



SCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT

Updated: 2017

School number: 0214

School name: Mid North Education Centre

School Profile:

Our vision is to develop resilient, creative and confident learners where staff, students and parents/carers work in partnership for positive student outcomes. Students receive a broad, relevant and effective curriculum. Parents/carers and the community are welcome into the school. We are a school within the Pirie Partnership. Along with other Pirie Partnership sites our qualities for learning are Respect, Responsibility, Persistence and Confidence. The main learning areas are addressed using the Australian Curriculum (Victorian ABLES version) to suit individual learning needs. We focus on presenting individual and small group learning programs inclusive of a range of student abilities and disabilities, R-12. The One Plan (OP) format for negotiated goals is being used for all students in the school.

Staff work collaboratively to develop proactive approaches for positive student behaviour. Students' health and safety needs are incorporated in a holistic approach. Short and long term planning supports students to develop capabilities and positive attitudes for life in the community. All staff are involved in professional learning to continuously improve their knowledge and skills.

1. General information

- School Principal name : Jayne Mainprize-Potter
- Year of opening:
 - New School Opened in 1981
 - Redeveloped school opened in 2003
 - School Name Change in 2007 (from Port Pirie Special School)
- Postal Address : 56 David Street
- Location Address : 56 David Street
- DECS Region : Pirie Partnership
- Geographical location – i.e. road distance from GPO (km) : 225 kms
- Telephone number : (08) 8632 1091
- Fax Number : (08) 8632 3963
- School website address : www.midnorthecc.sa.edu.au
- School e-mail address : dl.0214_info@schools.sa.edu.au
- February FTE student enrolment:

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Primary	24	18	19	15	18
Secondary	13	17	15	15	15
TOTAL	37	35	35	30	33
School Card Approval	29	28	29	27	31
NESB	0	0	0	0	0
Aboriginal FTE enrolment	6	6	6	6	5

- Student enrolment trends: Student numbers have averaged 34 students in recent years. In 2018 the ratio of PS & SS students was 18 PS & 15 SS.
- Staffing numbers 2016
 - 1.0 Principal.
 - 6.4 FTE between 6 Teachers including a B1 Band Leader.
 - SSO Ancillary staffing - There are eight permanent SSOs, 2 full time contracted SSOs and 5 other part-time contracted SSOs. There is one SSO in each class with additional ancillary allocation varying annually according to student needs.
 - 0.1 ACEO

2. Students (and their welfare)

- General characteristics

Students enrolled and attending are identified by a Psychologist and/or Speech Pathologist in line with the Department for Education Student with Disabilities Policy. All students have an intellectual disability. Students may also have additional disabilities e.g. vision, hearing, physical disabilities and/or sensory impairments. Many students also have Autism Spectrum Disorders. We have students with severe and multiple disabilities. All students have a One Plan. Some students have Health Care and Support Plans. Students can present with challenging behaviours. As the school is R – 12 students ages range from 5 years old to 18yrs. Students are often in classes with a varied age range.
- Student well-being programmes

Student well-being is considered integral with behaviour and communication programmes. Catering for students' sensory needs is important and is included in the curriculum. Student Health Care needs are attended to by a Health Support Officer and documents, plans and training are renewed each year. Student wellbeing and engagement is integrated into the Site Improvement Plan. From 2014 the site started the Be You (formally Kids Matter).
- Student support offered

The school works closely with other agencies - Kilparrin, Autism Association, Down Syndrome Society, and Port Pirie Health Service. Referrals to Department for Education support services (Psychology, Speech, Disability, Behaviour, Education Support, Attendance & Engagement etc.) are made on an individual needs basis. Students with challenging behaviours are referred to Student Support Services for additional support. We also have a Pastoral Care Worker and an Aboriginal Community Education Officer who support students and families.
- Student management

The school operates on a non aversive behaviour learning model. Student goals focus on effective communication of needs/feelings and interpersonal skills to support students learning effective and appropriate ways to communicate and have their needs met. Teaching practice is based on defusing behaviour and deflecting attention in times of escalation in order to explicitly teach skills at other times. Integrating successful behaviour learning is a core within the curriculum. Visual strategies, such as social stories, PECS, visual timetables supplement verbal and signing communication are used. Behaviour consultation and collaboration is highly valued, working with parents in a holistic way. Student wellbeing and individual programmes are discussed regularly in staff meetings.

