

# *Penong & Coorabie Districts School*



## **School Context Statement**

*Responsibility - Honesty - Respect - Caring*

*Excellence - Courage - Collaboration*

# 2024



**Government of South Australia**  
Department for Education

# SCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT

**School number:** 0338

**School name:** Penong Primary School

## 1. General information

School name : Penong Primary School

School No. : 0338

Principal : Mrs Karen Murray

Year of opening : 1899

Postal Address: Penong 5690

Location Address: Penong 5690

District Eyre

Distance from GPO 850 kms

Phone No: 08 86251017

Fax No: 08 86251009

School Website address: [www.penongps.sa.edu.au](http://www.penongps.sa.edu.au)

School e-mail address: dl.0338\_info@penongps.sa.edu.au

Child Parent Centre (CPC) attached: Yes

Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) service: No

## February FTE Student Enrolment 2024

Primary	Special, N.A.P. Ungraded etc.0.0
	Reception 2
	Year 1 10
	Year 2 4
	Year 3 5
	Year 4 4
	Year 5 5
	Year 6 4

**TOTAL 34**

## Enrolment Figures

2022-36  
2023-33

## Student Enrolment Trends

We have a slightly fluctuating enrolment but it is generally between mid and high twenties.

## Staffing Numbers 2024

Principal	1.0
Teacher	0.6, 0.8, 1.0
Pre School Teacher	0.6

### SSOs

SSO2	Finance	15 hours
SSO2	Classroom Support / Admin	37 hours
SSO1	Classroom Support /Admin	28 hours
SSO1	Special Programmes	33 hours
SSO1	IT	20 hours
SSO1	JP Classroom Support	18 hours
SSO1	UP Classroom Support	16 Hours
ACEO	Classroom Support	27.5 Hours

## Special Site Arrangements

We are a small school that needs to be flexible with its organization and management.

## 2. Students (and their welfare)

- General characteristics

Being a small school means students are a part of a safe, secure and familiar environment. The extended family situation is evident. Rapport between staff, students, parents and the wider community is a strong and productive partnership.

Students as with parents are highly involved in the decision making of the school. Penong School's Behaviour Management Policy follows the Department's Policy for schools. Staff, students, parents and the community have been involved in the setting of a behaviour code and the expectation that this will be followed is clear. Regular review of this policy ensures a safe and happy environment.

The underlying expectation is that all people will display respect for each other and exhibit appropriate behaviour in our school setting. Students play an extremely active and important role in our total school structure,

small school education enables students many opportunities for the development of leadership skills.

Children in our school are supported by Early Intervention action and a structured support program through SSO classroom time.

- Support offered
  - Some support is forthcoming for Special Education students and some Aboriginal Support.
- Student management
  - As Above
- Student government
  - Class meeting / Student Council
- Special programmes
  - Computing, students at risk, early intervention & Quick-smart.

### **3. Key School Policies**

- **Contextual Influences**

The major influences which have an impact of our schools culture and programmes include:

- Isolation
- Size
- Aboriginal Students
- Sustainability

- **Isolation**

Penong School is on a small site situated 78 kms west of Ceduna on the Eyre Highway and supported by farming families, local services, community members, local surfing community, and an aboriginal homelands community.

Large centres eg. Port Lincoln, Whyalla and Port Augusta are 5 or 6 hour trips by road. This geographical isolation limits our access to support agencies, specialist centres, cultural programmes, sporting opportunities and availability of access to the arts.

Our two sites are unique in their geographical and social isolation, and also our annexing arrangement. (There are currently no students at Coorabie School and no staff attached to that school.)

- **Size**

The uniqueness of small schools is enhanced by its multi year level and extended family flavour. Classes are R-7, R-2 & 3-6 in structure at various times during the school week.

Class sizes although not large in relation to our city counterparts are still complex due to the wide cross section of the student's ages, capabilities and maturity.

- **Aboriginal Students**

We currently have a third of our school population who are aboriginal students. All of the students come from the Scotdesco community.

- **Sustainability**

We are an old school which requires much maintenance and looking after, the buildings are old and are not purpose built. Our numbers can fluctuate dramatically over time and it is imperative that our school remains sustainable for the future,

- **Vision**

Penong School is characterised by:

- Acceptance, understanding, respect and the valuing of each individual's personal identity
- Ensuring well being by creating a safe, secure, consistent, positive, success orientated environment
- Co-operation / Collaboration
- Pride, Motivation, engagement and Connection
- Reaching one's full potential

- **Core Business**

"To overcome issues of Isolation – "Give country kids a fair educational go."

The core business of Penong School is to ensure we provide quality, inclusive, accessible education for all our students. We achieve this through providing a stimulating supportive learning environment that is fulfilling and gives satisfaction to all, students and staff alike.

All we do is underpinned by equity and social justice principles. Our schools are focussed on giving every student the opportunity to succeed and prepare them for life in the wider community ("real world") to learn and strive.

Underpinning our core business is the strong belief that it is our responsibility to ensure that all children are encouraged to do their own personal best.

