



PIHA SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB INC.

# PIHANIPPERS

nippers@pihaslsc.com



INFORMATION HANDBOOK

---

Welcome to Piha Junior Surf.

This handbook contains much of the information you will need to know as a parent of a Tadpole or Nipper to make this a successful season. Please have a look through and if you have any further questions feel free to ask me, your child's coach or their group coordinator. We are here to help.

Piha SLSC Junior Surf Coordinator.





PIHA SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB INC.

## BEING PART OF PIHA SLSC

Piha Surf Life Saving Club's mission is to keep Piha beach safe. It has 150 lifeguards who patrol one of the most rugged beaches on the west coast. By joining Piha's Junior Surf programme you and your kids are ensuring the life of the Club and that the beach will continue to be a safe place to have fun with the family.

Along with the Lifeguards and Junior Surf there are many other aspects of the Club; we have a highly successful senior competition squad and a strong surf boat squad. There are opportunities for our young guards (14 –18 yr olds) to take part fantastic courses through SLSNZ and to be part of an exchange to Huntington Beach, California every 3 years.

As a member of the Club you are welcome to use the Club facilities and the Club kitchen is open for lunch and dinner during the summer.



---

## HAVING FUN AND STAYING SAFE AT THE BEACH

Piha Surf Life Saving offers many opportunities to its members and their families. Our Junior Surf programme, or 'Nippers' is a great opportunity for families to become involved in surf lifesaving. More importantly however, Nippers teaches kids how they can keep themselves and their friends safe at the beach while having a heap of fun along the way.

Our Junior Surf programme enables the kids to learn about being 'surf smart' and gives them the chance to pursue a sport which covers both land and water activities. Our Surf Lifesaving education teaches Nippers everything they need to know to be a young surf lifesaver, starting with surf awareness and learning about rips. Surf sport exists to allow surf lifesavers to practise and test their skills against each other and to ensure that our patrolling lifesavers can maintain their fitness for patrols. Surf sports also allow our young surf lifesavers to develop their lifesaving skills such as board paddling and catching waves. And just like their older club mates, they are given the opportunity to compete against their friends in a fun, safe and friendly atmosphere.

While Nippers teaches everything there is to know about being a young surf lifesaver, we also focus our efforts to teach our members the importance of being a team player and improving their self confidence. It is very important to have young members who are positive leaders and play fairly.

---

## PARENTS (YOUR INVOLVEMENT)

Parents play a huge role in Junior Surf. Piha encourages all parents to take the opportunity to become active contributors to the Nipper programme. Your help during training sessions is always required and appreciated by the coaches whether setting up equipment, cleaning and packing away the gear, helping on the beach or being involved in the water.

Parent involvement is also crucial when it comes to attending surf carnivals. Whether it be as a water helper/official or putting up the tent and cooking sausages on the BBQ – we need you.

The Club and Nippers rely on sponsors and fundraising to provide equipment. Everyone is expected to get involved with fundraising and any new fundraising ideas are welcomed!

If you have a talent we are sure we can use it! There are so many different facets to running Junior Surf, if you have some time available or have a great idea please contact the Junior Surf Coordinator. Thanks.

---

## HOUSEKEEPING

On a Sunday we are welcome to use all the facilities in the Club so it is our responsibility to keep the Club clean and tidy after use. Please get the kids to use the back door (near the gear sheds) if going in and out to the toilets or when going to get changed. Rinse feet before heading inside and no wet clothing or wetsuits upstairs.

If the kids are using the showers please keep them short. Better they rinse off quickly in the sea or outside shower by the gear shed and then get changed in the warm changing rooms.

We have a tidy-up roster. Each week one group – A, B or C tidies up the changing rooms and entry. We all do this – the coaches, guards, parents and kids. It doesn't take long.

