

Winter Pop-Up Indoor Pool Play

CASE STUDY

Background:

During winter, families have fewer opportunities to access affordable activities that keep children active, connected and entertained, particularly when colder weather limits outdoor recreation.

To address this gap, Gannawarra Shire Council activated the Kerang Exercise Pool during the July 2026 school holidays, trialling family-focused pop-up pool play sessions. The sessions provided a fun, affordable and accessible activity for children and their parents or carers in a warm, safe and supervised indoor environment.

Four 30-minute free-play sessions were delivered over one week of the school holidays. Families paid \$5 per participating child, while supervising parents and carers could enter and swim free of charge.

The initiative aligned with Council's commitment to providing inclusive opportunities for children and families to connect, be physically active and spend time together. It also supported children's development of swimming skills, an important life skill in a rural community.

Event Aims:

The Winter Pop-Up Indoor Pool Play Sessions aimed to:

- Provide a fun, safe and family-friendly activity during the winter school holidays.
- Offer an affordable and accessible opportunity for children to maintain their swimming skills.
- Encourage children and families to be active together and spend quality time together.
- Increase awareness and use of the Kerang Exercise Pool as a valuable year-round community facility.
- Survey adult participants post sessions to receive feedback to inform future programs and continuous improvement opportunities.

Feedback (quotes from survey)

"It was great as it let the children enjoy free play and put what they have learnt at Warra Waders into practice."

"It kept the kids swimming whilst lessons are on break.. have some fun and gain confidence."

"The allocated 30 minutes is too short for children to really enjoy the time - perhaps offer 1 hour time slot."

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What was offered?

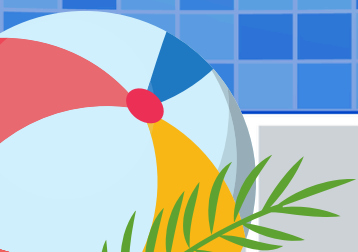
- Four 30-minute indoor pool play sessions at the Kerang Exercise Pool during the July school holidays.
- Affordable family participation, with children attending for \$5 and supervising adults free.
- Access to pool toys and equipment to support active play.
- A warm, safe and supervised environment for children and families to enjoy free play together.
- Qualified lifeguards and active parent/carer supervision to ensure participant safety.
- Pre-booked sessions to support effective event management and capacity control.

What was achieved?

- Engaged children aged 1 to 12 years in a fun and active winter school holiday program.
- Achieved 100% participant satisfaction, with 75% of respondents very satisfied.
- Received a 100% positive rating for the booking process and value for money.
- Achieved a 100% excellent rating for staff friendliness and professionalism.
- Provided families with an opportunity to be active together and access an indoor pool during winter.
- Generated strong interest in future sessions, with all respondents indicating they would attend again.
- Identified demand for longer session times.
- Created 7.5 hours of additional employment for casual lifeguards.

Key learnings

- Earlier promotion may increase program reach and participation.
- Integration with the broader school holiday program could strengthen marketing and bookings.
- A family pricing option could further improve affordability and accessibility.
- There is community interest in longer session durations.
- Aligning sessions with pool operating hours may improve resource efficiency.
- The program was delivered at minimal additional cost to Council.
- A waitlist process could help fill vacancies arising from late cancellations.
- The trial confirmed community interest in affordable, indoor winter activities for families.



WINTER POP-UP SCHOOL HOLIDAY INDOOR POOL PLAY

Looking for a fun way to keep the kids active these school holidays?

Join us for our Pop-Up School Holiday Indoor Pool Play! Enjoy family pool time in a warm indoor environment. Places are limited, so bookings are essential.

Gannawarra Shire is trialling a series of family-focused indoor pool sessions during the winter school holidays, providing a safe and fun opportunity for children and their parents/carers to enjoy the pool together.



Session Dates & Times:

Week 1 – 30 minute sessions

- Monday 29 June | 1.00pm – 3.00pm
- Thursday 2 July | 9.30am – 10.30am

Week 2 – 30 minute sessions

- Tuesday 7 July | 9.30am – 10.30am
- Wednesday 8 July | 3.00pm – 5.00pm

Key information:

- Indoor pool free-play sessions
- Bookings are essential
- Places are strictly limited
- Parents/carers must be in the water with participating children
- Children under 5 years require 1 supervising adult per child
- Cost: \$5 per child
- Supervising adults swim free
- Qualified lifeguards on duty
- Sessions are 30 minutes each

Kerang Indoor Pool, Patchell Plaza

**Bookings essential through Council's
Warm water pool, phone: 03 5450 9345**

