



SCHOOL STATEMENT

CONTEXT

Updated: 2017

School number: 1801

School name: Port Lincoln Special School

School Profile: Fostering Independence

Port Lincoln Special School is a Reception to Yr 13 site, located in the coastal city of Port Lincoln. It is the only special school on the Lower Eyre Peninsula and one of two in the Eyre and Western Region. It provides dual enrolment opportunities with rural mainstream sites if appropriate.

Catering for students with intellectual disabilities, some of whom may have additional sensory or physical impairments, a dual diagnosis or autism, the school offers specialised programming, through negotiated education and learning plans.

The school mission of fostering independence for each student, is achieved by focussing on the general capabilities of literacy, numeracy, ICT and personal and social development through the NEP process and embedding these across all learning areas of the Australian Curriculum. The Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum is a key focus of teaching programs and each student has a personalised Keeping Safe goal as part of their NEP. Communication skills are a priority, targeted via personalised plans and consistent use of PODD, signing and visuals across the school.

Strong community links have been established and the school is valued by the community for providing a safe, caring and supportive environment, conducive to students reaching their maximum potential.

The core values of the school are based on excellence, equity and social justice, tolerance, understanding and respect. Inclusion, where each person feels included and includes others is a feature of the school.

1. General information

- School Principal name: Clare Harris
- Coordinator: BJ Sauerwald
- Year of opening: 1986
- Postal Address: P O Box 1795, Port Lincoln, SA 5606
- Location Address: Barley Road, Port Lincoln, SA
- DECD Region: Eyre and Western – Port Lincoln Partnership
- Geographical location – ie road distance from GPO (km): 3km
- Telephone number: 86825319
- Fax Number: 86825016
- School website address: www.plss.sa.edu.au
- School e-mail address: dl.1801_1801@schools.sa.edu.au
- Child Parent Centre (CPC) attached: no
- Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) service: no
- February FTE student enrolment:

Year	ATSI	NESB	ESL	Disabilities	School Card	Total School
2010	2.0	0	0	24.8	10	24.8
2011	2.0	0	0	27.0	12.0	27.0
2012	2.0	0	0	30.0	11.0	30.0
2013	2.0	0	0	31.0	13.0	31.0
2014	3.0	4	0	32	12	32
2015	3.0	4	1	29	10	29
2016	3.0	4	1	30	11	30
2017	4.0	5	1	31	10	31

- Student enrolment trends: enrolments are predicted to be steady.

- Staffing numbers (as at February census):

Total teacher allocation is 5.85 (F.T.E.)

There are 4 female teachers and one male teacher

Principal (1.0)

Coordinator – SACE (1.0)

Teachers – 5.8 (including leadership)

Ancillary – school has 118 hours with 20 school support officers (the majority working in a part time capacity)

A Pastoral Care Support worker is employed 14.4hrs/wk.

- Public transport access: many students are transported to and from school in DECD funded taxis. The school owns 2 buses, both with wheelchair access, enabling access to community activities and programs.
- Special site arrangements: The school is situated on the same campus as Lincoln Gardens Primary School and shares IT infrastructure. It links with other rural special schools as part of the Spencer Special Hub and other small schools in the Eyre and Western region. It also links with other special educators from local schools and preschools.

Currently all students are enrolled on a full time basis, but the school allows students from outlying rural centres to access its specialised programs through part-time enrolment. This is only undertaken in partnership with the neighbourhood school and with regional support.

2. Students (and their welfare)

- General characteristics

All students attending the Port Lincoln Special School must meet eligibility criteria. Placement occurs following approval by a local Special Education Options Panel which includes the DECD Psychologist. All students have an intellectual disability. Some also have a sensory or physical impairment. A high percentage of students have autism and some display challenging behaviours. An increasing number of students have a dual diagnosis. All have a Negotiated Education Plan, which is developed annually with families in term 1 or in the term in which the student enrolls.

Students range in age from 4 to 19 years, with Reception to Year 10 students working within the Australian Curriculum. Post compulsory students work within the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) framework.

As well as having special needs, many students meet other criteria for disadvantage – poverty, indigenous, EALD, single parent families. All students are entitled to register with DisabilitySA.

- **Student well-being programs**

The school is a Kidmatter school. This initiative provides a framework for positive mental health and wellbeing.

