



Murray Bridge Special School

An Anxious Child Is Not A Learning
Child

North Tce Murray Bridge 5253

www.mbss.sa.edu.au

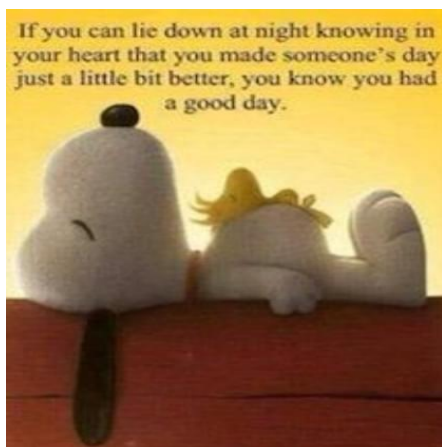
08 85 325 345

08 85 325 456

0438 894 176



Term 1 2026



Important Diary Dates:

Pupil Free Days:

***Friday 06th March 2026**

***Friday 05th June 2026**

***Thursday 10th September 2026**

***Friday 13th November 2026**

Closure Day:

***Friday 11th September 2026**

The school is closed on these days

Term 1 2026 Dates:

27/01/2026 – Start of
Term 1 2026

10/04/2026 – End of
Term 1 2026

Welcome Back!

A huge welcome back to all our precious young learners who have returned for the 2026 school year. School staff are all so very pleased to see you again, often that bit taller and more grown up! A special welcome too is extended to all of our new families beginning their child's learning journey with us. **Welcome James, Darius, Bryson, Garang, Shayan and Andy!**

Things really are back in full swing quickly, and although it often takes a significant amount of re-adjustment for our young people returning to the early morning starts and routines of school after the summer break everyone has been back and raring to go!

Staffing News

It is with great excitement we welcome back Charlotte (Learning Facilitator LA5), Jasmine (Learning Facilitator LA5 and LA2), Pam (School Services Officer LA5), Tamara (School Services Officer LA5), Jackie (Learning Facilitator LA4), Chris (Learning Facilitator LA4), Anne (School Services Officer LA4), Sam (Learning Facilitator LA2), Kirstie (School Services Officer LA2), Lily (Learning Facilitator LA1), Madi (School Services Officer LA1), Katrina (School Services Officer LA1), Donna (School Services Officer, Administration and Finance), Maegan (School Services Officer Administration and Special Projects) and Ashleigh (Learning Facilitator Non Instruction Time).





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Our school is small enough for us to function as an interactive family team for the benefit of all our learners. Although there are specific staff allocated to each Learning Area it is important our learners benefit from the diverse range of skills and abilities of all staff.

Who Is Our Newsletter For And What Is Its Purpose?

The target audience for the Murray Bridge Special School Newsletter is our school community and other interested individuals or groups. Murray Bridge Special School we take the privacy and safety of our learners very seriously. Some of our learners are under a confidential court order, and for safety reasons, some families do not wish their child's image or location publicized. Our newsletter is uploaded onto the internet and it becomes available to any persons choosing to access the net. Therefore photographs of young people attending our school, and specific information which may in any way identify our young people will not be included in the newsletter in order to maintain their safety, confidentiality and privacy. The purpose of the newsletter is to educate and inform. Specific information about individual and/or class learning goals and activities will continue to be shared with families through access to their child's Learning Facilitator. This may happen on a daily basis through Communication Diaries, SEESAW, by telephone, and/or face to face contact.

The Importance Of An 'Engineered Environment'

Education and learning researchers such as Carpenter, Barber, Nielson and McDonald, and organisations such as Autism SA and Learning4All all agree on the fundamental importance of engineering the environment to maximise learning outcomes for young people living with complex and/or multifaceted challenges. Evidence based individuals and groups who have demonstrated long term positive learning outcomes for our young people have rigorously and critically analysed our young people's learning spaces. Our learning spaces are based on their recommendations to best accommodate our learners needs.

Of greatest significance is acknowledging the effect of sensory overload on our learners. Sensory overload increases anxiety. Our learners may then communicate their anxiety in a range of behaviours which may cause stress and harm to themselves and/or others.





