

Splash

Liz van Welie Swim School Newsletter - July 2011



Special points of interest:

- Swimmer of the Month
- Mirror neurons
- Term 2 Survey results
- Developmental stages
- Competition winners

Term 3 starts Monday the 1st of August and is 10 weeks long!

Swimmer of the Month - June & July

JUNE - Rhys Fitzgerald

Rhys has been awarded swimmer for the month for June because of the achievements he has made in the pool this year. In the past Rhys has had some very negative experiences in the water so not surprisingly when he came to our swim school in January he was very nervous about putting his head under water.

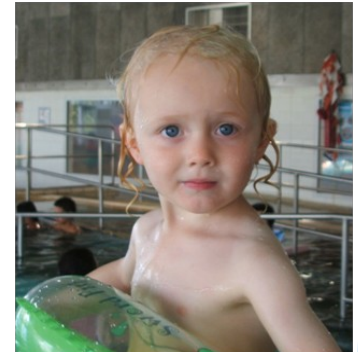
Rhys has progressed tremendously over the past two terms, has tackled his fears and is now swimming great freestyle arms and has almost mastered breathing. His backstroke has really taken off and he is starting to learn breaststroke kick. Liz is very proud of the way Rhys has progressed and looks forward to continuing to see him excel in the third term.



JULY- Eli Banbury

Term 2 was three year old Eli's first term of swimming lessons, following his big brother, Asa, who has completed two terms at our school.

Attending lessons each Saturday morning with his mum in the pool, Eli's confidence in the water has grown so much since he started. His instructor, Mandi, is very proud of him. "He listens very well to me and his mum throughout the lesson, tries his hardest at all tasks given and is up for any challenge," says Mandi. Eli is back next week for a second term of swimming and is looking forward to it. His mum, Rachel, says "Saturday swimming lessons are the highlight of his weekend!"



How we teach

As part of our ongoing goal to be the leading swim school, our swim teachers all use modern approaches to 'coaching' children. For children who can talk or verbalise their thinking it is very important to understand what children are most aware of during practice of their skills. Understanding is best tested through questioning. For example, during freestyle skill development a child will be shown, maybe even moved through the skill required e.g. pushing back with the hand until the thumb brushes past the thigh for maximum use of the water. Then in practice the child might be asked "Tell me where your thumb touches your leg on the next three strokes." In asking this question, the child then has a specific focus during their skill execution and as a result a much higher awareness of the process.





Liz's Corner

Brrrrrr it's getting chilly out there! I hope everyone is managing to survive the winter bugs and are wrapping up warm! Luckily we really don't have it so bad as I sit here and look out the window with the sun shining and think of my mum living in Dunedin snowed in and not being able to go to work!

It is great to finally have our new names for our levels up and running – we were very impressed with the ideas that some families came up with as we were completely stumped! We hope that your children have enjoyed the new term certificates with their group names on them. These certificates fall in line with our new flyers that we also have recently printed. We have plenty of flyers at the office so if you wanted to take some to give out to your family or friends who are also interested in swimming lessons, please feel free.

It's great to be back in the pool and teaching again after a month away. Being away from the teaching reinforced my love for the water and love for teaching swimming. Every day I experience little "wow" moments where a child has achieved something special and it inspires me to work even harder.

I also wanted to recognise those swimmers who have "graduated" from our Learn to Swim programme into the Bayswim Squad at Greerton. These children are Jacob Browne, Mia Watkins, David Hastie, Olivia Cummings, Ben Coster and Jessica Coster. These children have chosen to get into competitive swimming so we will look out for their name in lights in the future!

Liz van Welie

Mirror Neurons

In the early 1990s, Italian researchers made an astonishing and unexpected discovery. They had implanted electrodes in the brains of several macaque monkeys to study the animals' brain activity during different motor actions, including the clutching of food. One day, as a researcher reached for his own food, he noticed neurons begin to fire in the monkeys' premotor cortex - the same area that showed activity when the animals made a similar hand movement. How could this be happening when the monkeys were sitting still and merely watching him?



Our staff are aware of the importance of mirror neurons. From the moment you enter, Jenna with her wonderful smile lets children and parents know this is a friendly and fun place to be. Liz, Mandi and Sonja in the water are all very positive with lots of smiles and positive feedback on achievements. All of this triggers the same positive smile neurons in others around them. The goal for all of us is to develop children that have a love of water and the skills to survive in it.



