



SCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT

Updated: 03/02/2020

School number: 0123

School name: ECHUNGA PRIMARY SCHOOL

The school operates as a Preschool – Year 7 school and the Principal has leadership and management responsibilities for the preschool and school.

Echunga is a small, semi rural, close knit community with a safe environment for children.

Echunga Primary School and Preschool is a small, semi-rural school in the beautiful Adelaide Hills. Our school has a proud history and, I believe, is a hidden gem in the picturesque Adelaide Hills area. We are fortunate to have beautiful grounds for our students to play in. We also have a mini orchard of apple, pear, plum and cherry trees, a chicken enclosure and vegetable gardens. Our setting is stunning and our community environment nurtures learning and positive attitudes.

Our values of Care, Creativity, Challenge and Respect have been developed collaboratively with our community of students, staff and parents. We encourage children to challenge themselves and to take risks with their learning, promoting a growth mindset and strategies for children to use when in the Learning Pit.

As a small school our staff work as a team to provide the best learning and social opportunities for students, and all staff get to know the students and their needs. Our students are everyone's responsibility.

Our onsite preschool provides an excellent Early Years environment and a comprehensive transition to school. As the children are on site there are many opportunities to engage in activities with the rest of the school, including regular interactions with the Reception class, assemblies and performances.

We are very lucky to have a supportive community of parents and families, many of whom volunteer their valuable time for the benefit of the school and our students.

Echunga Primary School also provides additional services such as a Before and After School Care and Vacation Care OSHC service.

General Information:

Principal: Pam Thompson
Postal Address: C/- PO Echunga, SA 5153
Location Address: 802 Echunga Road, Echunga, SA 5153
Year of opening: 1926
Region: Adelaide Hills (Heysen Partnership)
Geographical location: 7kms from the GPO
Phone No: 08 8388 8306
Fax No: 08 8388 8451
Email address: dl.0123.info@schools.sa.edu.au
Preschool attached: Yes

February FTE Enrolment

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Reception	11	14	14	16
Year 1	11	12	13	13
Year 2	12	11	12	11
Year 3	8	12	9	13
Year 4	10	6	10	8
Year 5	10	10	6	11
Year 6	14	10	8	7
Year 7	3	9	9	7
Total	79	84	79	86
Male FTE	32	39	47	47
Female FTE	37	38	32	39
School card approvals	12	19	16	
NESB Total	3	3	3	1
Aboriginal Enrolments	1	1	0	0

Enrolments have been relatively steady with a slight increase for 2020.

Staffing

The school currently has a Principal, 5 classroom teachers, 2 of whom share a class. a specialist Arts & Technologies teacher, who also teaches in the upper primary class and 4 SSOs.

There is a preschool with 0.6 teacher time and 1 part-time SSO.

OSHC

An Out of School Hours Care program operates daily during term time. OSHC operates from 7:00am to 9:00am every morning. On preschool days (every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesdays of even weeks) OSHC is open from 3.00pm to 6.30pm. On Wednesdays of odd weeks and every Thursday and Friday OSHC operates from 3:15pm to 6:30pm. A Vacation Care program operates during school holidays from 7:00am to 6:30pm.

Public transport access

Limited public bus service to Mt Barker.

Students (and their welfare)

Our students:

- are active
- enjoy the wonderful environment at our school
- are polite and respectful to others
- are caring and considerate of each other

A sense of whole school community is fostered through programs and initiatives involving Preschool – Year 7, engendering positive relationships and a caring attitude between older and younger children.

The Early Years (Preschool – Yr 2) and Primary Years educators work together collaboratively, with a shared philosophy about curriculum, well-being and the learning environment.

All staff have high expectations of student engagement and learning outcomes.

Children readily participate in a range of physical activities both at school and in the community.

Having the preschool onsite enables a positive and seamless transition from Preschool to Reception. Preschool children are involved in assemblies & special events, regularly access the school library, and engage in regular buddy class activities with the Reception class.

Pastoral care & wellbeing programs

All classes participate in “What’s the Buzz?” lessons to enhance and support social and emotional development.

All educators work collaboratively to provide supportive structures for student well-being. Proactive intervention is practised together with appropriate grievance procedures and Restorative Practice framework principles.

The Pastoral Care Worker is available 10 hours per week to support the well-being of students, parents and staff.

Student Support

Children who need support in their learning have a One Plan. Some students receive SSO support either 1:1 or in a small group as required to work on literacy, numeracy or social skills.