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Sensory overload blocks the ability to focus. When you can't focus you can't learn. When you can't focus you can't build relationships. The school has deliberately and carefully structured our learning environment to best meet the learning needs of our learners. The learning environment therefor may look quite bare and empty to a cognitively average adult.

This is a carefully considered and deliberate strategy based on research to assist our learners be less anxious, and focus to learn. Our passion is our young people's learning. Our focus is our young people's learning. Therefore our school environment is shaped to maximise learning opportunities for our learners, not to be aesthetically pleasing to cognitively average adults.

A graphic example of the power of acknowledging sensory overload and shaping a learning environment to assist our young people focus to learn and be successful is illustrated below.

WHERE'S THE CHAIR?





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Emergency Procedures

It is a family responsibility to provide the school with up-to-date emergency contacts, consent forms, medical information and court orders. It is essential we are able to contact you and/or a nominated adult in cases of urgency. Please contact the school if your details change at any time so we can update our information. Thank you.

ATTENDANCE – All Day Every Day!

We strive for all learners to attend all day, every day. Our learners need to attend school regularly in order to engage fully in the curriculum and gain maximum benefit from schooling. Regular attendance enables our learners to access all areas of the curriculum provided, enabling them to reach their full potential.

Did you know missing one day of school a week adds up to almost three years by the time your child finishes school. Every day matters!

We also acknowledge learning will only occur when certain physiological and psychological needs are met. Our learners may have fragile unpredictable health concerns or require frequent ongoing medical assessments or appointments. It is important our learners attend only in appropriate circumstances. For example if a learner is unwell or significantly stressed; is recovering from a recent illness; has had recent surgery or hospitalization, or requires a standard of health or psychological care outside of the duty of care abilities of teaching or school support staff, then it is not in the learners best interests to attend.

Our goal is to eliminate any **'unexplained'** absences for our learners. An unexplained absence is 'a learner who is absent without explanation by parent/guardian or school or other authority (e.g. Department for Child Protection)'

If your child is unwell or unable to attend school please contact us directly as soon as is practically possible so we can provide any support you may need.

If your child is continuously absent without explanation after 3 days you will be contacted by the school to see if we can assist in any way.

As adults let's work together for your child to attain maximum attendance for maximum outcomes!!

Data – Review, Reflect and Act

We constantly monitor and review the effectiveness of our pedagogies, process and practice at school, through the ongoing collection and analysis of a range of data sets.





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The review includes exploring best placement of our young people to meet their learning and care needs during the school year. At the very beginning of the year, and between week 5 and week 8 of Term 1 of each school year we collate initial data and begin analysis and review. For some of our young people this may mean placement in a new learning area with a different team that has been assessed by staff to better meet their learning and care needs.

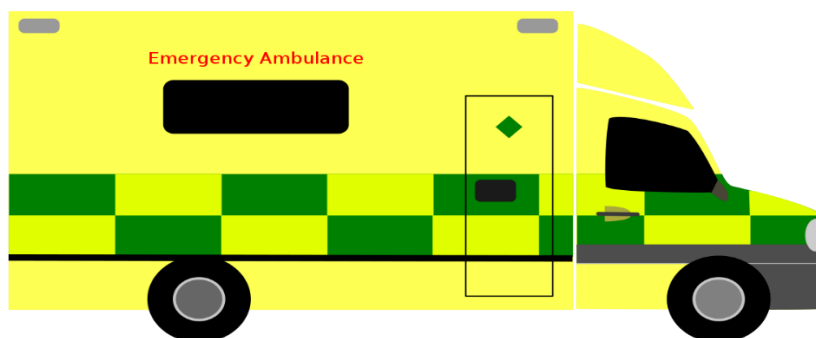
Although movement of our young people into different learning areas can occur at any time throughout the year, between week five and eight of term one is particularly important as staff have had time to make initial assessments regarding safety, access and the learning environment.

Link SA Dial-a-Ride

The LinkSA Murray Bridge Dial-a-Ride (1200) is a flexible, on-demand community bus service operating within the Murray Bridge township. It provides transport, including to central locations like Maurice Road, Standen Street (Drakes), Finch Road, and Robin Street, often operating on a cashless, pre-booked basis.