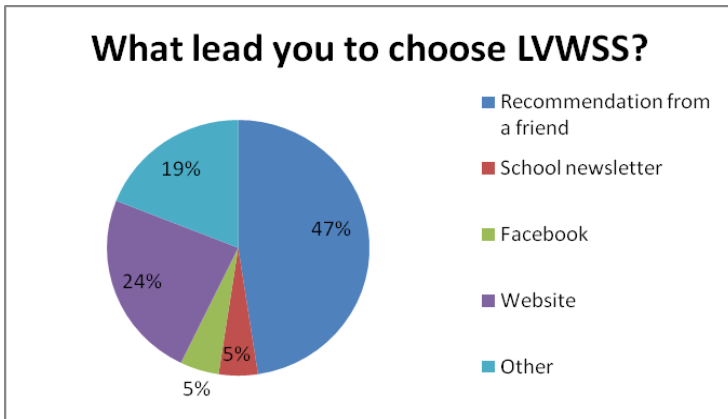
How, why, and when your child might progress

When your child is learning a new skill there will always be times where no progress can be seen. This apparent lack of progress does not mean learning has stopped, or that your child is going backwards. When learning new skills, neural pathways between muscles, joints and the brain need to be laid down, strengthened and remembered. This takes a lot of regular practice. Be aware that peaks and troughs along the way are a perfectly natural part of learning and that there will be times when your child needs lots of support and encouragement. When you see a period of rapid progress, know that this will be followed by a period of consolidation where you may not see any measurable improvement.

It is important to recognise that if your child is attending just one lesson per week, year round the average child accumulates 20 hours of tuition per year – that is less than one day! If you choose to attend one lesson per week during summer only, accumulated learning hours can be as little as just 10 hours per year – less than half a day annually! Ways that parents can assist with learning are mainly by increasing the child's exposure to water so that they can practice their skills, enrol for lessons twice a week (only \$8.00 for the second lesson) or back up the term lesson by doing the holiday intensive lessons. This way if your child is getting consistent exposure to the water then ultimately you will pay less over the longer term to have your child swimming safely and competently.

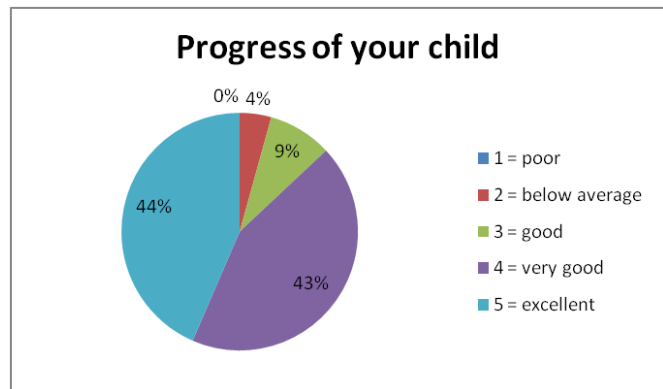
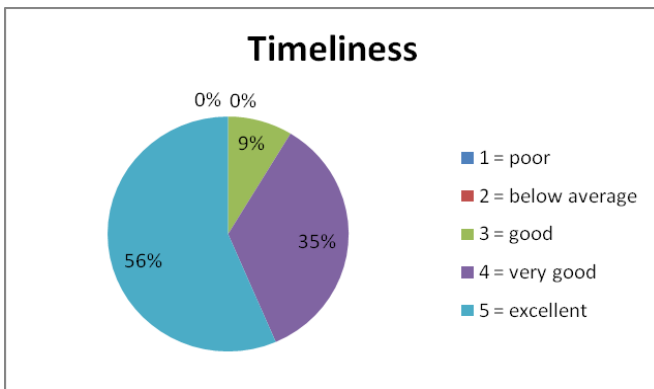
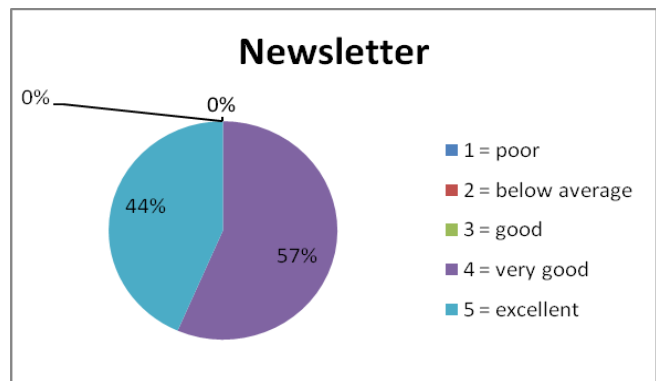
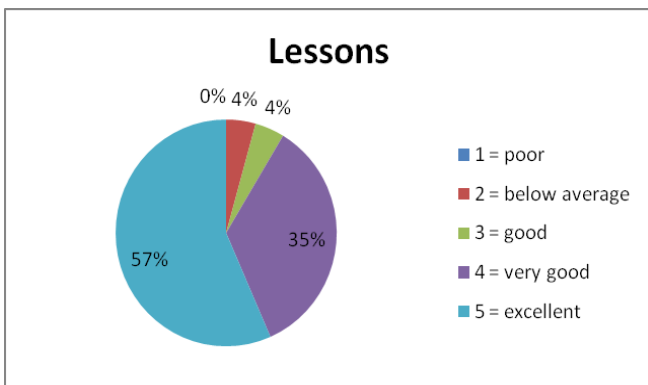
Here’s what our new Term 2 customers thought!

