



# Education Summary and Background



water safety  
Scotland

## What is Water Safety Scotland?

Water Safety Scotland is a voluntary association of organisations and individuals whose purpose is to understand the risks around water in Scotland and engage with partners to develop a consistent approach to the prevention of water-related fatalities.

## Why is this important for pupils?

Drowning is the third leading cause of unintentional injury/death worldwide, accounting for 7% of all injury-related deaths (WHO). Scotland has extensive opportunities for access to water due to its 30,000 lochs and a huge coastline stretching more than 11,800km. The average UK sea temperature rarely gets above 15°C, and becomes colder further north in Scotland, increasing the risk of cold water shock. Furthermore, while the Land Reform Act allows freedom to explore Scotland, it brings with it additional challenges regarding safety. The risk of drowning spans the course of life, therefore engaging with children and young people is key to prevention.



## Learning objectives

- 1 To develop an understanding of the dangers of water, including the effects of cold water shock.
- 2 To develop an understanding of the preventative measures that can keep you and others safe.



**Level:**  
Third/Fourth level



**Timings:**  
50 minutes (estimate)



**Key themes:**  
Drowning, cold water shock, risk, emergency services, self-rescue, Float to Live

## Background

Water Safety Scotland aims to drive a generational change to facilitate greater safety education and enjoyment in and around water. We want to support practitioners and communities to develop young people's understanding and awareness of the dangers of water, and encourage young people to participate in water-related activities in an appropriate and safe manner.

This workshop is designed to develop understanding of both the dangers of water, as well as the preventative measures that can be applied to keep yourself and others safe. This workshop stems from the tragic circumstances surrounding the loss of Cameron Lancaster, who sadly lost his life at Preston Hill quarry in Inverkeithing, Fife. Cameron's mother,

Gillian Barclay, has played and continues to play an integral role in efforts to combat water-related fatalities and has been central to the success of the Fife Water Safety Project, which has been rolled out to thousands of young people. In 2016, the Fife Water Safety Project won the Scottish Community Safety Network (SCSN) People's Choice Award.

Due to the sensitive nature of the workshop, we advise noting any recent water-related injury or loss of life in the community and among the school cohort. Furthermore, as this is an emotive topic, practitioners should be aware that some children and young people may struggle with it, **and pupils should be warned in advance**. Practitioners should be able to provide further support if needed following the lesson.