Our school community works towards ensuring a learning environment that:

- Is safe, secure and caring
- Consistent and success orientated
- Welcoming and supportive
- Has effective support networks
- Supplies comprehensive, relevant and purposeful curriculum
- Provides a variety of learning experiences
- Encourages regular and on going training and development
- Maximise learning opportunities though the use of relevant, accessible resources
- Abreast of technology developments.

Our learning environment is:

- Positive and success orientated
- Of a high quality
- Shared by the whole school community
- Harassment free

Our school community values the importance of:

- Individuality and cultural diversity
- Effective communication and educational integrity
- Sharing, cooperation and support for each other
- Participatory decision making
- Striving for excellence a fair deal for all

Our schools prescribed values are:

- Responsibility (step up)
- Respect ( be kind)
- Honesty (tell the truth)
- Caring ( be a friend)
- Excellence ( be the best you can be)
- Collaboration ( work together)

Our school community can expect that we ensure individual needs are met through:

- The opportunity to participate
- Pride in our school
- A shared responsibility in school planning and management

All students are provided with a balanced and stimulating curriculum encompassing seven areas of study:

- English
- Mathematics
- The Arts
- Health and Physical Education
- Science
- Technology
- H.A.S.S
- Our Core Business is supported by:
  - Whole staff (teaching/SSO) commitment and dedication
  - Student participation
  - Clear educational planning, goal setting and evaluation
  - Whole school decision making
  - Performance management structures

- Australian Curriculum
- Continuous developmental T/D
- Support from colleagues in other isolated situations
- Parental support
- Partnership involvement

### **Site Learning Plan and other key statements or policies**

#### **Current Priorities**

All current priorities at Penong has been underpinned by a commitment to improve the quality of learning outcomes for students.

These priorities have been formulated through processes of collaboration and consultation with parents and students.

#### **Monitoring strategies for core business and current priorities**

##### **Monitoring & Review**

- Our current priorities are monitored and reviewed through:
  - Parent, staff and student surveys
  - Reviews of our school improvement plan
  - School annual report
  - Data collection to determine what improvements have occurred
  - Use is made of data gained from Naplan tests; this information assists in improving learning programs from students.
  - Review of our processes.
- Student and school achievements are reported to parents in a variety of ways including:
  - Information nights
  - Curriculum Overviews
  - Learning Logs
  - Formal Teacher/Parent/Student Interviews
  - School Newsletters
  - Written Reports
  - Naplan Test Results
  - Open mornings / assemblies
  - Homework programme
  - Facebook
- Staff Performance is monitored through a formal Performance Development programme involving all staff members meeting with the principal once a term – during these meetings student progress and teacher programming is reviewed personal and school goals are set and support structures to help achieve goals are established. Staff members are encouraged to continually update skills through professional training and development activities.

- Long-term objectives: Our long term priority is to continue to provide a stimulating learning environment where children are able to be educated in their local area.
- Recent key outcomes: Our current school improvement plans key outcomes are to further develop staff knowledge and skills in the areas of:
  - Literacy

## 4. Curriculum

- Subject offerings:  
Penong Primary School offers students a broad and balanced education in seven curriculum areas of study. Emphasis is placed on the development of individual students and class sizes assist teachers in this aim.
- Special needs  
Small group and individual intervention programmes are run.
- Special curriculum features:  
The environment is a special curriculum feature.
- Teaching methodology:  
Teachers employ a range of teaching methodologies to ensure success of every student, including Aboriginal perspectives, a growth mindset approach, thinking skills and S.T.E.M.
- Assessment procedures and reporting:  
The established 'reporting to parents' policy includes written and oral reports, parent information nights, parent interviews and term overviews are also an integral part.
- Joint programmes
  - Involvement in Partnerships / Portfolio
  - Scotdesco
  - Involvement in State Small Schools Association

## 5. Sporting Activities

- Year 6s are involved with SAPSASA.
- Local football, netball and tennis.

## 6. Other Co-Curricular Activities

- General
  - All students are involved in the annual Strawberry Fete.
  - Penong Primary School prides itself in providing for our students many opportunities in the sporting area. Traditional and non traditional sports are presented as part of our Health and Physical Education curriculum.



- Upper primary students are involved in SAPSASA and all Ceduna Area School Middle School sports activities ie swimming carnival, athletics day, long distance runs etc. Aquatics programs (wind surfing, skiing, canoeing etc) at our local Blue Lake are run 2 days a year and children have access to swimming lessons during Christmas vacation.
- Winter weekend sport is very strong with netball and football. During summer children have access to cricket and tennis, but for most the focus is on beach sports.

## 7. Staff (and their welfare)

- Staff profile

Penong Primary School runs two classes R - 2 and 3 - 6. The principal has a teaching load of 0.2 which is used for classroom and other support for staff.

- Leadership structure

We are entitled to a Principal - no leadership team.

- Staff support systems

Staff work as part of a teaching team. We have an R-6 approach and most teachers are involved with all levels at some time. The team approach is vital to a successful small school.

Staff commitment at Penong School is one of its strengths.

- Performance Development

Performance Development is a focus as all staff members are committed to 'teachers as learners' and performance development is a tool for reflective development. All staff members including SSOs are involved in Performance Development.