At the end of Term 2 we wanted to hear from all our new customers to gauge their impressions. Thank you to our new Term 2 customers who completed our survey. At the end of Term 3 we will survey everyone.



1. Word of mouth is a significant marketing tool for us
2. 92% of our new customers rate us very good or excellent in delivering our lessons
3. Our newsletter is very well received
4. Being on time is valued by both us and new customers
5. 87% of new customers feel their child’s progress is very good or excellent.

Q9. Please give us your rating on the following:



Conclusions & actions

1. We will continue to offer the variety of bonuses to families who recommend us to others.
2. We will make sure that customers have a good understanding of swim teaching progressions
3. We will inform customers of what leading teaching/coaching pedagogies we are using in the pool
4. We will use the newsletter, our Facebook page and website to promote children’s successes and the ways in which we aim to be the leading learn to swim school.
5. We will continue to survey our customers each term to support customer feedback and to reinforce with staff that their efforts are appreciated.

“I am absolutely thrilled with the progress both of my children have made after just one term. From the very first lesson I knew I had made the right decision and that their swimming was going to improve a lot!”

Keep up to date with us on Facebook

For the latest news, offers and photos, follow us on Facebook! Just go to the link below and 'like' our page to keep up to date.

www.facebook.com/lvwss

Competition winners!

We ran two competitions during Term 2 and are excited to announce our winners! Thanks to those for paying their Term 3 \$25.00 deposit promptly. Congratulations to Melina Heavener and Harry Burns who won their Term 3 swimming lessons for free!

We received some great suggestions for names for our levels. Thanks to those families who entered! Mia McGrath won a free term of lessons and the Bignell, Spence and Brayshaw families each received 20% off one child's term lessons for their contributions. Our new names are:

1. Gliders 2. Stokers 3. Tumblers 4. Skimmers 5. Cruisers

Developmental stages

3-6 months of age: Baby swimming advances independence and development of intelligence. Motor stimulation in an aquatic environment will strengthen your baby's respiratory system, increase muscle tone, neurological function and enhance parent-child bonding. Children that learn to swim at an early age they are healthier, better coordinated, socially better adjusted and have higher mental capacities.

6 months – 18 months: Play = learning for this age group. Every new interaction, cause / effect is a learning experience. Lots of movement and exploration develop. At a critical time for positive feedback, learn to swim group lessons provide children an invaluable opportunity continue to bond with parents but also to indulge their curiosity by watching others.

18 months – 3 years: With a love of repetition and a sense of accomplishment from mastering skills, the songs and activities provided at Liz van Welie Swim School continue to develop physical and motor skills as well as cognitive and language skills. Children develop the ability to follow directions, learn colours and numbers, develop a greater awareness of sharing and best of all, through structured lessons and play learn to respond to rules when asked.

Term 3 refer a friend offer!

If you recommend a new enrolment for Term 3 you will receive a 10% discount for Term 3 swimming lessons - that is one lesson free! Please note: to receive this discount, your friend must mention that they were referred by you on their enrolment form and must enrol for Term 3.

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Magnesium facts from our Magnapool—the water you swim in!

Magnesium is needed for more than 300 biochemical reactions in the body. It helps maintain normal muscle and nerve functions, keeps heart rhythm steady, supports a healthy immune system, and keeps bones strong.



Liz van Welie
Swim School 