

# SCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT

Updated: 28/02/2026



Government of South Australia

Department for Education

**School number:** 0352

**School name:** Pooraka Primary School

## School Profile:

Pooraka Primary School is a welcoming and inclusive community where students, families, and staff feel connected, valued, respected, and supported. Our school is committed to fostering a safe and supportive environment, dedicated to supporting every student to achieve their full potential through high standards of learning and academic achievement.

As of 2023, our dynamic school community comprises 185 students. We are proud to celebrate and embrace our diverse population, which includes:

- 10% Aboriginal students
- 39% students with English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD)
- 22% students with disabilities (medical diagnosis)
- 35% of families receiving School Card assistance

Our Site Learning Plan is grounded in innovative, research-based, and data-informed teaching practices. Our 2026 site goals are focused on improving student achievement in literacy, specifically through the explicit teaching of phonics and spelling in Reception to Year 2, and spelling and morphology in Years 3–6. This approach empowers students to become proficient and confident readers. We are also committed to providing a highly differentiated and sequenced teaching and learning program to ensure all students' needs are met.

At Pooraka Primary School, we deeply value student wellbeing and engagement. We prioritise the social and emotional wellbeing of every child by explicitly teaching wellbeing and resilience skills through a trauma-informed approach. Our commitment to wellbeing is further strengthened by enacting the South Australian Curriculum and implementing the Department for Education's Strategy for Public Education.

We recognise the importance of the South Australian Curriculum's general capabilities and learning dispositions—such as critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, ethical understanding, and intercultural understanding—enabling our students to become confident, resilient, and capable learners. By embedding these dispositions and capabilities throughout our teaching and learning, we empower students to thrive not only academically, but as lifelong problem solvers, collaborators, and active citizens.

Our core values—Respect, Responsibility, Caring, Cooperation, and Trust—underpin all aspects of school life and support us in our pursuit of educational excellence for every student.



Pooraka Primary School has a long and proud history as a centre for the local community. Established on 14 April 1914 as the Abattoirs School, it originally served the children of Gepps Cross Abattoirs workers and local families. The school started in a two-room building, which now houses our Performing Arts and OSHC programs. The main two-storey building, officially opened in 1967, and subsequent expansions have accommodated our growing enrolments. In 2014, our community celebrated the school's centenary, marking a century of learning, inclusion, and community.

At Pooraka Primary School, we remain steadfast in our commitment to providing a high-quality teaching and learning program, underpinned by the South Australian Curriculum's dispositions and capabilities, to equip all students for success and to enable them to thrive—now and into the future.



# 1. General information

- School Principal name: Michelle Parkes
- Acting Assistant Principal name: Deborah Foreman
- Year of opening: 1914
- Postal Address: 11 South Terrace, Pooraka, 5095
- Location Address: 11 South Terrace, Pooraka, 5095
- DECD Region: Northern District: Montague Partnership
- Geographical location – ie road distance from GPO (km): 11 kms
- Telephone number: 08 82621010
- Fax Number: 08 83497838
- School website address: [www.poorakaps.sa.edu.au](http://www.poorakaps.sa.edu.au)
- School e-mail address: [dl.0352.info@schools.sa.edu.au](mailto:dl.0352.info@schools.sa.edu.au)
- Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) service: Governing Council managed

February FTE student enrolment:

<i>Feb FTE Enrolment</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>2025</i>	<i>2026</i>
Reception	28	33	17	24	16	28
Year 1	34	23	32	18	25	19
Year 2	31	32	26	31	17	31
Year 3	27	29	32	26	27	18
Year 4	28	21	29	30	27	30
Year 5	31	28	21	27	29	24
Year 6	32	27	28	24	25	30
Year 7	30					
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>241</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>183</b>

	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>2025</i>	<i>2026</i>
Total FTE Enrolment	<b>241</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>183</b>
School Card Approvals	51%	52%	52%	34%	35%	35%
NESB Total	45%	48%	48%	53%	52%	39%
Aboriginal FTE Enrolment	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%	19%

Student enrolment trends: School enrolments remain steady for most cohorts, with numbers fluctuating across years. Enrolments dropped in 2022, when our year 7 students transitioned to high school.