The make-up of a small school means there is an underlying basis that all staff members know all children and much informal professional interaction amongst staff is paramount.

SSOs are a most important cog in our machine and they are highly respected professionals. SSOs work with and for teachers as well as being responsible for individual children.

- Staff utilisation policies

See staff support systems.

- Access to special staff

Aquatics teachers and sports coaches are also utilized by the school. Some special education, guidance and special pathology services are utilized.

- Other: Nil

## **8. Incentives, support and award conditions for Staff**

- Shorter terms  
Penong School closes 1 day earlier in Term 4.
- Travelling time  
The school facilitates some release time for travel.
- Housing assistance  
Teaching housing is subsidised, teacher houses are available.
- Cooling for school buildings  
Refer to School Facilities section below.
- Cash in lieu of removal allowance  
Teachers who complete 7 years of service at the school will receive a removal allowance.
- Additional increment allowance  
N/A
- Designated schools benefits  
N/A
- Aboriginal/Anangu schools  
N/A
- Medical and dental treatment expenses  
Staff members are eligible for reimbursement for certain travel and accommodation expenses incurred when obtaining appropriate medical or dental assistance.
- Locality allowances  
Penong staff receive a locality allowance.
- Relocation assistance  
Some assistance is provided.

## 9. School Facilities

- Buildings and grounds

Penong School's original stone building is currently used as the administration block. It houses the office, staff room, teacher preparation area, and Principal's office.

Six other prefab buildings are used for our J.P classroom, Art/Technology/Science, Special Ed, Early Learning Centre, U.P classroom, Library.

A major commitment to continued upgrading of the school has been made. Technology is a major focus and every child has great access to devices.

- Cooling

All buildings are fitted with reverse cycle air conditioners.

- Specialist facilities

Nil

- Student facilities

Refrigerator/canteen lunches.

- Staff facilities

Teacher preparation area, staff area, use of computers, email/Internet.

- Access for students and staff with disabilities:

Disabled toilet and shower are available.

- Access to bus transport

Penong has access to two buses, one a Department bus, and a Variety bus housed in Ceduna. (This bus needs to be booked in advance.) The Variety bus carries 21 students and the yellow Department bus carries 22 students.

- Other

An Early Learning Centre/Preschool is housed on campus.

## 10. School Operations

- Decision making structures

A very clear Decision Making Policy is in place at Penong, all of the school's groups are involved. Staff, students and parents have ownership of this policy and it enables clear communication channels to function.

Regular staff meetings, collaborative planning meetings, Governing Council meetings, finance meetings, Child Parent Centre Management Meetings, student class meetings and other committees occur.

- Regular publications

A fortnightly newsletter is produced; it is made up of the school component, Students section and Community News. Other information deemed relevant to parents is disseminated regularly. A Day Book is on Teams in place for staff/weekly bulletins are produced.

- Other communication

There is a well structured arrangement, which enables communication to be a focus.

- School financial position

We run an adequate budget, which is utilised wisely. Governing Council works hard at fundraising.

- Special funding

Our funding is formulated by the department and comes to us.

## **11. Local Community**

- General characteristics

Penong is located in the drier part of the Far West; it is close to the coastline.

Many families are from the land but an equal proportion are children of service providers within the town and children who come from the aboriginal home lands area.

A local salt works and gypsum mine also provide work for individuals.

Students come from as far as Fowlers Bay, Coorabie and Nundroo to engage in their schooling.

- Parent and community involvement

The Penong community is supportive towards the school. Parents understand the necessity of a sound primary education and work with their children to support us. Parents spend much informal and formal time on school grounds and our open door, you are welcome attitude, has gained positive results.

- Feeder schools

Children at Penong come from an area surrounding the school of 82kms. For their secondary education there is a bus into Ceduna daily (150kms return). Some children may board in Ceduna or go away to Adelaide or Port Lincoln for their secondary education.

- Commercial/industrial and shopping facilities

Penong has a general store, hotel, police station and a 24 hours a day roadhouse. Most people use Ceduna as their shopping venue. The nearest Medical Centre and hospital is 74kms east in Ceduna.

- Other local facilities

Penong houses a local sports club and large hall.

- Availability of staff housing

Three, three bed roomed teacher houses are situated adjacent to the school.

- Accessibility

Penong can access Pt Lincoln, Whyalla and Adelaide by road. Airlines operate from Ceduna to Adelaide with various timetables. There is no public transport.

- Local Government body

Penong is out of District Council boundaries and is under the jurisdiction of the local Penong and District Progress Association, in line with the Outback Communities Authority.

## 12. Further Comments

- Penong Primary School offers a uniquely wonderful teaching and learning experience inherent in small school education. Teaching in Penong allows individuals to become a real part of their community and to work with students/families who are committed to education. Children are interested and genuine.
- The opportunity of combining a country style life with excellent teaching opportunities is what one would find in Penong.

I certify that these are true and accurate statements.

Karen E Murray (Mrs)

*Principal*

*Penong & Primary School*

*Date: Feb 2024*