SCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT

Updated: 08/15

School number: 0931
School name: Penola High School

School Profile Text

Penola is the oldest town in the South East of South Australia. The town borders the Coonawarra wine district, renowned internationally for its wines and is central to the blue gum forestry industry. Penola High School is a South Australian government school that has been enriching the lives of its students through dedication to the school’s motto of nurturing individual successes. The school prides itself on meeting the educational needs of all its students through offering a variety of subjects, either at school or through other agencies such as the WREN network. The student catchment area consists of Penola, Coonawarra, Kalangadoo and Nangwarry townships as well as farming communities within the district.

We have long been a regional leader in the provision of Vocational Education and Training (VET) opportunities for our students, with many achieving outstanding success in the completion of nationally accredited VET modules in their learning, both on and off site.

The teaching and support staff are dedicated with more than a third being nominated for SA Public Teaching Awards over the last two years.

1. General

   School Principal: Kirsty Trahar
   Deputy Principal: Michael Hentschke
   Year of Opening: 1962
   Postal Address: 43 Cameron Street, Penola SA 5277
   Location Address: 43 Cameron Street, Penola SA 5277
   DECD Region: South East Coast & Vines Partnership
   Geographical location: 400km from Adelaide
   Telephone number: 08 8737 0000
   Fax number: 08 8737 0050
   School website address: www.penolahs.sa.edu.au
   School email address: dl.0931.info@schools.sa.edu.au
   Child Parent Centre: N/A
   Out of School Hours Care: N/A
February FTE student enrolment | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
Secondary | Special, NAP, Ungraded etc | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0
Year 8 | | 24.0 | 23.0 | 26.0 | 22.0 | 30.0
Year 9 | | 20.0 | 26.0 | 21.0 | 26.0 | 19.0
Year 10 | | 24.0 | 24.0 | 25.0 | 26.0 | 20.0
Year 11 | | 22.0 | 21.0 | 20.2 | 24.0 | 19.0
Year 12 | | 18.2 | 19.0 | 16.0 | 15.0 | 20.0
Year 12 plus | | 6.2 | 0.2 | 2.0 | 0 | 1.0
TOTAL | | 114.40 | 113.20 | 108.40 | 113 | 109
School Card Percentage | | 15% | 18% | 22% | 22% | 17%
NESB Enrolment | | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0
Aboriginal Enrolment | | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2

Student enrolment trends:
Penola High School is a Category 4 Index of Disadvantage site with an enrolment of 110 students at the end of 2014. There are 60 classes taught across 8-12 and all areas of learning are covered effectively. Between 1994-2004 enrolments were consistently at 170. Between 2004-2009 enrolments declined. Over the past 5 years enrolments have been stable at approximately 110.

Staffing numbers (as at February census):
The leadership team comprises a Principal, Deputy Principal, and 1 Coordinator. The teaching staff of 11.8 includes 1 Learning Support Coordinator and 1 Teacher-Librarian. We have 9 permanent and 4 temporary SSO staff who provide administration, classroom and individual support and a groundsman that completes the staff team.

Public transport access:
The community is served by a daily Penola to Adelaide bus service. The Mount Gambier Airport is a 40 minute drive, with daily flights to Adelaide and Melbourne. There is no local public transport.

Special site arrangements:
Students from other government secondary schools come to Penola High School for subject delivery in the senior school, in a reciprocal arrangement some of our students attend other sites within the district to receive curriculum delivery. This is part of a secondary cluster arrangement, (WREN) maximising staff expertise in the district and broadening curriculum opportunities for students.

The school has a joint usage agreement with the Wattle Range Council for the use of the stadium for sporting activities and Physical Education lessons.
The town’s community library service is housed at and staffed by Penola High School, opening times include out of hours.
2. **Students (and their welfare)**

**General characteristics**
Students are drawn from a radius of approximately 25kms from the school (50% of our students travel by bus). The Year 8 intake of 20 students was drawn from Mary MacKillop (2), Penola (12), Nangwarry (2) and Kalangadoo (3) Primary Schools in the normal catchment area. Approximately 17% of the students are in receipt of school card.