---

## NIPPERS GEAR USAGE AND GUIDELINES

All water equipment used in training and at the carnivals has been bought by Piha SLSC for use by its members. It has been bought with money raised by club members through fundraising events, sponsorship and grants. The Club gear (boards, body boards, tubes) is expensive to purchase and to maintain. Most gear damage is avoidable. Please teach your kids to be careful and to be respectful of the hard work it has taken to get this equipment. This starts from Tadpoles and works through the years, if we teach the kids to look after the gear from day one we will have less to fix. Every dent in a board costs time and money to repair. It is the responsibility of each and every member that this equipment is looked after to ensure its longevity and most importantly its integrity for safety.

**There is a \$25 equipment subsidy for all A, B & C group members.** This is payable to your group coordinator over the first couple of sessions and helps us to repair boards as soon as they are damaged and enables your kids to get the most out of the programme. Please see the JSC if you have any queries over this.

- Boards and equipment can only be used by registered Surf Club members wearing the Club uniform (beanie, hi-vis vest etc).
- The fibreglass boards are labelled for use as competition boards or training boards. Our training boards are to be used at Piha to minimise damage of the competition boards.
- Avoid prolonged exposure in the sun, don't leave boards out in the sun longer than necessary.
- Handle & carry the equipment correctly. **DO NOT** drag boards, including body boards - carry them or if your child cannot handle the board, please carry with/for them.
- Standing on the boards is **NOT** permitted either in the water or on land.
- Use gear in designated areas, not near the rocks or around swimmers.
- Take all precautions necessary when transporting the equipment. If you are putting boards on a roof rack they must have padding and be tied down **CORRECTLY!** Ask for help if unsure.
- When you have finished wash the equipment after use and put it away.
- No gear is to be taken from the club without approval by the JS Equipment Manager.
- If the gear is damaged the board must be removed from the water immediately. Damaged boards can become water logged very quickly and a small fix can become a major problem if left. Any damage to the equipment **must** be reported to the JSEM. All repairs are to be undertaken by a Piha Nippers approved repairer.

---

## UNIFORM

Piha has a shop which sells uniform. Beanies are compulsory. Piha branded swimsuits and trunks are available, if you do not want to buy these please just buy your child black togs. T-shirts, hoodies and merchandise will be available throughout the season.

*Piha branded hi-vis vests are now included in your membership fees and will be allocated at the start of the season after subscriptions are paid. These vests are mandatory for safety reasons.*

---

## NIPPERS GROUPS EXPLAINED

Nippers are divided into age groups, which are calculated as per SLSNZ guidelines on the 30/9/2017:

Born on September 25th of 2007 = B Group aged 10

Born on October 2nd 2007 = A Group aged 9 and so-on.

### **TADPOLES**

#### **5 & 6 year olds**

Fun and games at the beach. With a strong focus on play, Tadpoles will also have a go at body boarding, body surfing and much more, often for the first time in their lives. The basis of team games such as relays will be explored along with other fun activities. A great time for parents new to surf to learn the basics too.

*Requirements for Tadpoles:*

- *Must have a parent/guardian actively participating 100% alongside their child during nipper sessions or the child cannot participate. A club beanie and hi-vis vest must be worn at all times. No other requirements. Parents help coach this group!*

Your team: Coordinator & Coach and U19 Junior Guards

### **A GROUP**

In A Group children can compete at club and inter-club competitions and will receive training in Beach Flags, Beach Sprints, Beach Relays, Run-Wade-Run and Body Board races, then progress to Run-Swim-Run, Board and Diamond races once they have their 200m badge.

#### **7 year olds**

Are encouraged to participate in water games and become more confident in the water, whilst learning about water safety. All 7 years can compete at club and inter-club competitions, if they want to, all water events will only be up to their waist.

#### **8 & 9 year olds**

Throughout the season, skills and questions from the SLSNZ Awards are taught to children in an informal manner. 8s are encouraged to train for their 200m Safety badge while 9 year old children need to achieve their 200m badge to compete in water events at inter-club competitions. Coaches teach paddle board skills, ocean swimming and body surfing skills once they achieve their 200m badges, building on the skills learnt as 7 year olds. Sessions have a higher fitness component and spend more time in the water.