Staffing numbers (as at February census):

Teaching Staff	13.4 FTE
SSO Staff	251 Hours
AEO	10 Hours
GSE	14 Hours

Public transport access: Torrens Transit (school bus)

- Morning: drop off on Scott Street.
- Afternoon: pick up on South Terrace.

Special site arrangements:

- The school has a valued OSHC service.
- A breakfast club (Kickstart 4 Kids) operates daily.
- The school is an active member of the Montague / Orion Portfolio, and Montague Partnership.

## 2. Students (and their welfare)

General characteristics

- In 2026 the school enrolment is 183
- The school has 8 classes across Reception to Year 6
- Approximately 50% of our students are from EALD backgrounds including Vietnamese, Afghani, Indian, Pakistani and African nations.
- Before and After School Hours Care (OSHC) operates for school aged children in the ACRA building. Vacation Care runs during all vacation periods and Pupil Free Days.

### Student well-being programs

At Pooraka Primary School, we are dedicated to supporting the Department for Education's Strategy Area of Impact: Well-being, by developing students' wellbeing, resilience, and capacity for self-regulation. We achieve this through explicit instruction of wellbeing and social-emotional learning skills across Reception to Year 6, and by modelling respectful relationships and positive language in every aspect of school life.

A range of whole-school and class-based programs underpin our trauma-informed approach, including the Berry Street Educational Model, Zones of Regulation, JumpStart Program, Circle Time, and Brain Breaks. These programs help to create safe, supportive, and predictable learning environments and foster students' abilities to manage their emotions and interactions.

Our curriculum includes key Australian Curriculum programs and learning opportunities, such as the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum and the development of General Capabilities, to ensure all students are equipped with essential social, emotional, and life skills.

For identified groups and individuals requiring additional support, targeted intervention and wellbeing programs are facilitated by School Support Officers and Social Work students, under the guidance of our Intervention Team and in collaboration with Department support services. This ensures a tailored approach, responding to the unique needs of every learner.

The introduction of the Autism Inclusion Teacher (AIT) role adds another layer of support, enhancing wellbeing and inclusion for students on the Autism Spectrum, further aligning with our commitment to inclusive education and positive student outcomes.

In addition, the school remains strongly committed to cyber safety. Teachers explicitly educate students on appropriate, safe, and respectful use of digital technologies and the internet, reinforcing safe digital behaviours in line with our wellbeing focus.

Through these strategies and programs, Pooraka Primary School actively advances student wellbeing, supporting every child to engage, learn, and thrive within our school community.

### **Student support offered**

- At Pooraka Primary School, our Student Support and Intervention Team exemplifies a collaborative and evidence-based approach to student learning and wellbeing. Comprised of the Principal, Assistant Principal, key teachers, and School Support Officers (SSOs), this multidisciplinary team is dedicated to providing targeted support in literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional regulation for identified students. The Leadership team, together with key staff, engage in regular strategic meetings to systematically review, monitor, and adjust intervention strategies across the school, ensuring they are responsive to individual and cohort needs.
- Interventions are informed by comprehensive assessments and ongoing data analysis, including tools such as PASM, Phonics Screening, PAT-R, PAT-M, NAPLAN, and reading assessments. Students below the Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA) are offered tailored, research-backed programs such as Phonics Intervention, APAS support, reading groups, speech and language interventions, and small group or in-class support. These practices are grounded in the latest educational research, recognising the importance of evidence-based, differentiated instruction to maximise student outcomes.
- For students with additional needs—including students with disabilities, Children in Care, and Aboriginal students—learning and engagement are guided by a collaboratively developed One Plan. This plan, created in partnership with families and relevant support services, ensures a holistic and individualised approach, underpinned by rich data and functional needs assessments.
- Our Aboriginal Community Education Officer (ACEO) and Aboriginal Education Teacher (AET) play vital roles in supporting Aboriginal students' literacy and wellbeing. Working in partnership with the school's Literacy Leader and classroom teachers, the AET and ACEO implement culturally responsive, data-driven intervention programs and foster the development of inclusive and affirming curriculum and pedagogy.
- Collaboration extends beyond the school, with staff liaising closely with Department for Education specialist services, including Psychologists, Speech Pathologists, Behaviour Coaches, Special Educators, and Hearing Support Services. In addition, Pooraka Primary School maintains strong connections with external agencies and NDIS service providers, ensuring students and families can access comprehensive and coordinated support.