**Student well-being programs**
A Learning for Life program operates for one lesson per week where students have the opportunity to develop a range of life skills. Year Level Organisers have general oversight of the specific year levels and meet with home group teachers and parents to discuss common practices and to monitor and support individual students achievement and wellbeing.

Penola High School recognises the importance of ensuring incoming Year 8s are thoroughly prepared for life in a secondary school. A transition programme that consists of visits by teaching staff to our feeder primary schools as well as the primary school students visiting Penola High School.

**Student support offered**
The size and nature of Penola High School ensures that all students are individually known by all staff, whether they are taught by them or not. Each member of staff takes a personal interest in the education and wellbeing of all students and information about how individual students’ best learn is regularly shared amongst teachers. SSOs in the classroom help to ensure students are appropriately supported.

There is a range of support structures including strong staff student relationships, intervention and support programs, student counselling, course/career counselling and individual case management. FIO, Hyper and Re-Engage are all options the school use to facilitate achievement and engagement.

We offer a unique opportunity for each student to have a comprehensive ‘Plan for Ideal Learning’ where students are supported throughout their high school years to successfully achieve their educational and lifestyle goals. This aims to provide a stimulating, quality education so that students of all ability levels are supported to reach their full potential within a caring and secure environment.

**Student management**
The school community has always had a clear focus on maintaining a caring and secure environment through promoting our values of Tolerance, Respect, Integrity, Commitment and Healthy Lifestyle through our learning programs, policies and day to day conduct.

Our processes are based on the belief that behaviour issues are best dealt with in partnership with all parties, staff, students and parents, as set out in the document Safe, Orderly and Productive classrooms.
Student government
The students elect their Student Representative Council representatives from their home groups. Two Senior Presidents are elected by the whole school. Student led activities focus on improving student wellbeing, school pride, charity fundraising days and sporting and social opportunities.

Special programmes
Negotiated Education Plans and agreed learning programs exist for students at risk and these are supported through the use of SSO hours for individuals.

3. Key School Policies

Site Improvement Plan and other key statements or policies
Following the comprehensive school review held in 2012 a range of recommendations for ongoing school improvement were made. The Site Improvement Plan has 2 main foci; Quality Teaching & Learning and Literacy & Numeracy.

To address the key direction of ‘Quality Teaching and Learning’ the Peer Feedback tool was used for classroom observations; this document now reflects the National Professional Standards for Teachers, as well as key elements of the TfEL. Staff are part of a triad team which works collaboratively to reflect on and improve teacher practice.

With regard to the key direction of Literacy and Numeracy, all elements of the Site Improvement Plan have been actioned and embedded into school practice. This key direction will now move into maintenance mode as the school focuses on the next area of development.

Recent key outcomes
NAPLan results this year were a gratifying reflection the school’s ongoing focus on literacy and numeracy. The most pleasing statistic is that 75% of students have achieved medium-upper level growth since Year 7 across all assessed areas.

Fourteen students worked towards SACE completion in 2014. Of these 13 (93%) were successful in SACE completion. The other student was using VET qualifications to complete their SACE and required 5 further credits for SACE completion. Upon completion of these competencies they will be resulted in 2015. All Year 12 students achieved passing grades in all Stage 2 subjects in 2014 with 6 students in Year 11 completing a Stage 2 subject. This year students achieved a higher number of grades in the A band (7) with one student receiving a Merit award for Mathematical Applications.
4. Curriculum

Subject offerings
The comprehensive curriculum includes Year 8-10 programmes in the 8 areas of learning as determined by the Australian Curriculum. Japanese is the language taught at Penola High School.

A comprehensive SACE curriculum is delivered onsite or through accessing neighbouring schools.

Open Access/Distance Education provision
For students who are unable to have their curriculum needs met on site there are many options available through Open Access.

Special Needs
A Coordinator supports Special Needs students with the assistance of an SSO and individually prepared learning programs.

Special Curriculum features:
ICT
All students in Year 9-12 are issued with a loan laptop for their exclusive school use. Year 8 students have first use of the school’s computer suite. Staff are also issued with a laptop. Commonly used programs such as Microsoft Office, Adobe and Photoshop as well as internet access exist on both the curriculum and administration networks.