*Requirements for A Group:*

- *7 year olds – a club beanie must be worn at all times and a hi-vis vest must be worn in the water. No other requirements.*
- *8 year olds – a club beanie must be worn at all times and a hi-vis vest must be worn in the water. No other requirements. 8 year olds are encouraged to train for and complete the 200m swim test by the end of the season.*
- *9 year olds – a club beanie must be worn at all times and a hi-vis vest must be worn in the water. 9 year olds are required to complete the 200m swim test (in under 7 minutes followed by 1 minute treading water) in order to compete in water events.*

Your team: Coordinator & Parent Coaches

---

## NIPPERS GROUPS EXPLAINED

### **B GROUP**

#### **10 & 11 year olds**

B Group training builds on the skills taught at A Group level and introduces other skills such as tube rescues and builds on board skills. B Group focus on water activities and it is mandatory that they have achieved their 200m badge at the start of the season otherwise participation is limited. Children have the choice to compete at Carnivals and those keen to train hard and develop their skills may be selected by their coaches to represent Piha at the National U14 Surf Lifesaving Championships.

*Requirements for B Group:*

- *10 year olds – a club beanie must be worn at all times and a hi-vis vest must be worn in the water. The 200m swim test – under 7 minutes followed by 1 minute treading water is mandatory to pass at the start of the season for this group.*
- *11 year olds – a club beanie must be worn at all times and a hi-vis vest must be worn in the water. 11 year olds are required to complete the 200m swim test in under 5 minutes followed by 1 minute treading water to achieve their SLSNZ award certificate.*

Your team: Coordinator & Parent Coaches

### **C GROUP**

#### **12 & 13 year olds**

At C Group level, training becomes more intensive but there are still plenty of opportunities for fun. The focus on developing skilled Lifeguards becomes clear but there is also an environment for becoming actively involved in Surf Sports and developing genuine athletes. Some Sunday sessions will focus on two areas – the first hour will focus on competition events and the second hour will be working towards the Rookie Programme, this focuses on lifesaving skills and children work towards achieving their SLGA.

*Requirements for C Group:*

- *12 & 13 year olds – a club beanie must be worn at all times and a hi-vis vest must be worn in the water. Children are required to complete the 200m swim test in under 4½ minutes followed by 1 minute treading water to achieve their SLSNZ Award certificate along with having a strong knowledge of tube rescues, CPR, First Aid and patient care.*

Your team: Coordinator & Parent Coaches + help from the Senior Competition Squad

### **ROOKIES**

This is for those 13 & 14 year olds wanting to become qualified lifeguards. Our Rookies programme will run throughout the season combining instructing, practical skill building, and patrolling. Each Rookie will be assigned to 4 patrols of 4 hours each and will also be expected to complete a series of 10 modules outlined in their workbook as well as passing their practical assessments. Uniform will be issued and worn while on patrol. At the end of the season there is an opportunity to compete in the Rookies Challenge which highlights their lifeguarding skills and knowledge. Those turning 14 years of age before the end of March are eligible to enrol in the SLGA (Surf Life Guard Award) at the end of the season to become a qualified lifeguard. The later birthdates will qualify the following season.

Your team: Rookie Coordinator & Club Instructors

## NIPPERS TRAINING SESSIONS EXPLAINED

Days	Time	Where	Groups
Sunday	10.00am – 12.00pm	Piha SLSC	All Groups
Please check the calendar for this season's sessions		Kelston Girls High School	A, B, C
Please check the calendar for this season's sessions		Takapuna Beach	200m badge holders only – A, B, C Groups

These training sessions all cover different aspects of Nippers.

### **SUNDAY – PIHA** 10.00am – 12.00pm (All Groups)

The main club training session is the Sunday at Piha, coaches teach nippers beach safety and understanding the conditions at Piha, as well as technique for surf sports.