- Through these integrated, research-informed practices and professional partnerships, Pooraka Primary School demonstrates a committed, contemporary approach to student support and intervention, enabling all students to reach their full potential.

## **Student management**

- At Pooraka Primary School, our behaviour education processes are comprehensive and highly responsive to individual student needs. Our practices are grounded in a restorative approach that prioritises learning, wellbeing, accountability, and the repair and strengthening of relationships.
- All behaviour support and engagement interventions are firmly aligned with Department for Education policies and procedures. The Behaviour Toolkit and our school's Behaviour Education Policy provide a clear, consistent framework for the implementation of evidence-based strategies and supports across the school community.
- We embrace a preventative and developmental approach to behaviour education, ensuring that the explicit teaching of expectations, responsible decision-making, and social-emotional skills occurs across all classes. This proactive model fosters a positive school culture built on respect, inclusion, and shared responsibility.
- For students requiring additional behavioural support, a range of Department-approved processes are implemented. These may include buddy class arrangements, supervised time out, collaborative meetings with families and support services, as well as tailored take-home strategies. Such measures ensure individual needs are addressed while maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment for all.

## **Student ambassadors**

At Pooraka Primary School, student voice is highly valued and actively promoted through a range of authentic leadership and agency-building opportunities. Central to this commitment is our newly established Student Ambassador Program, which provides a platform for students to develop and demonstrate leadership, agency, and key learning dispositions such as resilience, collaboration, and initiative.

The Student Ambassador Program encapsulates high-quality leadership pathways for students across the school. Through the program, students are empowered to represent their peers, contribute to decision-making, and influence positive change within the school community. Ambassadors participate in class meetings, lead cross-age tutoring and mentoring sessions, and collaborate on Student Action and Active Leader teams. These groups are flexibly organised throughout the year to respond to emerging student and school needs, ensuring broad representation and engagement.

Senior students are provided with additional leadership opportunities through the Ambassador Program, enabling them to take on a variety of responsibilities and to earn recognition for their contribution to school life. Key roles include School Captains, who lead assemblies, coordinate whole-school events such as concerts and sports days, and foster a sense of community and pride.

Our Aboriginal students' voices are also championed, with participation in the 'Nunga Group', where senior Aboriginal students assume leadership and mentoring roles, supporting younger peers and contributing to a culturally inclusive environment.

Through these initiatives, Pooraka Primary School places a strong emphasis on student agency, ensuring every child is equipped with the dispositions and capabilities needed to lead, collaborate, and thrive—both at school and beyond.

### **Student opportunities**

Pooraka Primary School offers comprehensive specialist programs in Performing Arts, Physical Education, Technologies, Science, and Italian.

Targeted English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) groups have access to First Language Maintenance and Development (FLMD) programs.

The school's choir, comprised of our senior students, participates in the Primary Schools Music Festival.

Students are regularly involved in a variety of SAPSASA and sporting events throughout the year.

Whole school events and celebrations, such as Harmony Day, NAIDOC Week, Book Week, Musica Viva, Sports Day, National Simultaneous Storytime, and STEM projects, are considered valuable opportunities for learning and wellbeing for both students and the broader community.

A significant number of our students participate in initiatives such as the Premier's Reading Challenge and the Be Active Challenge.