A Behaviour Code has been developed to align to the Partnership Qualities of Respect, Responsibility, Confidence and Persistence with “thumbs up” and “thumbs down” behaviours.

- Student Voice

The students have voted for student leaders from every class. Student leaders are encouraged to play an active part in determining class/school matters. This is done through choice making, expression of personal preferences and feedback from other students. Whenever possible classes operate on class based decisions with projects to develop decision making skills and promoting student voice in opinions and recommendations.

- Special programmes

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) and the Proloquo2go iPad program are used in most classes for students who are nonverbal or with limited communication. Speech Pathologists provide advice and assessment for teaching staff. Training has occurred for staff, and continues. Dedicated SSO time is factored in to prepare visual resources and provide 1:1 additional speech support for early intervention with students when possible on top of services provided by NDIS providers.

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- Swimming and water safety

Students are eligible for the student with disabilities swimming program when documented through their OP. In Port Pirie there are outdoor and indoor pools. We use a combination of models, with some block class attendance in Term 1 and Term 4 at the outdoor pool and weekly class lessons in the indoor pool.

- Work Experience

Senior students have a range of options for work experience and post school option placement. Port Pirie has services available of Bedford (Living Skills and Business Services), Orana, SCOSA, CBS Jobnet. Post school option planning is supported through the Personal Learning Plan established in Yr 10. New SACE transitions are considered well before the final year of schooling to allow time for learning, family awareness and adjustments. NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) is involved via various agencies to ensure continuity of programs/education. Our school strives to place students in the most appropriate setting for open employment, supported employment or day options.

- NDIS

All students at our school have a NDIS plan.

3. Key School Policies

Site Improvement Plan and other key statements or policies:

- Our Trademark Purpose statement is “Developing resilient, creative and confident learners.”
- Using the new school improvement model, the school is focussing on the teaching of phonics to improve phonological awareness, reading skills and oral language skills.

4. Curriculum

- All programmes are adapted or written to suit the needs of individual learners and support student learning goals.
- The Australian Curriculum (Victorian ABLES version) informs our curriculum. Individual student goals are aligned with the Australian Curriculum and Site Improvement Plan. We refer to both the Australian Curriculum standards and capabilities and our professional knowledge of students to determine their level of achievement within the learning continuum. We also refer to the Early Years Framework (including Indicators in Literacy & Numeracy) for relevant learning for student needs.
- Community programs: Classes regularly access a range of other programmes and venues in the community as a part of curriculum. These include the Road Safety Centre, bowling, playgrounds and library, gymnastics, swimming and parks.
- Senior students participate in SACE with modified assessment plans. All Year 10 students start with Personal Learning Plan.
- Teaching methodology: Teachers use a range of communication methodologies to address the needs of students. Visual strategies, including Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), Proloquo2Go and signing are integrated into practice to assist students to be able to communicate more effectively and to understand routines. As a R-12 school, methodologies progress according to situations e.g. from early play and language development to skills training for post school options. Pedagogies are inclusive of vision and hearing impairments. Students work best in small group and individualised attention. SSOs support these programmes. ICT supports alternative communication with specialised software and hardware. The school is open to using new digital technologies that create new opportunities for student learning. Each classroom has an electronic whiteboard and a suite of iPads used to support student learning. Mini iPads are dedicated for the speech programme Proloquo2go to support student communication.
- Student assessment procedures and reporting: Informal assessment and reporting occurs on an ongoing basis. Teachers communicate with parents frequently via phone and communication book and meet for individual case management. The student learning goals involve parents in discussions about student progress, learning needs, agreed plans and the setting of learning goals. Reports are sent home at the end of each semester addressing progress

with individual goals and the content and skills focus of the class. These reports include a range of photos of students learning as additional visual reporting. Students are assessed using the ABLES assessment tool, Early Years PAT (R) and PAT (M) assessment tools as well as school developed assessments for literacy & phonics.

5. Sporting Activities

- Physical engagement is an important part of the wellbeing curriculum. Daily fitness sessions are incorporated into classroom programmes and as a whole school focus with fitness sessions regularly held each week in the Hall. The school has a range of bikes to engage students. Students also have regular access to the Road Safety Centre and regular swimming and gymnastics programmes.
Secondary Students participate in the annual Combined Basketball Carnival in Port Pirie, Soccer Carnival in Kadina and Swimming Carnival at Clare, creating teams with other sites including Port Augusta Special School and John Pirie Senior School. Bi-annually there is a 'Life Be In It' style of Combined Sports Day with other special schools and classes. This is usually well attended and provides opportunities for all students to participate and succeed. Playground facilities and a grassed area is used for AusKick and cricket. Senior students use a gym set for age appropriate fitness.