- **Booking/Contact:** Phone [1800 227 576](tel:1800227576) or call the LinkSA Murray Bridge office at: 08 8532 2633.
- **Service Details:** It is a, "hail and ride" style service focusing on community access.
- **Route 1200 Information:** Specific stops include Maurice Rd, Drakes Bus Shelter (Standen St), Finch Road, and Robin Street.
- **Accessibility:** Reservations for wheelchair access is essential.

Ambulance Cover





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If any staff are unsure or uncomfortable about the health of any of our young people, and believe the situation to require immediate medical assessment and/or intervention an ambulance will be called immediately. Then the process of notifying the family of the school decision will begin. **School staff have basic first aid training only.** Staff will call an ambulance to health situations families may feel comfortable and knowledgeable in managing themselves. An ambulance will usually be called rather than waiting for a described pattern of recovery that may not occur. Paramedics will make an assessment as to whether the young person requires further medical assistance or assessment. The Ambulance service will send the account to the family of the child. We encourage all families to have Ambulance Cover. However if you are not covered notify the school and we will send you a form so you can apply to have the account paid by other means. Attending to our young people's health, safety and wellbeing is our major concern.

Reminder School Hours



School personnel are not scheduled for direct supervision of our learners before 8.30am. School personnel are scheduled into meetings and other school business before this time. **Young people are not to arrive before 8.30am as there is no appropriate supervision available.** School staffs are on duty for learners from 8.30am and learning programs are scheduled for our learners from 8.30am onward. A later arrival time for your child may be negotiated with your child's Learning Facilitator.

Doors are closed at 3.00pm.

Staff are required to undertake other duties from 3.00pm onwards and are not available for learner supervision after this time unless in an emergency.





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Everyone Is A learner – Everyone Is A Facilitator Of Learning

We all appreciate as adults how much more pleasurable, exciting and inspiring it is to be in the company of positive, calm, respectful and supportive people. The same applies to our learners. As cooperating adult role models and helpers of our learners it is important we continually focus on the positive aspects of life and learning, and promote through direct demonstration respectful, unconditional positive regard. **As adults we are in control, and are guides for our children to model good practice and set caring and respectful expectations.** I have had the pleasure of noting the wonderful interactions between families, our children, school staff and others. I thank you sincerely for this.

Telephone Systems

The landline telephone system for our school can be quite haphazard and confusing for our families due to our school being linked to the master system at Murray Bridge North Primary School. When a staff member from our school leaves a family member a message from any of our landlines if you then return the call via the number listed on your screen it automatically connects you to the North Primary School and not our school. The call is taken by Murray Bridge North Primary School administration staff who then need to transfer the call to our school. Not only is this potentially inconvenient and difficult for the North Primary School but there is no guarantee the transfer will be successful.

The most effective way to return a call or to ring the school is via our direct landline number: 0885 325 345.

We have a school mobile phone which is required as a back-up should school landlines fail. You can also always call the school on this number as well. For convenience you can also text through daily absences or any other message. Donna checks the mobile phone every morning and also during the day.

****The school mobile number is: 0438 894 176****





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If Your Child Is Unwell

Protecting the health and wellbeing of our precious learners is a priority. Many of our learners have fragile unpredictable health concerns and/or require frequent ongoing medical assessments and appointments. **It is important our learners attend only in appropriate circumstances.**

For example if a learner is unwell or significantly stressed; is recovering from a recent illness; has had recent surgery or hospitalization, or requires a standard of health or psychological care outside of the duty of care abilities of teaching or school support staff, then it is not in the learners best interests to attend, and if they come to school you will be contacted to take them home where they can receive the care and attention that cannot occur in a school setting.

If a child is unwell or has other pain or illness, then very little if any learning occurs. Rather they can end up having an uncomfortable or distressing day at school. There was an overwhelming number of viruses and other nasties circulating last year. Families were keeping their children home when they were not well to recover in the comfort and love of their families.

Thank you for not only caring for your own child, but for those around them who may be significantly impacted by your child attending when unwell.

Premier's Reading Challenge



This year as part of individual communication and literacy programs, your child will participate in the Premier's Reading Challenge.





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At our school 'successful participation' in the Premiers Reading Challenge does not mean a learner needs to be able to read independently to be successful.

For some of our learners participation may mean interpreting the meaning of picture books, reading single words, or simple text.