Training starts at 10am sharp regardless of weather conditions, but is determined by both weather and surf conditions. Please meet at the back of the Surf Club at 9.45am, unless otherwise advised. Training will normally finish at about 12pm, although this is dependent on the conditions and at the start of the season will normally finish a little bit earlier for the younger age groups.

PLEASE NOTE – there is often no training at Piha for B & C Groups when a junior surf carnival is taking place, see Piha calendar of events for more details.

### **KELSTON POOLS**

Piha also provide an opportunity for children to have swim fitness training. This is similar to squad training where your child will be asked to swim a certain number of lengths whilst using different swimming strokes. There is a cost per child/term and works on basic skills for surf swimming and endurance training.

Five sessions throughout the season will include FREE swim proficiency testing for all nippers. Dates for these are in the calendar and each child must be tested every season, whether you are a returning Nipper or new to the programme. ALL ROOKIES must be tested by mid November to qualify for the programme.

PLEASE NOTE – these are not swimming lessons, your child must be able to swim at least 100 metres confidently. If your child cannot swim 100 metres it is advisable that they attend regular swimming lessons.

### **TAKAPUNA** 6.15pm – 7.30pm (200m badge swimmers only, A, B & C Group)

This is a sport focused session and a fantastic opportunity for your child to have flat water training where they will complete surf swims, board training, tube rescues and board rescues as well as have mini competitions within their group. The conditions do not always allow for this type of training at Piha, so it is a great opportunity for children to practise these things in flat water.

To attend these sessions your child must have been tested and achieved their 200m badge and then complete a 100m ocean swim at Takapuna with the coaches.

Meet at the southern end of Takapuna Beach (near the changing rooms) by 6.15pm, please ensure at the end of the session that your child helps load the boards back onto the trailer.

All parents are required to stay with their children throughout these sessions; at times coaches may ask you for assistance in the water or on the beach. If you are unable to have an adult present with your child on the beach, then please do not send your child.



---

## WHAT TO BRING TO NIPPERS TRAINING

- Piha beanie! (No beanie - no training)
- Piha hi-vis vest! (No hi-vis - no water training)
- Piha togs (preferred) or black togs
- Sunscreen & sun hat
- Towel & warm clothing to change into
- Wetsuits for Piha & Takapuna
- Goggles and Fins\*
- Water bottle
- Rock shoes / old sandals
- 200m badge sewn on togs\*\*
- Parent or Guardian
- Rookie workbooks & uniform

\*Anyone that wants to swim the Keyhole when conditions allow must have fins! Parents are no exception – no fins, no swim.

\*\*All A, B, C group members who wish to use boards and/or swim beyond waist depth must pass their 200m safety test and have the badge fixed to their togs or beanie. They must also wear their hi-vis vest.

---

## SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

### NIPPERS 200M SAFETY BADGE

As already mentioned, nippers **MUST** achieve their 200m badge before they can train or compete in water events which go beyond waist depth. This is a mandatory safety requirement which demonstrates that members are confident in the ocean and capable of returning to shore if they are separated from their equipment. This test must be repeated yearly and must be sighted by a Piha senior coach or instructor. Nippers must swim 200m of a competent non stop single freestyle stroke with no stopping or changing of strokes.

The beginner pass time is 7 minutes with the expectation that the swim will be under 4.5 minutes by the time the child reaches 12 years of age. The assessments are done for safety purposes and the criteria will be upheld by the senior coaches of the Piha SLSC under the direction of the Chief Instructor. There is no limit to the number of times a candidate can re-test but they must have swum their 200m competency test in order to participate in open sea and board training. In addition to this a 100m ocean swim test must be completed at Takapuna in order to attend these sessions.

