

SCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT

Updated: 6/21

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 success. The school prides itself on meeting the educational needs of all its students through offering a broad variety of subjects, either at school or through other agencies such as the WREN network and Open Access. The school is one of 6 regional High Schools sharing a VET focus, Hospitality and Tourism being our specialty. The student catchment area consists of Penola, Coonawarra, Kalangadoo and Nangwarry townships as well as farming communities within the district.

1. General

Acting School Principal:	Lesley Okholm
Acting Deputy Principal:	Judy Goodes
Year of Opening:	1962
Postal Address:	43 Cameron Street, Penola SA 5277
Location Address:	43 Cameron Street, Penola SA 5277
Department for Education 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		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Secondary	Special, NAP, Ungraded etc	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0		
	Year 8	22.0	30.0	20.0	19.0	27.0	27	22	
	Year 9	26.0	19.0	24.0	25.0	20.0	22	26	
	Year 10	26.0	20.0	26.0	25.0	19.0	18	20	
	Year 11	24.0	19.0	17.0	17.0	21.66	12	16	
	Year 12	15.0	20.0	16.0	15.0	11.4	14	12	
	Year 12 plus	0	1.0	0	0.0	0.0	7	0	
TOTAL		113	109	103	101	99.06	101	96	
School Card Percentage		22%	17%	20%	23%	39.2%	37%	41%	
NESB Enrolment		0	0	1	1	2	1	1	
Aboriginal Enrolment		2	2	2	5	4	4	3	

Student enrolment trends:

Penola High School is a Category 4 Index of Disadvantage site with an enrolment of 97 students at the end of 2020. There are 60 classes taught across 8-12 and all areas of learning in the Australian Curriculum 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 100. With the inclusion of Year 7s from 2022 onwards the school population will rise to over 120.

Staffing numbers (as at February census):

The leadership team comprises a Principal, Deputy Principal, and 1 Coordinators. The teaching staff of 13 includes 1 Teacher-Librarian. Of these, 10 are permanent. We have 7 permanent and 1 temporary ancillary staff who provide administration, classroom and individual support and a grounds man who completes the staff team. In 2022 an additional Year 7 teacher will add to our staff in a permanent position.

Public transport access:

The community is served by a daily Penola to Adelaide bus service. The Mount Gambier Airport is a 40 minute drive away, 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, while, 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, (Wattle Range Education Network - WREN) maximising staff expertise in the district and broadening curriculum opportunities for students. Currently PHS provides Stage 2 Maths to other sites, while our students access Stage 2 Physics and Psychology from Millicent High School.

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 7 and 8 (2022 only) intake is drawn from Mary MacKillop Primary School, Penola Primary School, Nangwarry Primary School and Kalangadoo Primary School in the normal catchment area. Approximately 40% of the students are in receipt of school card.

Student well-being programs

A 'Learning for Life' program operates for 2 lessons per week where students develop a range of life skills and engage with social education topics such as cyber safety and sexual education. 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 student's achievement and wellbeing.

Penola High School recognises the importance of ensuring incoming students are thoroughly prepared for life in a secondary school. Our transition programme consists of visits by teaching staff to our feeder primary schools as well as visits by the primary school students to Penola High School. In addition, there are many collaborative activities between the sites that familiarise staff and students with each other and provide for more seamless transition to High School.

Each year students, including the SRC run a Twilight Tour of Penola High School, showcasing what the school has to offer for prospective students and their families. This successful practice has continued. This complements the regular school tours run within and outside of school hours by the Principal.

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 are a range of support structures including strong staff student relationships, intervention and support programs, student counselling, course/career counselling and individual case management. Year 12 students are participants in an onsite mentoring program.

We support families struggling with attendance through attendance campaigns that identify attendance issues, meet and collaborate with students and families and devise solutions for improvement. This may include mentoring programs and alternative timetables.

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.' Our strategies promote positive behaviour for learning. In 2020, all staff engaged in Restorative Practices training. Restoring relationships forms the basis of our philosophy on resolving grievances and anti-bullying.