For some of our learners' successful participation in the Premiers Reading Challenge means demonstrating enjoyment of being close to, communicating and having a shared experience with the storyteller.

For some of our learners successful participation means the development and nurturing of relationships while interacting with the storyteller and/or the group.

Successful participation can mean developing an understanding of the purpose of communication and interaction with another person.

Successful participation can mean enjoying being included in a group activity with a communication/literacy theme, having the opportunity to model and learn from peers and adults.

Successful participation can mean acknowledging the purpose of a book, holding it and turning the pages.

It can mean looking at the pictures and/or print and tracking from left to right.

Successful participation for our learners can mean being positively and meaningfully included in any of the many pre-requisite skills required for reading.

We are extremely proud of the effort our learners make on a daily basis to participate, engage, learn and enjoy success. We hope you will be as proud of your child's achievement and success in the Premiers Reading Challenge as we will be!

SeeSaw – A Wonderful Way To Share



Don't forget to check your SeeSaw communication from staff at school to see some wonderful examples of your child at work. Learning Facilitators' will be attaching the curriculum learning area focus to the photos to clearly illustrate how the activity connects to learning. If you can, please leave a comment directed to your child, as they love having these read out to them and it reinforces their sense of joy and pride in their achievement.





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Vehicle Users

** Please remember the area under the veranda directly in front of the school is a No Parking Zone. This space is for drop off and pick up only. Parking is available on the street or in the two areas used for car parking directly opposite the school. The space underneath the veranda at the front of the school must be kept clear for use by emergency vehicles such as ambulances. **

There are safe practices which apply when a vehicle is in the area under the veranda directly in front of the school.

***Turn the car engine off when your child is embarking or disembarking.** Do not leave the engine running.

***Do not reverse out of the area.** You must wait for the vehicle in front of you to move forward and out. Please take the time to wait in queue and drive out correctly. A wait of a few minutes may prevent a devastating and heartbreaking accident.

***If your child refuses to get in or out of the car, you must get out of the car to assist them.** Staff are not responsible for getting your child into school, or into your vehicle to go home (taxi service excepted).

***Please respect the 5km speed limit restriction when entering and moving through the veranda area.**

We need these safe practices in place to ensure that this very busy area, often shared with child pedestrians accessing the North Primary school remains a safe space. Our young people and others in the area are put at extreme risk when adults choose not to follow these requests. The area is clearly posted as 'One Way' only. Part of the access road under the veranda area is located on Council land and owned by the local Council. This area may be monitored by Council for breaches of rules.





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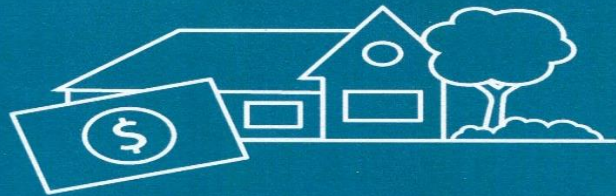


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School Card Applications

If you are eligible for School Card, please complete an application on line as soon as possible. The online application is available at www.sa.gov.au/education/schoolcard. If you need any assistance applying online, just contact Donna at school and she is very happy to help you complete the application. Donna has done this with other families and it only takes approximately 10 minutes.

WHAT IS SCHOOL CARD?



School Card provides financial help
to cover the cost of school fees.

WHO CAN APPLY?

To qualify for School Card, your family's income must be below a specific limit. This limit depends on how many children are in your care.

You must **also** meet at least one of the following:

- have a child or children aged four years or over who attend a school full time
- be an independent full-time student studying year 10, 11 or 12
- be an adult re-entry student undertaking subjects to complete SACE (years 11 and 12).

You can find more information and apply for School Card here:

www.sa.gov.au/education/schoolcard

HOW WILL I KNOW IF I AM APPROVED?

After you apply, you will receive a letter in the mail advising if your application has been approved. Please note, School Card is not a student identification card.

WHO CAN HELP ME APPLY?

If you would like more information or need help applying for School Card, please visit your child's school office and show this flyer.

