



## NEWS RELEASE

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**Press Release: Pupils learning about drowning prevention as part of new initiative**

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### **Pupils learning about drowning prevention as part of new initiative**

The dangers of drowning and how to prevent it will be highlighted to school children in Scotland as part of a new initiative from Water Safety Scotland (WSS) and the Scottish Government.

In time for the summer holidays, WSS is handing out kit bags featuring water safety messages to children at schools in Fife and East Renfrewshire and at a number of summer community events in partnership with Inspiring Scotland's Link Up programme.

The bags can be used for swimming and sports gear to help children make the most of the outdoors during the summer holidays and they carry key safety messages about how to keep safe by water. Inside they include some resources from across the water safety partners such as quizzes and magazines, aimed at raising awareness of the dangers of water.

Figures from the National Water Safety Forum show that across Scotland in 2017, there were 46 accidental fatalities. This resource is aimed to further ensure that we can enjoy our great natural landscape safely.

Michael Avril, chairman of Water Safety Scotland, said: "Water Safety Scotland is delighted to be working with the Scottish Government, to ensure that the Drowning Prevention Strategy makes a difference to the people of Scotland. We are keen to promote water safety education within schools and believe this targeted pilot project will help to raise awareness of the dangers and assist them by giving essential information to make informed decisions about their safety."

The initiative coincides with a ministerial roundtable on water safety, hosted by Annabelle Ewing MSP, Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs, which discussed how Water Safety Scotland's Drowning Prevention Strategy can be supported. The strategy aims to cut the number of drownings in Scotland by half by 2026.

Held at the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Headquarters in Balloch on Wednesday (June 20), attendees discussed the joint approach to promoting safe participation of recreational water activities.

Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs, Annabelle Ewing said: "In our ambition to build safer communities we are working closely with Water Safety Scotland and other partners to deliver initiatives that can help reduce deaths from accidental drowning and raise awareness, particularly among those most at risk.

“Getting water safety messages out to children and young people is a key part of this work. The Scottish Government is pleased to support this joint initiative to promote water safety messages to schools and communities ahead of the summer holidays. We want people to be able to enjoy the water safely – and one of the most effective ways of doing this is through education and awareness.”

For more on Water Safety Scotland, and its Drowning Prevention Strategy which was launched in January, see [www.watersafetyscotland.org.uk](http://www.watersafetyscotland.org.uk)

The Royal Life Saving Society UK Drowning Prevention Week is running until Monday, June 25. [Find out how you can get involved.](#)

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