms should be held close to the upper body.

Form the huddle position as a group for 30 seconds	Learners to go into the huddle position for 30 seconds.
Swim 15m to exit the water unaided	Swim 15m without floatation equipment using a survival stroke for example head up long arm front paddle, side stroke or lifesaving backstroke to the side of the pool and climb out of the pool without the use of steps.

By the End of the Programme, Children Will Have:

- A clear understanding of water safety **Water Safety Code**
- The ability to recognise dangerous situation and prepare / react accordingly in order to keep safe.
- Knowledge of how to get help in an emergency
- Confidence in knowing how to react calmly if they enter water unexpectedly



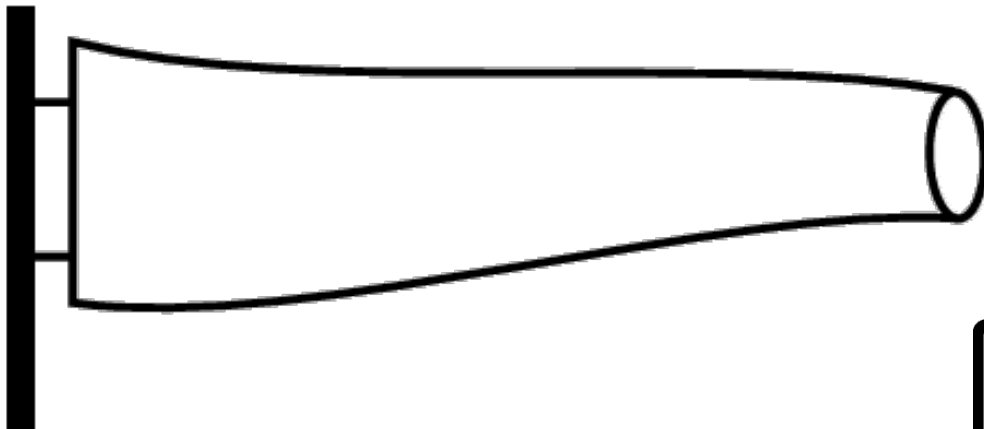
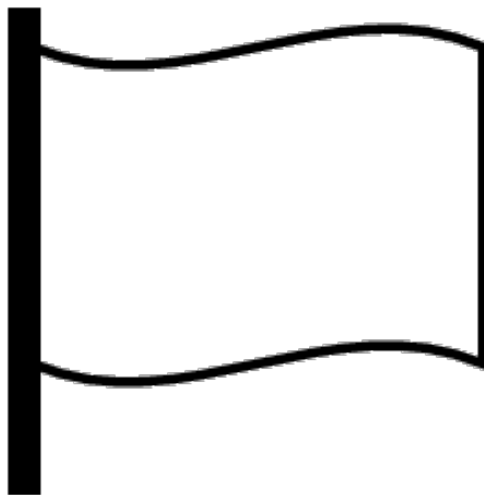
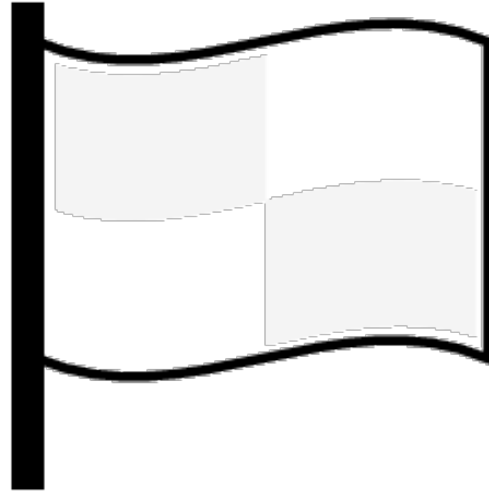
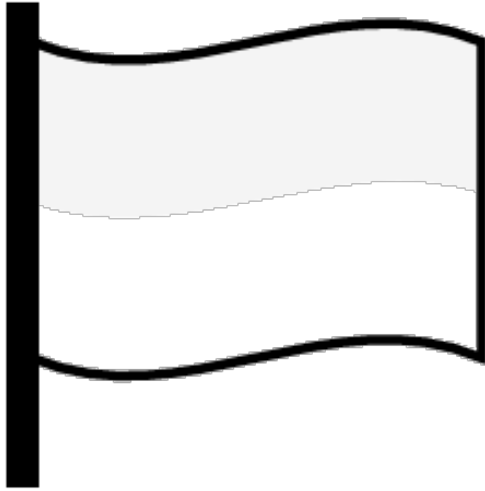
Parents and guardians – please scan the QR code. We’d love to hear from you!