Some students and families are involved with the Child Development Unit service, based at the Port Lincoln Hospital. This involves a paediatrician, professional support personnel and family members meeting annually (minimum), to enable a 'team around the child approach' in the provision of services and support.

Positive behaviour support, Keys to Success and other care programs implemented by all staff exert an influence across the school. Peer mentoring with Port Lincoln High School students has been introduced.

Communication and engagement are pivotal in developing student wellbeing. Supportive environment, strong family connections and working collaboratively with other agencies are features of the school.

PODDs are used across the school with strong positive responses from students and staff. The goal of giving each student a voice is strongly supported via this pedagogy.
- **Student support offered**

Staff receive specific training in transfer and positioning techniques, safe mealtime management, medication management and health support implementation.

All staff form close relationships with students and their families. The school works closely with other agencies and services to ensure that students are supported – AutismSA, DisabilitiesSA, FamiliesSA, Novita, Community Health etc. DECD services eg Kilparrin, SERU are accessed. Regional support – disability coordinator, behaviour, hearing impairment, psychological assessments are available.

A Pastoral Care Support worker provides support to staff, students and families.
- **Student management**

The school aims to provide a supportive, caring and collaborative environment, through a non-aversive behaviour policy, in which each student has the opportunity to develop to their maximum potential. Student issues are addressed through individualised goals set in the negotiated education plan process. Staff, students, families and in some cases support agencies work in partnership to encourage and support positive behaviour.
- **Student government**

Students are encouraged to participate in the planning and organisation of learning opportunities where appropriate. School and sports captains are elected each year and extra responsibilities undertaken by these students.
- **Special programmes**

Senior students are involved in townies– an initiative linking students to community organisations and experiences. The school links with Australian Conservation Volunteers and Greening Australia amongst others. Work undertaken in this program, forms a component of the work exposure program; and the Duke of Edinburgh award, which is undertaken when there is a large enough cohort.

Swimming and water safety sessions are undertaken on a weekly basis. Some students also access Riding for the Disabled. Community resources are utilised – library, gymnastics.

The Mobility Opportunities Via Education (MOVE) program is providing extensive physical activity/therapy to selected students.

3. Key School Policies

- Site Improvement Plan and other key statements or policies:

- Vision:

Port Lincoln Special School is committed to fostering independence in each student, enabling them to have the capacity to engage in a positive and productive life. It provides a supportive, caring and collaborative environment in which each student has the opportunity to develop to their maximum potential. Port Lincoln Special School works in partnership with care providers, specialist agencies and department service providers to ensure programs and courses are in line with national priorities, DECD strategic plan priorities and region priorities; while always meeting the individual's unique needs.

- Priorities

The school mission of fostering independence in each student, is achieved by focussing on the general capabilities of literacy, numeracy, ICT and personal and social development (through the NEP process) and embedding these across all learning areas of the Australian Curriculum.

Ensuring each student has an appropriate primary and (where necessary) a secondary method of expressive and receptive communication, and is engaged in their learning, are regarded as significantly important factors in improving learning outcomes.

Our belief is that the quality of learning is directly dependent upon the quality of teaching. Understanding how students learn, developing deep, specialised, pedagogical knowledge, participating in professional learning, disciplined dialogues, and planning and organising for teaching and learning, will ensure staff well-being for teaching, as well as improve learning outcomes for each student.

4. Curriculum

All students have a negotiated education plan in which literacy, numeracy, ICT, Child Protection and personal health and wellbeing goals are addressed.

The 4 blocks literacy approach is used as a basis for English.

Natural Maths is being introduced as a basis for Mathematical learning, along with YuMi maths strategies.

A comprehensive curriculum is provided through the Australian Curriculum for students from Reception to Year 9. Modified SACE is offered over a 4 year framework for students in years 10-13. Transitional work experience opportunities are provided in the final year of school to prepare students for the world of work.

Inter-agency specialists support the planning and delivery of individual programs for speech, occupational therapy and physiotherapy.