Student government

The students elect their Student Representative Council representatives from their home groups. Two Senior Presidents are elected by the whole school. Leadership skills are developed through local training days. Student led activities focus on improving student wellbeing, school pride, humanitarian awareness days and sporting and social opportunities. The SRC provides student voice in learning, on Governing Council and in decision making processes where appropriate. An important role of the SRC is fostering inclusion and healthy lifestyles.

Special programmes

One 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 2019 – 2021

All stakeholders (staff, students and parents) were involved in the process of determining the strategic direction and improvement goals of the school for the 2019 – 2021 period. All students and staff participated in an online survey and 67% of our parent group participated in a phone survey conducted by the Governing Council. The vision statement for the School Improvement Plan was created from the feedback provided by these stakeholders.

All teaching staff participate in analysing data and reviewing goals and targets. They determine the challenges of practice and actions that are required to meet these targets.

Vision Statement:

Through continuous improvement, Penola High School aspires to prepare students for their future as positive, resilient and creative members of their community.

We envision a safe, collaborative learning environment with innovative and responsive teaching across the curriculum.

By maintaining high expectations of ourselves and other, we aim to ensure all students and families are engaged and empowered to meet the challenges of education, work and life in a challenging global environment.

Goals:

1. Increase student achievement in writing, particularly academic writing genres.
2. Increase students' reading and comprehension skills, particularly interpreting information.
3. Increase student growth in numeracy in the Middle School.

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.

In 2021 the school will consist of a dedicated Middle School (Years 7, 8 and 9) and Senior Secondary (Years 10, 11 and 12). The curriculum in the middle school will be clustered into core teaching areas; Global Perspectives (including English, History, Geography and languages), The Physical and Natural World (including Science, Digital Technologies and Maths), Healthy Lifestyles (including PE, Learning for Life, Civics and Citizenship, Child Protection and SHINE) and How we express ourselves (which includes the Arts).

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.

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. Penola High School offers a mentoring program by connecting Open Access students to a teacher mentor in the school. In 2021 students participate in Stage 1 Digital Technologies, Stage 2 Chemistry, Stage 1 Psychology and VET Animal Studies online.

Special Needs

The Deputy Principal and Coordinator support Special Needs students with the assistance of an SSO and individually prepared learning programs. They are supported by Special Educators from the Mt Gambier Education Office.

Special Curriculum features:

ICT

All students in Year 7-9 are issued with a Chromebook, and Years 10-12 with a loan laptop for their exclusive school use. 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. Staff are trained in the use of Google Classroom to support 'virtual classrooms' and the IT committee actively seeks ways in which technology can be used to enhance learning in a 21st century environment. The school has purchased 30 iPads for use in classrooms and to support the learning. Students in STEM and IT classes make great use of our 3D printer. A small suite of high end desktops are available for students using CAD and other high resource programs, within our STEM space.

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 Integrated 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.

VET : Traineeships and apprenticeships

Students complete their learning through part-time or full-time school and also through on-the-job training through their workplace provider. They complete a range of modules and attend weekly or monthly depending on the course.

School based apprenticeships enable students to complete their SACE whilst getting a start on a Certificate vocational course.

The school works closely with local industry to establish work experience and traineeships/apprenticeships where a student selects this as their pathway.

Student assessment procedures and reporting

Week 5 of Terms 1 and 3: Traffic Light reporting (work habits)

Week 10 of Terms 1 and 3: Reporting with teacher comments and grades

Week 2 of Terms 2 and 4: Three way interviews

Week 10 Term 2 and Week 9 Term 4: Graded reports

Teachers encourage ongoing communication around student growth and make themselves available to work with students and parents as the need arises.

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. Opportunities to compete at a state level are also enabled.

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, Coordinator (Learning, Curriculum and Pedagogy) and a Year Level Organiser at each year level.

The Improvement Committee meets twice a term with Leadership to plan strategically for improvement.