Local Delivery
Students from our school are able to extend their range of subjects available at Stage 2 through the Wattle Range Education Network (WREN). Students access Chemistry here at Penola and in 2015 have accessed Physics from Millicent High School and Nutrition from Kangaroo Inn Area School. Students travel to the school of delivery and also connect via Centra, an internet learning environment each week.

Flexible Learning Options
Students are able to undertake learning via a range of flexible models in addition to VET, Open Access and local delivery. Some of these options include Community Learning, Community Studies and Australian School Based Apprenticeships. Each of these is student initiated and directed learning options that require students to negotiate and organise their learning in consultation with staff. Further details regarding Community Studies and Community Learning can be found in the Stage 2 section of the Curriculum Booklet.
For further information regarding School Based New Apprenticeships, students should make an appointment to meet with the VET Coordinator.

Open Access Learning
Students complete their learning through an offline course not offered at the school. They share a phone linkup lesson once a week with their teacher and other students from across the state who are completing the same course. They work independently for the rest of the week on the work that is sent to them via the Open Access College in Adelaide.
VET/ASBA
Students complete their learning through part-time or full-time school and also through on-the-job training through their workplace provider. They also complete a range of TAFE modules and attend TAFE weekly or monthly depending on the course.

Off-the-job learning
• which might happen at school or with another training provider and

On-the-job learning
• which will happen at one or more workplaces.

Teaching methodology
Staff at Penola High School are committed to providing students with the optimum learning environment and curriculum, consequently staff are reflective of practice and link current research with recommended classroom methodologies. Small class sizes assist with any implementation of change. Staff have been working with the Australian Curriculum early in the implementation cycles.

Student assessment procedures and reporting
Subject reports are written each term. A formal parent/teacher interview time is available early in Term 2. Regular progress checks on student achievement occur throughout the year.

5 Sporting Activities
Penola High School students are regularly involved in a wide range of sporting activities including a traditional inter-house competition involving swimming and athletics. Students also compete against other secondary schools in the South East Coast & Vines Partnerships in interschool and knock out competitions which include swimming, athletics, cross-country, football, netball and cricket.

6 Other Co-Curricular Activities
Penola High School actively participates in cultural and educational opportunities through participation in excursions such as the Outdoor Education Camp, World Challenge, Rural Reconnect and Tertiary Trip.

The school program is also supported and extended by participation in such activities as the Lions Youth of the Year, Science & Engineering Challenge, MASA Quiz Night and various debating and public speaking competitions.

7 Staff (and their welfare)

Staff profile
At Penola High School the teaching and support staff are a dedicated, hardworking and committed team. They are actively encouraged to undertake professional development and share their experience and expertise at weekly, year level and faculty meetings.
Leadership structure
The school has a Leadership team of Principal, Deputy Principal, Teaching and Learning Coordinator, Learning Support Coordinator and 2 Year Level Organisers.

Staff support systems
Staff work collaboratively to achieve positive outcomes for students, this includes a triad structure where colleagues observe and provide feedback and a comprehensive meeting structure covering faculty meetings and professional learning. Leadership meets weekly with key personnel including Step 9 teachers.

Performance Management
Performance Management processes encourage reflection, development and contribution to school goals and access to feedback. Teaching staff support each other by observing each other during the year. Individuals ask colleagues to focus on a specific aspect of their work and use the feedback to build good practice. Staff meeting structures include collaborative professional development opportunities which are in built into the performance management structure.

Access to special staff
Mount Gambier Education Office provides additional support through the Integrated Support Services, including access to behaviour coaches, speech pathologist, psychologists and social workers etc.

8. Incentives, support and award conditions for Staff
Complexity placement points
N/A

Isolation placement points
N/A

Travelling time
Penola is approximately 4 hours from Adelaide and half an hour from Mount Gambier.

Housing assistance
Government housing available.

Locality allowances
Staff teaching at Penola are eligible for locality allowance.

Relocation assistance
As per DECD policy.

Principal’s telephone costs
As per DECD policy.
9. **School Facilities**

**Buildings and grounds**
In 2007 the school received funding from the Investing in our Schools Project – this funding was expended on furniture and carpet for classrooms in the main building and furniture only for all other classrooms. This funding prompted the school to initiate a maintenance register both buildings and grounds.

Work completed from 2008 has included air conditioning, window furnishings, teacher desks and chairs and painting to all classrooms.