- Open Access/Distance Education provision: n/a
- Special needs:
To be eligible for enrolment, students must have an intellectual disability or global developmental delay. Their special needs are addressed and catered for within the specialised environment and through specialised programs and support agencies.
6 SSOs have been trained by Women's and Children's Hospital staff to provide specialised feeding services for individual students according to their health care plan. This service is funded by WCH.
- Special curriculum features:
Sensory awareness, focus on engagement, and positive behaviour support enable access to the curriculum and are driven by the goals negotiated and outlined in the NEP.
The school uses augmentative and adaptive communication programs, including symbol and signing systems – PECS, PODDS, visuals, verbal cues, and electronic communication devices based on the communication needs of students. Each learning area has an interactive white board.

- Teaching methodology:

High quality teaching is integral to improving student learning outcomes and professional development is a priority of the school. Staff have undertaken PECS, positive behaviour support, MOVE, PODD, 4 blocks and information communication technology training.

Jane Farrall (speech therapist) conducted an 'intensive' in the school early in 2015 to further develop skills in the implementation of the 4 blocks model and the use of the PODD communication system. This was consolidated by a two day program with PODD designer Gail Porter in 2016. Staff are confidently implementing the PODD and many students now have a personal PODD. Each classroom has at least 3 PODDs for staff and student use.

Based on the communication needs of the student, staff use other augmentative visual communication techniques – Boardmaker, Proloquo2go and AUSLAN. The TEACHH program is also currently being explored as a teaching methodology.

Explicit teaching occurs on a 1:1 basis or in small groups. Staff work in teams (teachers and SSOs) to maximise the achievement levels of students. Classes participate in regular 'Circle Time' sessions to introduce topics and practice literacy and numeracy skills.

Information Communication Technology is used across the curriculum by all classes. The students use a variety of technologies from simple equipment to more sophisticated computer programs. Teachers must become familiar with alternative access techniques, which enable students to use technology. In school training is provided to school staff for IPADS, Smartboard, Boardmaker & switches.

- Student assessment procedures and reporting

Assessment is based on the goals outlined in negotiated education plans. A termly matrix system is used to ensure priorities are continually being monitored and addressed. Teachers use a variety of assessment procedures and reporting mechanisms – observation, photographs, developmental checklists, worksheets, work samples and incident reports to develop an understanding of the student's current knowledge and skill level and plan for further learning.

Formal reporting to parents is via NEP reviews in term 1, written reports in term 2 and in term 4 (directly relate to NEP goals). Progress folders highlight work undertaken in term 3. Informal discussion, diary entries, parent information evenings, CDU and other reports also occur. Daily communication between home and school is via a diary or in some cases, email or telephone.

- Joint programmes:

Links with the Lincoln Gardens Primary School are valued and a more formal partnership is being investigated to enable integration and inclusion.

Transition programs exist between Bedford (post school option for most students) and the school.

The Spencer Special Hub enables teachers working in special school settings to meet and share expertise.

The school hosts the Lower Eyre Special Educators hub and shares expertise with others working in the field of special education in the local area.

5. Sporting Activities

- Physical activity is an important part of the curriculum and all students are encouraged to take part. Weekly swimming sessions are held at the Port Lincoln Leisure Centre. Some students access the Riding for the Disabled (RDA) program. Community resources – basketball stadium, tennis courts, table tennis and gymnastic halls are used when appropriate. Surf sessions and aquatics are popular. Bike riding is undertaken by most classes. Sporting achievements have been incorporated into the Duke of Edinburgh and Premier's Be Active awards. Although learning team games is enjoyed by some students, others engage in solitary play and make use of playground equipment

6. Other Co-Curricular Activities

Assemblies, excursions and community access visits are organised on a regular basis. Students participate in whole school special celebrations that are closely linked to the curriculum. These include, Reconciliation/NAIDOC Week, Science Week, PE week and Book Week.

7. Staff (and their welfare)

- Staff profile

There is a high staff to student ratio, with the school supplementing DECD funding to provide additional support in classrooms.

- Leadership structure

There is a Principal and Coordinator.

- Staff support systems

The leadership team of Principal and Coordinator provide support in the areas of curriculum planning, team building and provision of professional learning opportunities through formal and informal meetings. Performance Development, planning meetings and Step 9 evaluation and review are the responsibility of the Principal.

Regular teacher and SSO meetings as a group give an opportunity to share concerns, learning and goals.

The staff is committed to providing a high quality education for all students in a supportive learning environment. The staff approaches this task in a professional manner and attend weekly teacher/SSO meetings

Sound working relationships exist between the WHS representative, PAC, AEU and the administration of the school.