## **3. Key School Policies**

Site learning plan:

**Vision Statement:** *Students are empowered to become effective, resilient, critical, and creative thinkers. We provide an environment that nurtures the develop of skills, knowledge, and understanding necessary for students to solve problems, enabling them to thrive in an ever-changing global landscape. We are committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where every student can reach their full potential and contribute positively to society*

### **Improvement Journey 1**

#### ***Effective/Resilient Learners through the SA Curriculum Dispositions***

- All learners can articulate and demonstrate the dispositions of effective learners
- All learners can apply the dispositions across all school contexts and improve their learning through increased resilience, being resourceful and reflecting on their learning

## Improvement Journey 1

### ***Effective/Resilient Learners through the SA Curriculum Dispositions***

- All learners can articulate and demonstrate the dispositions of effective learners
- All learners can apply the dispositions across all school contexts and improve their learning through increased resilience, being resourceful and reflecting on their learning

### ***Effective/Resilient Learners through implementation of trauma informed practice***

- All learners can identify and action pro-active and productive strategies to increase their readiness to learn.
- All learners can apply the necessary strategies to become self-regulated learners, improving their learning outcomes.

### ***Effective/Resilient Learners can demonstrate their Literacy Knowledge across all areas of learning.***

- All learners can clearly articulate what they are learning, why they are learning and how they apply their literacy knowledge to deepen understanding and improve application.
- Improved literacy assessments showing growth in phonics, spelling, morphology, reading and writing.
- Students can apply their literacy knowledge throughout all areas of school life.

### **Recent key outcomes:**

Our **Year 1 phonics data** has shown a significant improvement in phonics understanding in the early years over the past 4 years. In 2026, 100% of students achieved in the Year 1 Phonics Screening.



## 4. Curriculum

### Subject offerings:

- All areas of the Australian Curriculum, with Italian as Languages.
- PE, Performing Arts, Italian, Technology and Science are our Specialist (NIT) subjects.

### Special needs:

- Students with disabilities or additional / complex needs access support and intervention via IESP funding. The support can be from a teacher or SSO one on one, small group, or within the wholeclass – depending upon needs and adjustments required.
- Children with a disability are supported in their learning by a comprehensive One Plan.

### Teaching methodology:

- Teachers utilise the Australian Curriculum and South Australian Curriculum to design and implement high quality teaching and learning programs.
- Teaching for Effective Learning (TfEL) and High Impact Teaching Strategies (HITS) are pedagogical practices and teaching strategies delivered by our teachers.
- Teachers use assessment data to inform their teaching and learning programs – and to provide a high quality, differentiated learning program.
- Learning programs and teaching methodologies are based on current research and resources.
- All teachers attend professional learning to ensure their practice is relevant, evidence based and inclusive of all students.

### Student assessment procedures and reporting

- There are a range of ways (formal and informal) that teacher's report student learning progress. Teachers communicate and report regularly to families via the SeeSaw app – where they share learning, data and celebrate successes. Teachers keep detailed records of student learning, achievement and progress.
- Although this is not limited, a general outline of ways we report to families is:
  - Term 1 – Meet and greet and Formal Student Learning Conversations/Interviews – One Plan meetings.
  - Term 2 - Written report
  - Term 3 - Informal check in with families as required.
  - Term 4 - Written report

### Joint programmes:

- Kindy in Schools Program – our local kindy visits the school weekly and shares our spaces. They also join the school for events like Book Week and Harmony Day.
- Transition – Preschool to School – coordinated transition visits during term 4
- Transition – Primary School to High School – two state-wide transition days in term 4
- Transition to High School STEM Project

## 5. Sporting Activities

- All students participate in our specialist PE curriculum each week.
- Students also have the opportunity to participate in a range of SAPSASA and sporting events throughout the year including: swimming, athletics, cross country, rugby, cricket, basketball.

- The school partners with a range of sporting associations and clubs to provide additional sporting opportunities including: Footsteps dance lessons, Cricket Australia, Rugby SA, Sports for Schools
  - tennis, basketball and badminton.
- Students also participate in swimming and water safety sessions each year.

## 6. Other Co-Curricular Activities

- Premiers Reading Challenge
- Premiers Be Active Challenge
- Instrumental music program (select instruments) available at different times
- Students and families also participate in other cultural and community events of significance

## 7. Staff (and their welfare)

### Staff profile

- Teaching and Support Staff as detailed above

### Leadership structure

- Principal
- Assistant Principal
- Key teachers lead various aspects of curriculum and teaching & learning via a coaching and peermentor structure.

