

## SCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT Updated: 12/2016

**School Name: Blackwood Primary School**

**School Number: 0565**

Courier Address : Southern Adelaide – Mitcham Hills

Principal : Mr Phil Garner

Deputy Principal : Ms Kristyn Robson

School e-mail Address: [dl.0565.info@schools.sa.edu.au](mailto:dl.0565.info@schools.sa.edu.au)

Postal Address : 4 Seymour Street, Eden Hills 5050

Location Address : 4 Seymour Street, Eden Hills 5050

District : Southern Adelaide – Mitcham Hills

Road distance from GPO : 11 kms

Phone No. : 08 82785355

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CPC attached : No

### FTE Enrolment (as of Term 3 Census)

	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	TOTAL
2012	22	30	28	25	28	34	43	39	249
2013	25	20	31	32	25	26	42	40	241
2014	35	29	25	40	38	28	30	47	272
2015	31	36	32	23	38	41	33	35	269
2016	32	39	51	41	36	46	44	36	325
2017	48	36	43	59	45	42	48	43	365

October 2017 total FTE Enrolment 325

Male FTE 167

Female FTE 158

School Card (Persons) 46

NESB Total (Persons) 44

EALD 73

ATSI FTE Enrolment: 4

Disabilities: 23

### Staffing numbers

The staffing allocation for 2017 is 22.46 and includes 1.5 administration, 0.4 library, 1.0 LOTE (Japanese/German), 0.4 EALD, 0.2 School Counsellor and 13 classroom teachers.

## **Special arrangements**

Blackwood Primary School is situated in an attractive hills setting overlooking Wittunga Botanic Gardens. The 5ha grounds are spacious and allow for a variety of play and learning experiences. Blackwood Primary School is located immediately adjacent to the Blackwood High School.

## **OSHC**

The OSHC program is administered by the Governing Council. The program offers before school care from 7.00am and after school care until 6.00pm. The service is currently approved for 30 before school and 45 after school places and there is no waiting list.

A vacation care service is conducted each holidays. OSHC has recently completed an assessment against the National Standards and received *Exceeding the Standard* in three areas and *Meeting the Standard* in four Areas.

## **Enrolment trends**

Enrolments are increasing with 2 classes being added in 2017.

Because of the proximity to Flinders University and Medical Centre and the attraction of the adjacent Blackwood High School, the enrolment trends differ from many other schools in that a large number of students join us during their years at primary school, with many new enrolments coming from interstate and overseas.

## **Public transport access**

The school is 11kms from the GPO and 1km west of the Blackwood Shopping Centre. A bus service, which also connects with the train, stops outside the school on Shepherds Hill Road. Many of our students also access the various specific school buses which service the adjacent Blackwood High School. The nearest railway station is Coromandel, which is accessed from the south of the school grounds and is less than 5 minutes walk from the school.

## **Students and their welfare**

### **General characteristics**

The students at Blackwood Primary School come from a diverse range of cultures are motivated to learn and enjoy opportunities to demonstrate leadership and initiative. Our staff take seriously their responsibility to ensure that all children have the opportunity to succeed, and programs are in place to support students who are disadvantaged. We have a number of students who are from Non English Speaking backgrounds and we have English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) support program.

### **Student management**

The school values its partnership with parents in negotiating, setting and implementing effective behaviour management practices. A Behaviour Management Plan has been developed in consultation with students, parents and staff and supports students to take responsibility for their behaviour and learn to make appropriate choices.

The behaviour management policy is reviewed regularly. Staff appreciate the support of parents in implementing the behaviour management policy.

The students are further supported through the focus on the school's values of *Care, Harmony* and *Excellence* and the International Baccalaureate Learner Profile.

## **Student Government**

The school's primary forum for student voice is the Student Action Team and class meetings. The team meets weekly, with representatives from each class. The Student Executive also meets regularly with the Mitcham Hills Cluster SRC to plan cluster events. Student Leadership at Blackwood PS is further supported through House Captains.

## **Autism Intervention Program**

In 2013 the school began an Autism Intervention Program. This consists of up to 16 students in two classes of eight.

Staffing for the unit includes a B1 Coordinator, 3 full time classroom teachers and 3 support staff. Facilities include specifically designed classrooms with outdoor undercover play area and a withdrawal room, coordinator office and teacher preparation area.

The programs are established for students with High Functioning Autism with verbal and non-verbal cognitive abilities within the low average range or above. The program uses the Zigurat Model of intervention to build skills and increase independence in key areas of challenge.

On completion of set goals, the students transition back to their home school.

## **Pastoral Support Worker**

The school has a, for a total of 12 hours per week. Their role is to support students, staff and parents to be part of a community which exemplifies the school values of *Care, Harmony and Excellence*.