6. Other Co-Curricular Activities

- The students of the Mid North Education Centre make extensive use of the local and close by community facilities – Port Pirie Library, Bowling Club, various parks, shopping centres and other amenities. The students enjoy local cultural and arts exhibitions at the Tourism and Arts Centre and visiting performances at the Keith Michell Theatre.

7. Staff (and their welfare)

- Staff profile: The school operates with 4 classes, with a teacher for each class. As a country school staff usually live in Port Pirie and a range of close areas/ towns.
- The Leadership structure consists of the Principal and B1 Leader.
- Staff support systems: Professional development is strategic to whole school development in line with school priorities to develop staff expertise and shared understandings within the team. As a small school, staff meetings are inclusive of project and inquiry development rather than separate committees. Each day at 3.15pm there is a short staff meeting with an additional teacher meeting each week. Sound working relationships exist between staff in WH&S, PAC, AEU rep. Staff are supported by debriefing processes as required. Support from DfE Support Services is available from the Employment Assistance Program.

- Performance Management: The Principal coordinates a Professional Development Plan with all staff. Staff negotiate their individual learning goals in line with the Site Improvement Plan.
- Staff utilisation policies: Staff are deployed flexibly across the site with consideration to the needs of students, staff expertise and current professional development interests. A SSO2 is allocated to coordinate Health Care Plans and also provide intensive speech and language intervention. All SSOs are expected to work cooperatively with rosters. Several SSOs are trained and work also as Health Service Officers (HSOs) for specific students needs.
- Access to special staff. The school receives support from consulting teachers from Kilparrin Teaching and Assessment Unit each term. Health Support Officers are trained through the Access Assistant Programme. Autism Association and Downs Syndrome Society provide a service to the school as per their practices with other DfE sites.
- Staff at the Mid North Education Centre needs to have a commitment to and empathy with students and their families and an understanding of the impact of various disabilities on student learning. Working collaboratively and flexibly as a team is essential. Staff are challenged to be creative, innovative and thorough to constantly modify educational programmes to suit student needs, responding proactively to learning needs and any inappropriate behaviours.

8. Incentives, support and award conditions for Staff

- Travelling time: Port Pirie is approximately 2½ hours from Adelaide, one hour from Port Augusta and 2 hours from Whyalla. The Yorke and Mid North Region has regional offices in Port Pirie, Clare and Kadina which are approximately one hour travelling from Port Pirie.
- Housing assistance: Some government housing is available in Port Pirie and is accessed through DfE processes.
- Designated schools benefits: Teachers are eligible to apply for Special Class Allowance. Staff are eligible to claim for Protective Clothing Allowance each year
- Relocation assistance is as per DfE Policy when teaching staff are newly appointed to sites.
- The Principal's telephone costs related to the conduct of school business are met.

9. School Facilities

- Buildings and grounds
The school was redeveloped in 2003. There are 4 classrooms located within the main buildings and a Sensory Room, Art Room, Home Economics Room, Meeting Room, Staff Room, Principal, Bursar and Front Office. Each classroom has phone access, Soundfield system, a storeroom and small learning room connected to it. Each classroom has access to a fenced outdoor

area from the classroom. There are male and female toilets and an access toilet room. An internal courtyard with playsafe and equipment provides an extended learning area joined onto the Art and Home Economics Room. The Home Economics room is designed as a large cooking area with a communal eating area. There is a separate laundry. The Resource Centre is located in a transportable building. There is a Flexible Learning Area used as a hall for classes and whole school sessions and events. The grounds are spacious and are well developed with several developmentally designed playground zones. There is a basketball court, grassed area and sheltered area. A shed provides storage for bikes and physical education equipment and another shed for the groundsman equipment. All areas are fenced safely. There is a drive through facility for taxi, buses and cars to drop off and pick up students. The school is next to the Road Safety Centre which is accessed by other sites in the area. Bookings for this are made through the Port Pirie Regional Council.