Gaining the 200m badge is a first step to the next level – ocean swimming – not an immediate entry into surf competitions. Swimming in the ocean is very different to swimming in the pool. If the coaches are not confident that a child is a strong enough swimmer to tackle the conditions, whether it be training or at a carnival, they can stop the child taking part. This is not done lightly and is only done for the child's safety. When it comes to carnivals, SLSNR would rather U9 athletes keep competing as non-badged until they are confident to pass both the pool and ocean swim tests strongly, than have to rescue kids from badged arenas when they haven't coped with the conditions.

### 5:1 RATIO SUPERVISION

As another **STRICT** mandatory safety requirement, we require a minimum supervision ratio (in any water activity, regardless of depth) of 1 adult **IN THE WATER** per 5 children. On rough days, we will increase this number. If we cannot reach the required ratio, the water events will be cancelled.

### 1:20 RATIO OF QUALIFIED SUPERVISION

In addition to the 'in-water' 5:1 ratio we must also have 1 qualified guard per 20 children in the water. One of the best ways to help at the beach is to become a lifeguard. We are really lucky at Piha to have senior and U19 qualified guards keen to give up their time to coach the kids.

Contact [chiefinstructor@pihaslsc.com](mailto:chiefinstructor@pihaslsc.com) for more information about becoming a guard.

---

## JUNIOR SURF CARNIVALS EXPLAINED

Carnivals are a great opportunity to participate in both a fun and competitive environment, meet nippers from other clubs, and see other beaches. While it can be competitive at times, the emphasis is always on safety, sportsmanship and enjoyment. \*\*Wetsuits cannot be worn! \*\*

### **Regional & National Pool Champs – September/October**

These are the first official events for the surf season. We start training for this at the start of Term 3 at Kelston Pools. Obstacle races, brick carries and rescues make for an interesting day at the pool. Strong swimmers are required but you do not have to be registered pool swimmers.

### **Interclub Carnival #1**

The first beach carnival of the season is usually around the first week in December and held at a North Shore SLSA. This is a participation carnival. We would encourage all children to attend as this is a great carnival to gain experience and have a go.

This usually starts around 8am and is all finished by 4pm. Can be cold, bring warm clothes!

### **Interclub Carnival #2**

This is one of the most fun carnivals of the season and usually held at Waipu Cove or Ruakaka. As it is at the height of the summer holidays our families book into a local camp ground – Uretiti DOC Camp – and take part in our 3-day skills camp before the carnival. We encourage our senior comp squad competitors to join us as guest coaches, something that the Nippers have gained a lot from. A great way to improve the kids skills and confidence in a family friendly atmosphere. Please see your Group Coordinator for more details about camp but it is very casual, book your own campsite and come when you can.

### **Twilight Carnivals (C Group only) – January/February**

At C Group level there is the opportunity to participate in two twilight carnivals throughout the season. These carnivals are usually run from 5-8pm and are a great chance for C Group Nippers to have fun and hone their skills prior to Nationals.

### **Northern Region Champs – February**

This is the major Carnival for our competing Nippers in B & C Group (10yr olds to 13yr olds). Children compete individually for medals and in teams for top Club and the Cath & Eddie Millar Cup.

### **Northern Region U10 Surf Carnival – February**

This is the end of season event for 7yr olds to 9yr olds. Children compete individually and in teams. *These events have additional entry fees and closing dates for entries. Your Group Coordinator will email out details and costs nearer the time.*

### **Oceans U14 National SLSNZ Champs – March**

This is the National U14 SLS Event and runs in four separate age group categories (from 10 yr olds to 13 yr olds). Children compete individually for medals and accrue points towards the overall club winner. Conditions are often very demanding at this event and a high standard of confidence and ability is expected of the team. Please talk with your coach or coordinator as to the requirements for this.

### **Rookie Challenge – March**

This is a knowledge testing, scenario and skills event for the Young Rookie Guards. Competition will challenge and endorse the training of our young rookies. Maximum of 10 Rookies will attend this event. See the Rookie Coordinator for more details.