## **Music and the Performing Arts**

The school has strong programs in Music and the Performing Arts, with a Senior Choir involved in the Festival of Music, a middle primary choir involved in school and local productions and a 'Big Sing' each week for junior primary students. An instrumental music program is provided in guitar, piano/ keyboard, and strings.

Year 3-7 students are also involved in music productions. These may consist of:

- year level productions involving all students, where everyone gets a chance to explore their skills as performers and/or production crew
- Club 13 for Year 6 & 7 students who perform at local kindergarten and child care centres.

## **Learning Support**

The school offers a range of student learning support programs (see Curriculum)

## **School Counsellor**

We have a 0.2 School Counsellor who is also the AIP Coordinator.

## **An IB School**

The Blackwood Primary Vision was reviewed in 2014 and incorporates the attributes of the International Baccalaureate Learner Profile. Much work has been done to interpret the meaning of this vision and the learner qualities it outlines and to explore what it means for the actions of students, parents and staff. Staff are expected to model and promote these values and qualities.

## **Our students develop the qualities of the IB Learner Profile:**

**Inquirers.** They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

**Knowledgeable.** They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

**Thinkers.** They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

**Communicators.** They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

**Principled.** They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

**Open-minded.** They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

**Caring.** They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

**Risk-Takers.** They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

**Balanced.** They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

**Reflective.** They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

## SITE LEARNING PLAN PRIORITIES

Current priority areas for 2015 and 2016 are:

1. Focus Area 1 - Develop a whole site improvement cycle for Reading that ensures consistency, cohesive practice and improves student achievement
2. Focus Area 2 - Develop a whole site improvement cycle for Mathematics that ensures a focus on the Australian Curriculum capabilities.
3. Focus Area 3 – Explore and incorporate teaching and learning practices that inspire a community of lifelong learners
4. Focus Area 4 – Engage students, their families and the wider community in the development of a “Community school

These priorities are developed in the context of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years programs and the new Australian Curriculum. We also refer to the Teaching for Effective Learning framework is key to our pedagogy.

Our 2017-19 Site Improvement Plan will be developed following our External Review in Week 3 Term 1 2017.

## Curriculum

**International Baccalaureate and Inquiry Learning:** We believe the International Baccalaureate methodologies are consistent with the qualities outlined in the Blackwood Vision in that they promote engagement of students, constructivist learning through inquiry and a global perspective.

The school received authorisation for the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IBPYP) for Reception to Year 7 in August 2010. The structured framework called the Program of Inquiry requires class teachers to teach six transdisciplinary units of inquiry each year. This provides consistency and cohesion to the curriculum we offer.

Specialist teachers conduct the Japanese/German, Music/Performing Arts and PE, based on the Blueearth program.

## Special needs

Students with special learning needs are identified through:

- 1) Analysis of the Year 3, 5 & 7 NAPLAN, Pat M and Pat R and INCAS and PIPS. English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) Scales are also used.
- 2) Testing by Guidance Officers and Speech Pathologists
- 3) Teacher request as a result of classroom observations

Identified students are then supported through one of an extensive range of support programs which include:

- Primary Learning Support including the ‘Multi-lit’ literacy support program and English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD)

- Junior Primary Early Intervention, including a reading recovery program
- Special Education for students with disabilities.
- Too Smart Maths Intervention Programme

These programs are conducted by parents, specialist teachers or School Support Officers (SSOs). Student Support is decided and monitored by a Student Review Team.

### **Teaching methodology**

Teachers are encouraged to use methodologies that reflect current research and which are consistent with the constructivist approach underpinning the International Baccalaureate. Inquiry methodology is a major approach from Reception to Year 7.

It is expected that student voice plays an important part in the curriculum development process and that ICT is an embedded learning tool. Our core business is teaching and learning to ensure that our students reach their full potential and achieve high literacy and numeracy standards.

Assessment and reporting processes at Blackwood Primary School include interviews and /or acquaintance nights at the start of the year. By the end of term 1 teachers, parents and students are involved in three-way-conferences with a component of student reflection and goal setting. Optional interviews may occur at any time during the year and are offered again formally in term 3 as a student-led conference. A written report is provided in terms 2 and 4 and Work Samples/Portfolios are sent home regularly.

Several joint programs occur at a student level between schools such as shared environmental projects (the Monarto Zoo planting), Mitcham Hills College Sports day in term 4, a shared School Social (disco) in term 2.

With the Primary Years Program at Blackwood Primary we have established links with other government and private schools in South Australia and are involved in networks of librarians, teaching and learning coordinators and Language other than English (language B) teachers.