Teachers have access to support from AutismSA, Down Syndrome Society, DisabilitySA, Speech Pathologists, Novita

Staff are provided with extensive opportunities for school based professional learning in safe transfer and positioning of students, mealtime management and procedures, disability awareness, behaviour support and protection, information communication technology, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC),

- Performance Management

Teachers and School Services Officers meet with the Principal formally.

Staff are free to meet informally throughout the year should they wish to discuss any issues of concern or request feedback. Formal and informal feedback is provided following class visits etc.

- Staff utilisation

The school supplements DECD allocation of SSO hours to enable additional support in classrooms. Staff are deployed according to student needs. Applications for additional support to manage challenging behaviours and personal care have been successful. Staffs' strengths and areas of interest and expertise are considered as part of the class allocation process. Each class has a team of one teacher and at least 2 SSOs.

8. Incentives, support and award conditions for Staff

- Housing assistance

Contact David Wray 86883077

- Designated schools benefits

Special class allowance

Toileting allowance for SSOs

- Locality allowances

Zone 2

9. School Facilities

- Buildings and grounds
Our school is small and an educational brief is currently being written to address facility issues. One classroom is currently set up as a sensory space, with active sensory play equipment in one area and an attached withdrawal room furnished for quiet time.
A building has been allocated from Lincoln Gardens Primary school and has been developed as a 'resource/family room', classroom and indoor sensory/activity area.
The yard can be divided into 2 play areas with the entire yard secured with high fencing.
A large shed, attached to an enclosed garden area, is used to store 2 buses. Yard play equipment is specifically selected to support the sensory and developmental needs of our students. Swings, spinners and climbing equipment are popular.
- Heating and cooling
Split cycle throughout the school
- Specialist facilities and equipment
Access ramps and disabled toilet facilities. Secure decking to three learning areas.
Smartboards in learning areas
- Student facilities
Access to cool storage for food and drinks
- Staff facilities
Staff room with shower and toilet
- Access for students and staff with disabilities
Ramps and toilet facilities are fully accessible to wheelchair users.
- Access to bus transport
School owns 2 coaster buses with wheelchair provision.

10. School Operations

- Decision making structures
Weekly teacher meetings and SSO meetings, Personnel Advisory Committee, Governing Council, Finance Advisory Committee. It is desired that the principals of the primary and special schools meet formally twice a term to discuss whole of site issues or plan joint learning sessions. Class teams meet regularly to discuss student and class issues.
- Regular publications
Weekly planner emailed to all staff on Fridays, daily notice board, term planner, fortnightly newsletter.
- Other communication
Staff handbook, email
- School financial position
The school is in a sound financial position.
- Special funding
The school is active in accessing grants to provide more and varied opportunities for students.

11. Local Community

- General characteristics
Port Lincoln is a city of approximately 15,000 people. The central industries are fishing, aquaculture, grain handling and tourism.
- Parent and community involvement
The school encourages family support, while acknowledging the difficulties and time constraints faced by families who have a child with special needs. The school is held in high esteem by parents who value the provision of this special education option. Governing council is an active body who promote the school in the local community. Governing council meetings are scheduled during school time to support more parents to attend. School functions and events are well attended.
- Feeder or destination schools
All schools and preschools in Port Lincoln and surrounding areas have the potential to be feeder schools/preschools. An inclusive preschool program and junior primary and primary special classes enable a pathway for students with special needs to continue their education in a special school setting, should that be determined as the most suitable option.

- Other local care and educational facilities
There are a range of educational facilities available in Port Lincoln from preschool to tertiary. There are four preschools, a junior primary school, three primary schools and one high school. There are also two independent schools. A TAFE campus and Marine Research Centre linked to UniSA are also located in the city.
- Commercial/industrial and shopping facilities
The city boasts a number of aquaculture industries and vineyards. A wide range of shopping facilities are available.
- Other local facilities
Cinema, indoor swimming pool, range of sporting facilities, national parks and beaches.
Hospital, dental and medical facilities
- Availability of staff housing
Government housing available
- Accessibility
Port Lincoln is situated 660km from Adelaide. There are regular flights and a bus service between Adelaide and Port Lincoln. Road conditions are good.
- Local Government body
City of Port Lincoln, Civic Centre, Tasman Terrace, Port Lincoln

12. Further Comments