### Staff support systems

- Three working collaboratively in teams – Junior Primary, Middle Primary and Upper Primary – and across teams – in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) structure
- SSO staff work in teams – managed and supported by the Deputy Principal
- Staff support systems are set up to encourage team work, collaboration and professional relationships built on respect, trust and open communication.
- Staff wellbeing is a high priority.

### Performance Management

- Professional Development Plans (PDP) and processes reflect site improvement priorities, goals and actions. They are tailored to individual needs, with improvement and accountability at the forefront. PDP's focus on individual strengths and professional learning opportunities. PDP meetings occur regular throughout the year.
  - The Leadership team engage in regular and purposeful instructional leadership processes, including classroom observations.

### Access to special staff

- Close partnerships have been established between Pooraka Primary School and our departments support services.
- School staff collaborate with specialist support services via NDIS and Autism SA.

## 8. School Facilities

### Buildings and grounds

- The school comprises of a main building – housing all primary classes; an Open Space Unit – housing the junior primary classes; a gymnasium / hall; and the 'old school' – housing performing Arts and OSHC.
- There is a canteen kitchen space – utilised for breakfast club
- A shelter shed – utilised for sensory movement play and shelter
- The oval is large, with nature play opportunities around the outskirts
- There are two playgrounds and a nature play inspired sandpit area.

### Heating and cooling

- All classes, work spaces, offices, the multipurpose space and the hall are air-conditioned.

### Specialist facilities and equipment

- The Resource Centre and Computer Room are shared facilities
- There are two wellbeing & engagement rooms within the main building – lunch clubs are facilitated in these spaces each day.

### Student facilities

- There is a school canteen kitchen space used for breakfast club daily and selling ice blocks and snacks. The space is also used during community events.
- The Seniors Room is located within the main building

### Staff facilities

- Air conditioned, spacious staff room in the main building
- A shared space and kitchen area is located within the Open Space Unit
- There are a range of offices and shared spaces for staff to utilise for independent work
- Toilet and bathroom facilities are located within the main building, Open Space Unit and gym area.

### Access for students and staff with disabilities

- Ramps and wide doors make buildings easily accessible. A disabled toilet is located near the hall. There is allocated disability parking in staff and parent carparks.

### Access to bus transport

- As stated above, public transport is easily accessible
- Students access public and private buses for excursions

### Other

- The hall is hired for a variety of community activities and events.
- The school buildings and grounds are used on Saturdays for Vietnamese School

## 10. School Operations

### Decision making structures

- The Governing Council in collaboration with the School Principal oversees the operation of school policy and decision making.
- Staff meetings and PLC meetings are held weekly – staff share information and make decisions at a local level – with a focus on student improvement and professional learning.
- Committees (Literacy, Numeracy and Whole School Wellbeing & Engagement) meet regularly
- Student voice is valued and sought through a variety of processes

### Regular publications

- SeeSaw is the main method of communication between school and home
- School newsletter – published via the SeeSaw app
- Transition to school information booklets
- Other general information and policy documents are available via the school website

### School financial position

- The school operates a consolidated account. The Governing Council is kept up to date regarding financial information.

## 11. Local Community

### General characteristics

- The school is located within the Pooraka community.
- Unity Park is a short walk away and the space is utilised by the school and family members.

### Parent and community involvement

- Parents and community members are involved in the school community via the Governing Council, OSHC Committee, volunteering opportunities, and attending class and whole school events.
- Pooraka Primary actively encourages families to be involved in the school and their child's education.

### Feeder or destination schools

Students come from a range of feeder kindys and schools. Our main connections are:

- Kindy : Pooraka Kindergarten, Pooraka Yawarra Children's Services – Early Education and Care
- High Schools: Valley View Secondary, Para Hills High School and Roma Mitchell Secondary.

### Commercial/industrial and shopping facilities

- The Gepps X Home HQ, South Ausytalian Produce Markets and Ingle Farm Shopping Centre are all in close proximity to the school.

### Other local facilities

- GP and medical centres, chemist, a range of restaurants and cafes, tennis club, Velodrome and soccer stadium are located nearby.

### Local Government body

- City of Salisbury Council

### Access to bus transport

- As stated above, public transport is easily accessible
- Students access public and private buses for excursions

### Other

- The hall is hired for a variety of community activities and events.
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