- Heating and cooling. The main building has reverse cycle air-conditioning. All other buildings have split system airconditioning.
- Students have access to recreational/leisure options such as pool table, table tennis and indoor soccer game. Under-cover raised garden beds provide wheelchair access with secure facilities. There have been significant upgrades of ICT facilities with interactive whiteboards, laptops and ipads. Review and improvement with ICT facilities is ongoing.
- Staff facilities: There is a staff room with staff pigeon holes, lockers and computer access.
- Access to bus transport: The school has 2 Variety Club buses with wheel chair provision which supports access to the community and for excursions. Currently a DfE bus is stored close by and is used to transport for some students with approved transport support.

10. School Operations

Decision making structures

- There are a number of decision making forums and staff have the opportunity to participate in these. Democratic decision making forums are through staff meetings, P.A.C., Governing Council and school reviews. P.A.C. meets as required, with minutes available to all staff. SSO meetings are held regularly to discuss issues. The Governing Council meets on the 3rd & 8th week of term at 9.00am. Staff meetings, which includes SSOs, are held daily 3:15-3:30 and teacher meetings are held weekly on a Tuesday.
- The school newsletter is published several times per term. Each student has a communication diary for communication between home and school. Phone contact is often made with parents/carers on a needs basis.

School financial position

- The school is in a sound financial position. The Site Improvement Plan reflects in budget allocations. A monthly financial report is submitted to Governing Council via the Finance Committee. Each teacher is responsible for his or her class budget; other budget lines may be delegated with guidelines according to school priorities. The school's finances are managed according to EDSAS and FABSnet systems.

11. Local Community

General characteristics:

- Port Pirie is a large regional centre within a farming district and there is a large variety of employment opportunities within the government and service agencies. The main employer in the town is the Trafigura Smelters. Port Pirie is located on the Spencer Gulf and near the Southern Flinders Ranges.

Parent and community involvement

- The school encourages family support but also acknowledges the difficulties and time constraints by families who have a child with special needs. The Governing Council meetings are held on Thursday Week 3 & 8 in the term.
- Feeder or destination schools: All schools and preschools in the Mid North have the potential to be feeder schools/preschools. Students accessing the school from country areas can travel long distances. The other closest special school site facilities are in Port Augusta, Peterborough, Clare and Kadina. There are special needs classes at Solomontown Primary School and John Pirie Secondary School.
- Mid North Education Centre is a part of the DfE Pirie Partnership. There are total of 11 DfE sites in Port Pirie with four kindergartens, after hours care in one school and a Child Day Care Centre. Port Pirie has four DfE primary schools and one large secondary school, a R-12 Special School. Port Pirie also has a R-12 Catholic complex and a Christian School. There is a TAFE campus which is a part of the Spencer Institute of TAFE. There is also a Uni-Hub.
- Commercial/industrial and shopping facilities: Port Pirie is well serviced by a variety of retail and business outlets which are located in the City Centre, Pirie Plaza and along Main Road. These include hardware, supermarkets, specialty shops, three motels (servicing the Flinders Ranges), cabin park, two caravan parks, furniture/carpentry, hardware, homeware, car dealerships and light construction to service the city and surrounding rural area.
- Other local facilities: The community has a strong sporting focus with a wide variety of sports available throughout the year. Good facilities are available for a variety of sport and recreational activities. The city has a quality public library service. Cultural events are frequent due to the Northern Festival Centre, an excellent facility that hosts live entertainment and films. There is a Tourism and Arts Centre, which has quality art and craft displays and a range of exhibitions. Port Pirie is close to the Flinders Ranges for camping and bushwalking, and close to the Yorke Peninsular for water activities. Port Pirie has three large medical centres supported by a large hospital with a wide range of visiting specialists conducting day surgery. There is an Ambulance, Metropolitan Fire Service and Regional Police Station.

- Availability of staff housing: some housing is available through Office Government Employee Housing (OGEH). Private rental and a range of housing is available.
- Accessibility: Port Pirie is 6 kilometres off National Highway One. Accessibility by highways is Adelaide to the south, Port Augusta to the north and Eyre Peninsular via the north. The Premier Stateliner coach company offers a number of regular services each day with coaches from Alice Springs, Ceduna, Port Lincoln, Whyalla and Port Augusta making scheduled stops in Port Pirie.
- The Local Government body is the Port Pirie Regional Council. The mayoral and council offices are located in the city centre. More information about the Port Pirie community can be obtained from the Port Pirie Regional Council phone 08 8632 1222 and the Tourism and Arts Centre phone 08 8633 0439.