Performance Development

Performance Development processes encourage reflection, development and contribution to school SIP 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 built into the performance development 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 Department for Education policy.

Principal's telephone costs

As per Department for Education policy.

9. School Facilities

Penola High School was built in 1962. Both the Administration and Science buildings still stand today having benefited from numerous upgrades and improvements such as painting and internal re-furbishing over the years. Just recently the administration block has received new floor coverings while the downstairs classrooms, corridor and foyer has been painted throughout

The Community Library housed within the school's main building has a free internet service available to both the students and wider community. The Community Library boasts an extensive supply of reading materials for all ages as well as a designated children's area. The Community Library also has a multi-function meeting room available for both internal and external use. Upgrades late 2020 should see the Library become an even more pivotal part of the school and community.

The Drama and Art rooms located within the Science building have been refurbished during 2019 as part of a minor works program.

The school has two stand-alone buildings, the original Tech Studies building houses an internal classroom that can be shut off from the main area that houses the stand alone fixed machinery. The Home Economics building has a carpeted textile classroom and a refurbished kitchen area. Stage 1 of the kitchen project included purchase and installation of five gas oven and cooktops as well as a central ventilation unit. Air conditioning and a new roof was completed as part of Stage 2. The third stage involved gutting of the original kitchen cupboards and bench tops, which have since been replaced with a more modern neutral look. Penola High School specialises in Food and Hospitality, and Tourism. Café 43, is a stand-alone cottage that has been converted to a fully operational commercial kitchen and service area. From 2022 students will access our program at Certificate level in this area.

The school grounds are extensive and well-manicured. While the shedding is also extensive there are plans to revitalise some of the existing shedding, demolish that which is beyond repair plus add a second hand shed to the current suite. The school Ag farm houses a large shed and is fenced into 4 paddocks with running water for stock purposes. Currently these house 4 mini goats and a chicken as part of our 9/10 Agriculture program.

Over the course of 2018/2019 the local Men's Shed group have built a stand-alone shed that includes both a toilet and kitchen facility. The Men's shed meet on school grounds each Wednesday.

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 twice a term 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 shared on Sentral, are a vital form of communication. A daily calendar is available on Sentral and the staffroom LED screen. 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 and are available electronically on the staff drive and school website.

There is an active Facebook page which is a means of sharing and celebrating the school successes.

Staff communication include a weekly Principal's update, "The Same Page" and the 'WHIP' (What's happening in PHS) from the Deputy Principal.

Other communication

The school website www.penolahs.sa.edu.au and Facebook page are regularly updated with information.

School financial position

As a small regional High School, we struggle to manage on our funding however we work hard to be strategic and maintain programs and infrastructure. 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. The town borders the Coonawarra wine district, renowned internationally for its wines and is central to the forestry industry.

Parent and community involvement

A very positive relationship exists between staff, students and parents who participate in school activities and support the school in many ways. Parents place a strong emphasis on learning and support sporting events and many attend 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 and Penola Show fundraiser. A focus on revitalising community understanding and support has been a focus in 2021.

Continuity of Learning – Transitioning to Penola High School

The Continuity of Learning Program at Penola High School is designed to provide students and parents with a wide range of familiarization opportunities when students are transitioning from primary school. Students have experiences with our curriculum offerings and also extra-curricular activities. Key focus areas include working as a team, embracing changes, communication and cooperation, and catering and monitoring individual differences. Processes are established at this early stage to ensure students are able to develop holistically throughout their time in our school environment. Open and transparent communications are encouraged to enable the educational experiences for our students to be positive and successful. We work as a team and respond to each other's needs to ensure there are always knowledge and understandings surrounding our students' education and their social interactions at 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 from REX and QANTAS-link 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 (including a free swimming pool) and numerous cafes, restaurants, shopping outlets and galleries, reflect the artistic talents of the community. The local IGA supermarket and majority of shopping outlets trade six to 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 4-4 ½ hours.

Local Government body

Wattle Range Council

Arthur Street

PENOLA SA 5277

Telephone: 08 8737 2391