Student management

Behaviour management issues are not a major concern in our school. When they do arise, restorative practice strategies are used and are part of everyday activities. Restorative processes including affirmation, informal affective statements and interactions and small impromptu conferences (restorative circles) are used to enable students to restore relationships and take control of their own behaviours (intrinsic motivation). Students who find it difficult to manage their behaviour through informal strategies are supported in their learning by formal conferences, which may involve parents, the Behaviour Support Coach, teachers and the Principal.

Student government

Student representatives are elected onto the Making a Difference group to work on ideas for fundraising and the outdoor and learning environments. Students are also encouraged to take on leadership positions, such as Sports Leaders and School Leaders. There are also opportunities for leadership in areas such as recycling, care of our chickens and setting up assemblies and special events.

Special programmes

We value the sense of community across the school site through:

- Preschool children accessing school programs (assemblies, special events)
- Special whole school events, such as Apple Day, National Simultaneous Storytelling Day, Book Week, Arts Masterclass, STEM Day and Community Night
- Library Resource Centre being accessed by Preschool – Year 7 students
- Student involvement in community activities, such as Remembrance Day ceremony, ANZAC Day vigil, Community Carols Night
- Connections with community groups, such as RSL
- R-7 cross-age group activities, such as cooking, Science Week activities, Art Masterclasses

Key School Priorities

School Vision

Together we will strive for academic, social, emotional and personal achievement, working within a positive culture that promotes the pursuit of excellence and the understanding of others.

Curriculum

Curriculum Areas

Echunga Primary & Preschool's core business is teaching and learning in the 8 required areas of study of the Australian Curriculum in a supportive school environment where relationships, participation of the total school community and trust are all truly valued.

Spanish is offered to all students Preschool – Year 7 and is taught through Open Access College in a combination of online and face to face lessons.

Technologies and The Arts are specialist subjects for all R-7 students weekly.

Staff Professional Development

Teachers regularly share their teaching practice and engage in professional learning together at staff meetings each week. Teachers create a Performance Development Plan with goals for improvement aligned with the school priorities in the School Improvement Plan.

In 2020 our priorities: Literacy, Numeracy and Learner Readiness. Actions to improve in these areas include assessment and feedback, intellectual stretch, assessing and tracking writing through Brightpath, metacognition and “What’s the Buzz?”.

Special needs

Students with identified learning needs are supported through the Learning Support program. This program is dependent on allocated Department for Education funding to cover SSO support, resources, individual staff training and the development of skills and expertise.

Special curriculum features

There is a focus on the environment and sustainability. The school encourages students to bring ‘nude food’ to reduce waste. There is a strong focus on recycling of food waste for composting and to feed our resident chickens.

Healthy lifestyle is encouraged through the preparing for, growing of, eating and cooking of fresh fruit and vegetables from the school fruit and vegetable garden. Students are encouraged to graze from the vegetable garden.

An indigenous bush tucker garden has been developed with the support of a grant from NRM. The area also incorporates a yarning circle and fire pit which is used for class and whole school learning and activities.

Teaching methodology

The school has been part of a Heysen Partnership initiative to participate in the Collaborative Impact Program based on John Hattie’s Visible Learning research. Classroom practice is based on research and all teachers commit to regular self-review and reflection on their practice.

Echunga Primary School staff use a range of effective assessment and feedback strategies, including peer observation, feedback, exit slips and mentoring. All teachers use learning intentions and success criteria as part of their practice. All classrooms are equipped with computers, iPads, interactive whiteboards/screens and access to printer, including a 3D printer. Classroom teaching practices provide explicit instruction and support the use of high-impact strategies.

LDAM (Learning, Design, Assessment and Moderation) planning activities and student learning moderation are undertaken as part of teacher professional learning teams with local schools.

Assessment procedures and reporting

- Assessment and reporting procedures incorporate:
- student self-reflection
- NAPLAN
- PAT data
- Phonics Screening Check in Year 1
- Running Records as per Department for Education requirements
- Australian Curriculum data
- Normed assessments
- Student work samples
- Brightpath tool
- 3 way conferences with parents & students
- Summary reports in Terms 2 and 4.

Joint programs

Professional development is undertaken with staff from nearby Meadows, Macclesfield and Callington Primary Schools.

Preschool (kindergarten) offers whole day sessions, on Mondays, Tuesdays and alternate Wednesdays.

Sporting Activities

Students in the Yr 5-7 classes are encouraged to participate in a variety of SAPSASA activities.

All students are encouraged to participate in a range of sporting activities, often supported by a Sporting Schools grant.

There is an annual water safety program for R-5 students at Woodside pool and a 1 or 2 day aquatic program for Yr 6/7, alternating between Port Noarlunga and Murray Bridge.