Whole school projects have included a Hall upgrade, external painting of buildings, installation of drink fountains, school signage as well as significant landscaping to various areas of the school grounds.

Current projects include installation of built-in cupboards to the Art room and a compactus to house school records.

**Heating and cooling**
All classrooms have reverse-cycled air conditioning installed.

**Specialist facilities and equipment**
The Community Library, housed within the school has a full and free internet service. The school stadium is shared with the community. Specialist rooms include a Information Technology/Multimedia suite, Drama suite, 3 Science laboratories, separate Art, Tech Studies and Home Economics buildings and a multi-function meeting room. The Café 43 is also located on site and has a fully functional commercial kitchen and service area.

**Student facilities**
A school canteen provides sound nourishment, in line with the Right Bite strategy, for students and staff. Students have access to a stadium, oval and tennis and netball courts.

**Staff facilities**
Staff have personal desks in separate preparation areas and there is a fully equipped staffroom area. Staff have use of the computing facilities including the internet and email.

**Access for students with disabilities**
Wheelchair access is available to all buildings except the second storey of the main building.

**Access to bus transport**
There is no town bus service, however, local contractors are available for hire.
10. School Operations

Decision making structures
The school recognises the valued partnership of parent, student and teacher in the education process and believes that all groups must be consulted in the determination and implementation of the school's educational programmes and its practices. A number of formal groups exist to facilitate the consultation process, these include the Governing Council, which meets monthly and the Student Representative Council.

Decisions are reached by consensus and any matters that affect the school in general will be made known at the staff meetings. Staff meeting agendas are posted in the staffroom and any staff member may give notice for any item to be discussed. Individual staff members make organisational day to day decisions in their areas of responsibility. Once the consultation process has been undertaken, it is the role of the leadership team to ensure that all parties are aware of the decisions and it is the responsibility of the staff to implement the agreed policies.

Regular publications
Daily staff and student bulletins are a vital form of communication. A daily calendar is available on Sentral and the staffroom whiteboard. A fortnightly newsletter is published promoting school/community events and student achievement. The Staff Handbook, Curriculum Booklet, School Magazine and Penola High School brochure are other sources of information regarding the school.

Other communication
The school website www.penolahs.sa.edu.au is regularly updated with information.

School financial position
The school is in a sound financial position, with the Finance Committee managing the school finances.

Special funding
The school receives the following funding – Rural and Isolated Index, Open Access, additional ICT support, RAAP and Community Library funding.

11. Local Community

General characteristics
Penola is the oldest town in the South East of South Australia and is committed to preserving its heritage. It is enjoying a ‘renaissance’ of the literary and arts heritage of its predominantly English-speaking community. The town borders the Coonawarra wine district, renowned internationally for its wines and is central to the blue gum forestry industry.
Parent and community involvement
A very positive relationship exists between staff, students and parents who participate and support the school. A strong emphasis is placed on learning by parents and the community. Parents support sporting events and parent-teacher interviews.

Community support is clearly evident for the school with local businesses donating generously in the form of cash donations and items for events such as the Annual SRC Quiz Night.

Feeder of destination schools
A positive transition programme exists between the feeder schools of Mary MacKillop, Penola Primary School, Nangwarry Primary School and Kalangadoo Primary School.

Other local care and education facilities
The McKay Children’s Centre is open for children aged 0-5 years.

Commercial/industrial and shopping facilities
Penola is 50 kilometres from other major centres including Mount Gambier, Naracoorte and Millicent. These centres adequately complement the local facilities. An airport with services to Adelaide and Melbourne is situated near Mount Gambier.

Other local facilities
The district is well served by the local hospital, medical centre, dentist and physiotherapist. A large number of church groups, summer and winter sporting facilities and numerous cafes, restaurants, shopping outlets and galleries reflect the artistic talents of the community.

The local supermarket and majority of shopping outlets trade seven days per week.

Availability of staff housing
There is limited Government Employee Housing, however, the town boasts 2 real estate agents who are readily available to assist with rentals.

Accessibility
A regular bus service operates daily and car travel to Adelaide takes approximately 4-4½ hours.

Local Government body
Wattle Range Council
Arthur Street
PENOLA SA 5277
Telephone: 08 8737 2391