Hi! I would like help to apply for School Card.



sa.gov.au/education/schoolcard



Government of South Australia
Department for Education



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Department for Education

Murray Bridge Special School Principal – Vicki Smith February 2026 Page 11 of 15
We acknowledge the Ngarindjeri people as the traditional owners of this land on which we meet and work. We respect and acknowledge their spiritual connection as the custodians of this land and that their cultural heritage beliefs are still important to the living people today. Nguldi Arndu (Welcome)



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APPLYING FOR A SCHOOL CARD



All types of School Card applications are now online.

You can access the online forms from any device that gets internet, including mobile devices, such as tablets and smart phones, as well as laptops and computers.

Applying online is easy! Simply follow the steps below.

- STEP 1** Visit sa.gov.au/education/schoolcard
- STEP 2** Select the type of School Card you would like to apply for (for example 'Type A') and follow the prompts.
- STEP 3** Complete all mandatory fields.
Please note: you cannot submit your application unless all mandatory fields are complete.
- STEP 4** Once you have completed a page click on the 'NEXT' button.
- STEP 5** Once you have filled out all pages click the 'SUBMIT' button.
Please note: if you exit the form without clicking 'SUBMIT' your details will be lost.

You can save the form, and return to complete it at another time, by clicking on the 'SAVE' button.



sa.gov.au/education/schoolcard



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Murray Bridge Events Calendar

Visit the following events link to explore what is available in Murray Bridge to you and your family. There are many great offerings in Murray Bridge Library, particularly for those who love to take advantage of daylight savings!

<https://www.murraybridge.sa.gov.au/discover/events/event-calendar>

MyTime

MyTime organises supported groups where parents and carers of children with disability or other additional needs can feel understood, share ideas and access quality information and resources. MyTime is time for you. MyTime groups are free to join, and being a part of MyTime does not affect your NDIS funding. Check your eligibility.

Group name: Murray Bridge

Venue: Tinyeri Children's Centre, 65 Jarvis Avenue

Coordinated by: Women's and Children's Health Network

When: Weekly on Monday at 12:30pm–2:30pm

Contact: Renae Kennewell, 1300 867 110

A trained facilitator helps group members get to know each other and learn more about local resources and support services.

Preschool-age children are welcome at MyTime sessions. While you unwind, your child is kept engaged nearby by MyTime play leaders.

MyTime is a place where you can unwind, and share ideas and experiences with others who understand.





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What happens in a MyTime session?

By talking about their experiences and listening to each other without judgement, members share their highs and lows, including how they have navigated challenges. Through this, they build connections with people in similar situations, which can lead to an increased sense of belonging and wellbeing. MyTime is a place to socialise, to discuss, to get information, and to support and be supported by other parents and family carers. It's a world away from appointments and therapy.

Members get to plan the group sessions around their specific needs as carers. Each group has between 4 and 12 members, who usually meet once a week for 2 hours during school term. It's not necessary to attend every session – members choose to go when they have time.

SA Dental Service

Keep Your Kids Smiling.....



Dental care is FREE for ALL babies, preschool and most children under 18 years at School Dental Service clinics. Our specially trained staff provide comprehensive dental care to help prevent pain and tooth decay. We will always talk to you about what your child needs before we provide any treatment. We have been a trusted government dental service for children since 1969 and bulk bill under the Child Dental Benefits Schedule.

Call us now for an appointment!

Your local clinic is: Murray Bridge Community Dental Clinic

Phone: 8531 9300 or use the link on our website to ask us to contact you.

www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/dentalappointment



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Scholastic Book Club

We will continue receiving hard copy catalogues from the Scholastic Book Club in 2026. When the catalogues arrive we will send one home to all families with their child, and then you can make the decision whether to explore what is on offer or not.

Below is the link to the parent information brochure which outlines all the information regarding Scholastic Book Club and how to purchase goods should you choose. **Please remember the school cannot accept cash payments, the process for purchase is completed by families directly on-line.** There is no obligation whatsoever to purchase anything, and if you would prefer your child does not have a catalogue to look at or to bring home, please let us know.

https://issuu.com/scholastic_australia/docs/scholastic_book_club_parent_guide?fr=s0DVIMDM0NDU5MDI

"When little people are overwhelmed by BIG emotions it's our job to share our calm, NOT to join their chaos" L.R Knosk Child Development Researcher U.S.A

Enjoy Every Precious Moment Together!

Warmest Regards Always,
Vicki Smith
Principal
February 2026