R – 7 Sports Day is held annually. Students participate as house teams; Battunga, Kuitpo and Jupiter.

Other Co-Curricular Activities

General

Learning opportunities for students are sought to enable access to specialist educators, performance groups in The Arts and sport clinics.

Special

There is a commitment to supporting student involvement in local community activities eg Remembrance Day, ANZAC Day Vigil, significant celebrations.

Preschool – 7 participate in Literacy & Numeracy Week and Book Week initiatives.

Staff (and their welfare)

Staff profile

Primary: There are 5 class teachers (2 part-time), 3 permanent and 1 contract. There is 1 permanent part-time specialist teacher, who is also a classroom teacher. 2 SSOs have permanent hours, and 2 SSOs are on contract.

Preschool: There is 1 permanent part-time teacher and 1 permanent SSO.

Leadership structure

The Principal supports and encourages shared leadership across Preschool - Year 7. Teachers are encouraged to initiate and take on leadership responsibilities in a variety of areas, including The Arts, Science, Environment, Student Voice, Early Years, Preschool, Playgroup and Spanish. Examples are: organising whole school Reconciliation Week activities; leading the development of the indigenous garden; organising the National Simultaneous Storytelling Day; whole school science activities for Science Week; and the planning for Art Masterclasses. Staff are also given opportunities to take on leadership in project areas, such as STEM 500 & Brightpath.

Performance Development

Within the context of a small school, PD is based on professional and personal conversations between the Principal and individual staff members with an emphasis on a mutually supportive approach.

School Facilities

Buildings and grounds

Echunga Primary School is fortunate to be surrounded by a beautiful, natural environment. The Echunga school grounds, including extensive natural play areas, oval and playground areas, are studded with large eucalypt and pine trees, which provide shade in the summer months. There is a small bitumen play area and a large sandpit. A small apple orchard and fruit and vegetable garden are centrally located between the oval and the bitumen play area, allowing easy access for children. Adjacent to the school are community facilities including a full-sized oval and tennis courts, the Echunga Golf Course and a wetland environment, all of which can be accessed by the school.

The buildings vary in type and age. Upgrading has occurred over time to ensure that buildings have furnishings which are in fair condition. The Administration area, staffroom, and a classroom are in the original stone building (1929). A verandah/pergola structure links this building with the Alluvial Hall. A red brick building (1960) contains 3 classrooms, the Resource Centre, Computer Room, Art room/kitchen and Music Room. There are 3 single transportable classrooms, linked by a verandah area.

The Preschool is in a standalone building, which is securely fenced, a short distance from the original stone brick building. The OSHC building is positioned centrally on the site. There are various storage sheds across the site.

Classrooms and the administration area have reverse cycle airconditioning.

Staff facilities

The Staff Room is in the Administration building. There is a teacher preparation room in the red brick building.

Access for students and staff with disabilities

There are access ramps to the transportable buildings. Wheelchair access to toilet facilities is available.

Access to bus transport

Buses need to be hired for excursions.

School Operations

Decision making structures

These include PAC, Staff Meetings, Governing Council and sub committees, and Student Voice.

Regular publications:

newsletter; Skoolbag app; Seesaw app; local media as appropriate; facebook page; website.

Other communication:

parent workshops; communication boards in the school.

School financial position:

Is aligned with the Site Improvement Plan and Department priorities.

Special funding:

The school community is proactive in seeking grants to support initiatives.

Local Community

General characteristics

Parent and community involvement

The parent community is enthusiastic and extremely supportive of the school. There is an active Governing Council which participates in planning and policy development with staff and students, to ensure that the best possible opportunities exist for learning at EPS. Subgroups which contribute to the governance of the school include Finance, Fundraising, OSHC, Grounds & Facilities, Communication and Early Years. A collaborative approach is fostered between staff and parents of the school community.

Feeder schools

Students from Echunga Primary School transition to a range of public schools (Heathfield High, Mt Barker High, Eastern Fleurieu Middle School Campus, Urrbrae Agricultural High School) and private schools (Cornerstone College, St Francis De Sales).

Other local care and educational facilities

Within a 10km radius of Echunga there are TAFE, childcare and family day care, hospital, nursing home and public library facilities.

Commercial/industrial and shopping facilities

Within the township of Echunga there is a hotel, post office, shop, hairdresser, florist, mechanic and bakery. Nearby there is a function centre and within 10 kms police, hospital and ambulance facilities and commercial shopping facilities.

Other local facilities

The school is located within close proximity of football, netball, tennis and golf facilities. There is a CFS station, church groups, and a scout group locally.

Accessibility

Echunga is approximately 30 kms from the CBD.

Local Government body

Mt Barker District Council