### **Sporting Activities**

The Governing Council encourages and supports the participation of students in out of school hours competitive sporting activities. A sub-committee manages out of school hours sport. The school currently fields numerous teams in soccer, Aussie Rules football, cricket, netball and basketball. This school competitive sport is supplemented by involvement in a wide range of SAPSASA inter-school, district and State programs for Years 5-7 and which occur during school hours.

An annual swimming and aquatics program is conducted through the Marion Pool and Port Noarlunga Aquatics Centre.

In 2008 the school began a Jump Rope Demonstration Team which visits other schools to do performances and run workshops in skipping. Skipping is keenly practiced by our students and we have a school-level team of students who practice together and develop routines.

The opportunities for successful participation in sports complement the school Physical Education and Fitness Program. All students are provided with a PE skills lessons each week by a specialist teacher using the Blue Earth program.

Reception and year one students also participate in a coordination programme each week.

There is a program of sport skills clinics conducted by sporting associations, clubs and students from Blackwood High school and Flinders University.

### **Other Co-Curricular Activities**

The school has two Sports Days each year, a Sports tabloid event and an Athletics Day for years 3 to 7. These are run in House teams by House Captains elected by students in the respective House.

Our Senior Choir participates in the Primary Schools Music Festival and the Middle Primary Choir performs at local events. Music / drama productions and a Music Showcase Assembly are held each year.

Environmental Programs are an important part of the curriculum at Blackwood Primary, especially considering our 'parkland setting'. Classes have participated in such programs as Gutter Guardians, composting, recycling, Clean Up Australia etc.

### **Debating**

Year 5, 6 and 7 students have the opportunity to be involved in SA Debating competitions during Term 2 and 3 each year.

### **Staff and their welfare**

Staff who come to Blackwood invariably comment on four aspects of their work:

1. The high standard and availability of resources both facilities and learning support materials in print, visual and ICT mediums.
2. The variety of grounds and sporting spaces and the impact this has on student behaviour and curriculum programs.
3. The interesting diversity of the school population, with a wide range of willingness and ability of students and families to engage with the learning process and life of the school.
4. The high levels of professional commitment of colleagues and the collegiate support offered.

### **Staff profile**

The annual staff opinion survey and DiaF scan shows that staff, both teaching and ancillary, enjoy working at Blackwood. There is a mix of ages and experience of staff and some teaching staff are part time. In 2017, most teaching staff are female, with 3 male teachers.

### **Leadership structure**

The formal leadership structure comprises a Principal, Deputy Principal, an IB curriculum Coordinator and School Counsellor. Shared leadership is valued by staff and is supported through the decision-making structure.

### **Access to special staff**

The school has an ongoing and positive relationship with a range of external support staff, which includes Instrumental Music Teachers, Educational Psychologist, Speech Pathologist, Social Workers, Interagency Personnel and staff at the neighbouring high school (Including Counsellors.)

### **Staff Support Systems**

Collaborative year level teams are expected to work and plan together. This is supported by shared non-instruction time and extra shared release time for planning with the teaching & learning coordinator. Regular meetings, some of which occur during weekly staff meetings, support collaborative planning.

All permanent staff are provided with IBO authorized training. As well, the school organizes in-school IB workshops and related training. Individual and whole school training is also provided in Literacy and Maths.

PAC and the OHSW committees assist in the support of staff and in ensuring equity of access to resources and support. The staff psychological health is audited through the online staff survey conducted in Term 3 each year. Results are analysed and actions planned as a result.

A comprehensive induction process is conducted with all new staff.

The school has an ICT technician for three days per week providing technical support to teachers.

### **Performance Management**

Our process follows DECD guidelines. Most staff are engaged in the Step 9 process of goal setting and review. Each staff member is assigned a line manager and chooses a mentor. Performance management is jointly designed by the staff member, the mentor and their line manager and includes the following:

- A meeting early in the year to discuss the needs of students and the support each staff member will require to meet student needs.
- A jointly agreed plan to provide the feedback mechanisms and documentation most suited to the needs and career aspirations of the individual staff member.
- Subsequent meetings focus on monitoring:
  - 1) student achievement
  - 2) Staff actions towards and reflections on the achievement of their individual professional goals.
  - 3) the work of each staff member in achieving the priorities of the school.

All staff are provided with information about T&D opportunities which relate to the goals developed through performance management.

### **Utilisation Policies**

SSO time (other than administrative) is allocated to support ICT, Resource Centre, Science resource organisation and Student Support programs.

Leadership time is allocated to:

1. the Deputy Principal, in order to support SAPSASA and other sport management.
2. the administrative SSOs, to allow the school to have two SSOs in attendance every day. This was as a result of concerns expressed through the Psychological Health audit, OHSW committee and SSO meeting.

The Personnel Advisory Committee monitors equity issues and gives advice to the Principal or HR related issues.