---

## JUNIOR SURF CARNIVALS CHECKLIST

On the day, arrive at the carnival 30 minutes before the first event and report to your Group Coordinator. Members are expected to stay in the club area during the Carnival. Children must tell their Group Coordinator if they are leaving the club area for ANY reason.

At carnivals there are a limited number of boards available, so ALL CLUB BOARDS ARE TO BE SHARED. Coaches will advise which boards are with each group. Parent help is required for all carnivals, even little jobs like helping put up the tent or being there at the end of the weekend to take the tent down are crucial, please offer your time.

It is important that you always remember to bring:

- Piha beanie (no beanie means you cannot compete)
- Piha togs, hi-vis vest and 200m badge if applicable (no hi-vis vest means you cannot compete)
- Food & plenty to drink (snacks are easiest - sushi, sandwiches, fruit, muesli bars, yoghurts)
- Sun hat & sunscreen
- Towel & warm clothing, including a warm jacket to put on between events

---

## JUNIOR SURF OFFICIALS

**There is a requirement that the club supply carnival officials and water safety officers for carnivals. If in the event there are insufficient officials, our club may be withdrawn from the carnival. Parents of nippers competing at carnivals are expected to help with water safety (if qualified guards) or officiating.**

A surf official is the person helping to set up the flags arena, recording winners, marshalling children to the start lines, starting the races and more. The only people closer to the action are the athletes.

To become an official you must first do a Surf Officials Level 1 (one day) course which the club will pay for. Then you will be mentored on the beach and assessed in your role before being issued a qualification. Surf Official uniforms are issued so children and spectators may easily identify you and lunch and snacks are supplied at most carnivals.

If you are interested please see the Junior Surf Coordinator. If you decide to take the course the Club will expect you to finish the course, attend the carnivals to be assessed and for you to gain the final qualification. You will not be expected to official at Carnivals that your child does not attend, but the opportunity to do so is there if you would like to.

Whilst we encourage all parents to help and be part of the Club activities, being an official is a full day's job on Carnival day and it is not advisable if you have small children that will need to be kept an eye on. If you have an older child who is too old for Nippers but interested in surf and will be available at the beach to help, they can be put forward to take the course.

---

## WATER SAFETY

On Carnival day we will be asked to supply qualified life guards for water safety. This is an important job but less demanding, usually water help will be on duty for 2-3 hours and then swap with other guards. Please let your Group Coordinator know if you can help.

---

## THE PIHA JUNIOR SURF COMMITTEE

Position	Contact
Junior Surf Co-ordinator	nippers@pihaslsc.com
Junior Surf Manager	juniorteammanager@gmail.com
A Group Co-ordinator	agroupcoordinator@gmail.com
B Group Co-ordinator	bgroupcoordinator@gmail.com
C Group Co-ordinator	cgroupcoordinator@gmail.com
Rookies Co-ordinator	rookiecoordinator@gmail.com
Equipment Manager	juniorequipmentmanager@gmail.com

Any queries please email [nippers@pihaslsc.com](mailto:nippers@pihaslsc.com)

---

## THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS!



---

Thanks to **SOAR PRINT** for donating the printing of this booklet, enabling us to spend hard earned cash on equipment instead. Thanks to **THE WAREHOUSE WESTGATE & NEW LYNN** for choosing Piha Nippers to be an on-going recipient of their plastic bag initiative, awesome guys. Thanks **TEGEL** for supporting us throughout the season for BBQs & camp and thanks also to **ALL GOOD ORGANICS** for their support over the past few years supplying food for camp. Thanks to **FREERIDE** for discounts in-store on presentation of the Piha Club card.

THESE GUYS SUPPORT US SO PLEASE SUPPORT THEM TOO!

PHOTO CREDIT: STEEN BECH – THANKS STEEN FOR ALL THE GREAT SHOTS!



### PIHA NIPPERS

Children under the age of 14 years must have one adult (parent or guardian) enrolled as a member of Piha SLSC and must not be left unattended at the beach.