Session One: Stop and Think

Below are the signs usually found inland



Below are the four flags usually found at the beach



<https://youtu.be/zwzB7So7jSM>



Water Safety at the Beach

WORDSEARCH



BEACH Water Safety Advice

SWIM at lifeguarded lakes

READ safety signs at the entrance to the beach

LEARN the meanings of the lifeguard flags

CHECK if the tide is coming in or out and make sure you won't be cut off from the beach exit



Why not share your pieces of art with us?
Simply post with #enjoywatersafely.





 @rlssuk

E S T M S E A G U L L J P
 W D S G A L F R M O S R U
 O X W U P T U O Y L M E A
 C L I F F S H G E S A W O
 P I N F L A T A B L E C R
 V F D E G C I R O W R D C
 T E Q A I D S Z A J C N U
 Y G S N U N H A T P E I R
 R U K S P A D E S H C K R
 O A W I J S C W T K I L E
 E R O C K S Y D O E G Y N
 C D M U T A O L F X U R T
 I S U N C R E A M P T S A

Can you find all these words in the grid?

SAND CASTLE BOATS INFLATABLE
 FLAGS SEAGULL CURRENT
 ROCKS CLIFF HAT
 LIFEGUARDS SUN CREAM
 ICE CREAM SPADE
 FLOAT WIND

MATCH the flags with the meaning



No Swimming



Always check wind direction and when pointed offshore, avoid using inflatables



Water sports only



Safe area to swim



Session Two: Stay Together

Below is an example of a local water way in Aberavon Port Talbot, can you identify the 8 possible dangers.

How many can you find? Please circle them



Session Two: Stay Together

Below is an example of a local water way at the Gnoll Country Park Neath, can you identify the 6 possible dangers.

How many can you find? Please circle them



Please scan the QR Code:

Try this activity at home with someone in your family – how many water dangers can you identify?

<https://www.flickr.com/groups/14934743@N21/>

ALWAYS FOLLOW THE WATER SAFETY CODE



Whenever you are around water:

STOP AND THINK

Take time to assess
your surroundings.

Look for the
dangers and
always research
local signs and advice.



STAY TOGETHER

When around water always go
with friends or family.

Swim at a lifeguarded venue.



In an emergency:

CALL 999

If you are at the
coast, call 999 and
ask for the
Coastguard.

Don't enter
the water to
rescue.



FLOAT

Fall in or become
tired - stay calm, float
on your back and call
for help.

Throw something that
floats to somebody that
has fallen in.



Enjoy Water **Safely**

Learn basic lifesaving and CPR skills.
Visit www.rlss.org.uk

Session Three: Call 999

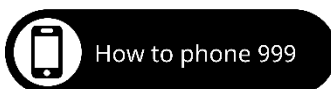
What is your emergency: using Table A draw a line linking to table B

Table A

Support Services
Water based incident in the sea
Water based incident not in the sea
Domestic incident
Mountain Incident
Roadside Crash
Fire
Heart Attack (medical incident)
Assault – (fight)
Antisocial behaviour

Table B

The Main Four Services
Police
Fire & Rescue
Coastguard
Ambulance



Session Four - Float to Survive

Quiz Time!

1. Narinder is going bodyboarding. What should she do? (Tick 4)

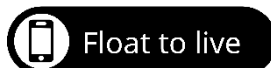
- Bodyboard between the red and yellow flags
- Wear a swimming hat
- Head to an area with the biggest waves
- Wear her bodyboard leash
- Go with a friend and stay together
- Check her board for damage before using it

2. Harry is going out on a boat. How can he stay safe? (Tick 3)

- Bring his fishing net to collect creatures
- Wear a lifejacket
- Make sure someone has a mobile phone
- Learn how to tie a sailor's knot
- Stay sitting while the boat is moving
- Bring good tunes on his phone

3. Emily is going canoeing. What should she do? (Tick 3)

- Wear a lifejacket or buoyancy aid
- Take a mobile phone in a waterproof pouch
- Take a selfie stick
- Wear really thick socks
- Ask her dad to check the weather before going
- Take her swimming goggles



Session Five: Stay Away from the Edge:

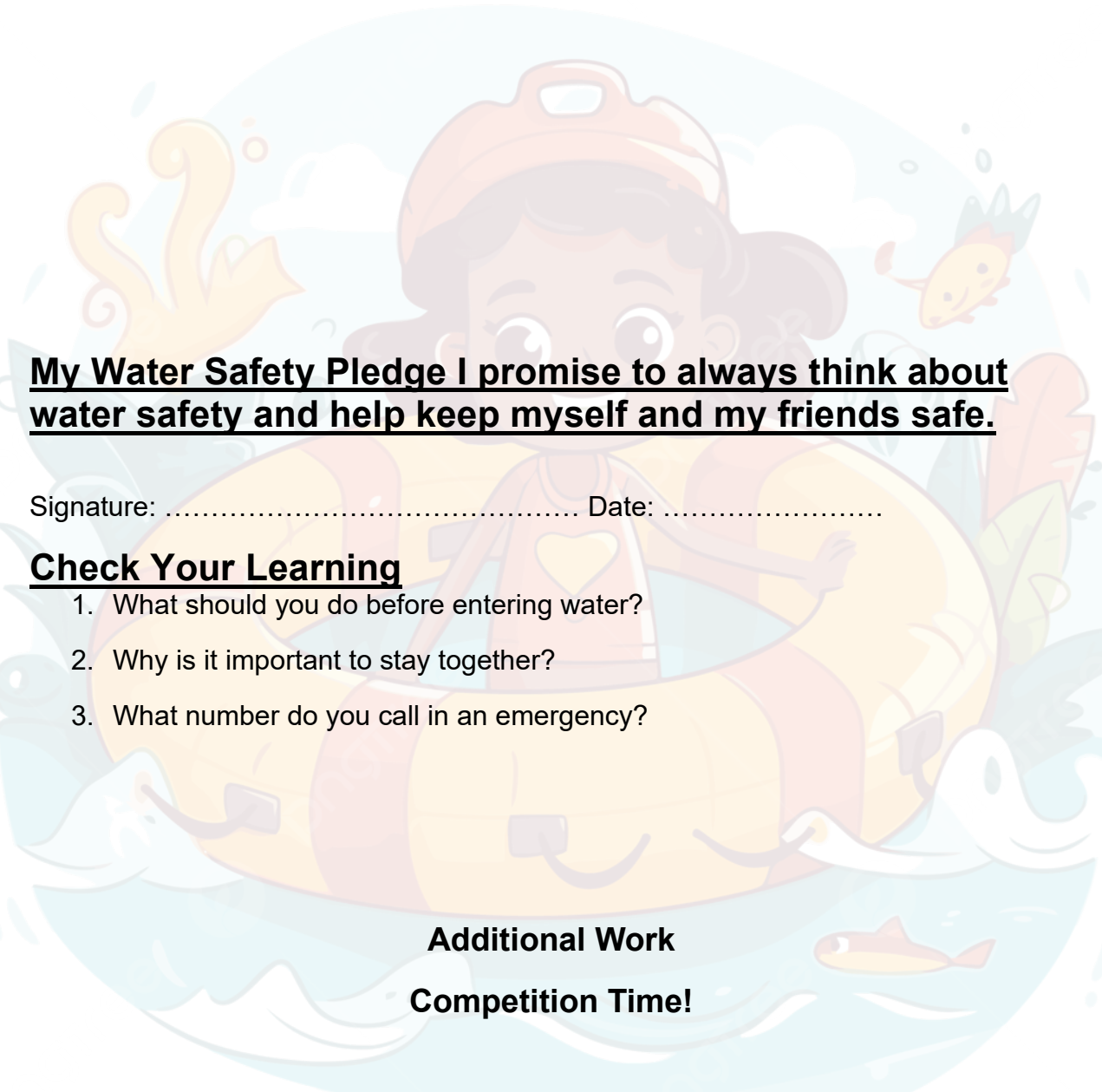
Below is a list of items you might consider if you are going out with friends and you'll be around water:

Mobile Phone – Tea Pot – **Fishing Rod** – Ball – **Towel** – Computer – **Sunglasses** – Sausage Roll – **High Heel Shoes** – Hammer – **Tell an adult** – Drink – **Snacks** – Knowledge of where you are going – **School Homework** –

From the list above, write down the things that are of **NO USE to you** to keep yourself safe:

From the list above, write down the things that you would do **to keep yourself safe:**





My Water Safety Pledge I promise to always think about water safety and help keep myself and my friends safe.

Signature: Date:

Check Your Learning

1. What should you do before entering water?
2. Why is it important to stay together?
3. What number do you call in an emergency?

**Additional Work
Competition Time!**

We would like you to design a poster that raises awareness about staying safe in on and around water This should be based on what you have learned during the water safety sessions, including rivers, canals, beaches and other open water.

The poster should include:

- A clear safety message

- Pictures or drawings showing water dangers
- Simple advice on how to stay safe

You can be as creative as you like, using colour, words and images to help your message stand out.

Prize: The winning poster will receive an **Prize** (*this is a cluster-based project*)

Good luck – and remember, your poster could help keep others safe around water!