### **Buildings and Grounds**

All school buildings are of solid construction. All buildings apart from the gym have reverse cycle air conditioners. All classrooms have an interactive whiteboard and a Sound Field System.

The Federal Government building program has allowed us to provide significantly larger teaching spaces and the following facilities:



A main two-storey building houses the administration area, staff room, meeting room, the Year 3-7 classroom spaces.

A Resource Centre includes ample teaching and work spaces as well as an ICT suite and centralized storage for all teacher/student reference and support materials.

The Specialist teaching areas are adjacent to the main building and include a Performing Arts suite with a stage area and instrument practice rooms and a Japanese room.

Two separate building houses the Junior Primary students. Each of the JP classes has a separate teaching area of double classroom class dimensions and shares the full-size wet area, 6-terminal computer pod, withdrawal room and shared Science/Creative Activity wet area.

The Ashby Hall houses a gymnasium, multi-purpose space, sports stores and PE office.

The grounds are extensive and well maintained and provide a vast range of play and sporting opportunities. The grounds consist of 2 ovals, 1 tennis/netball court and 1 basketball/netball court, three playground areas and hard play areas. There is a large bush land area, known as “the gully” where students engage in nature play and imaginative play. The scope and variety of play activities afforded by our grounds has a very positive impact on student behaviour.

### **Specialist facilities**

Music room, gymnasium, ICT rooms, Resource Centre, Japanese Room, Special Education areas and dedicated OSHC rooms.

### **Student facilities**

A canteen operates 3 days per week during lunch time and meets the Australian Healthy Eating Guidelines.

### **Staff facilities**

All staff have access to the staff lounge with refrigerator, microwave, stove, hot and filtered water facilities. There are showering facilities, a teacher resource area and access to ICT including personal laptop, wireless internet and interactive white board.

### **Access to transport**

Trans Adelaide bus stop outside the school and the Coromandel train station is a 5 minute walk at the rear of the school.

## **SCHOOL OPERATIONS**

### **Decision making structures**

The school has a decision making policy, where decisions are made by consensus, voting or through consultation. The staff meeting is the forum for whole staff decision making, although many decisions are made at a committee or team level. Staff committees are:

- PAC.
- OHSW.
- Year level teams (SSOs, Junior, Middle & Upper Primary and Specialist teachers)

Governing Council has a constitution, standing orders and sub-committees in Finance, Sports, Fundraising and OSHC.

The school has a regularly updated website, which is widely used by prospective and current parents, students and teachers. There is also an outside noticeboard where notices and information are

displayed for parents and the wider community.

Classes communicate in a range of ways including regular program overviews/class newsletters, email communication and class websites or blogs.

### **Other communication**

Internal communication is facilitated through the use of Learnlink ICT including an extensive 'staff only' drive containing school policy and curriculum support materials, term calendars, a room booking system and method of bookmarking websites for student use. Mobile phones (2) are used for yard duty in the 'Gully' and 'South' areas and are available for staff during excursions and camps.

All staff have access to Learnlink.

### **School financial position**

The school has a Finance Committee that develops and closely monitors the annual budget and reports at least twice per term to the Governing Council.

The school is in a sound financial position and has expended a large amount of money in recent years on upgrading ICT provision. The majority of the school's funding is provided through the Government Global Budget and the Materials & Services Charge to parents. Other funding is a result of grants/special project funds.

### **Local Community**

Blackwood/Eden Hills is a diverse community, with a wide range of housing types. A shopping precinct is within walking distance of the school offering a large range of stores and services. There is a Library and many community and cultural programs are locally available, such as choirs, theatre groups etc.

The Blackwood Community Recreation Centre is adjacent to our school and offers options for students and parents. Medical services are available and include Flinders Medical Centre.

It is a short train journey to Adelaide, or a short bus trip to shopping and community facilities at Marion, Mitcham or Unley. The Blackwood Park/Craigburn Farm housing development is close to the school, accessed by a bridge over the railways line to the rear entrance of the school.

Blackwood Childcare Centre is within walking distance of the school and will take children to the Blackwood Kindergarten. The school has an Out of School Hours Care Service and Vacation Care. The High School is adjacent to Blackwood Primary and Flinders University is in close proximity. There is also a childcare centre located at the University.

Blackwood Primary offers a range of types of involvement for parents and community members and respects the decision of parents on the level of involvement they are able to offer. The

Governing Council and its sub-committee structure encourages extensive parent involvement in decisions about the school. Parent skills are extensively utilised in the sports program and the classroom. In addition, parents help with the library and during excursions and camps.

Many of our students join us during their primary school years from overseas, interstate or from other schools. Our Reception students are mainly drawn from Blackwood, Eden Hills and Flinders University kindergartens. The majority of our Year 7 students enrol at Blackwood High School.