

SCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT

updated April 2016

School number: 0171

School name: Happy Valley Primary School

Context

Happy Valley Primary School is the combination of both Happy Valley Junior Primary (established in 1987) and Happy Valley Primary (established in 1898) which formally amalgamated in 2012.

The school is situated in Happy Valley, 20kms south of Adelaide, in the City of Onkaparinga and celebrated its centenary in 1998. The school therefore has a rich historical background and was originally located at the current Chandlers Hill Kindergarten adjacent the school. It moved to its present site in 1980 and grew rapidly. For almost a decade numbers were slowly declining due to the ageing population within the district but over the last several years our enrolments have remained stable and this year we have seen a slight increase in Reception numbers.

Families come from a range of socio economic backgrounds. The student population is predominantly of English speaking background with 5% NESB and 1% Indigenous students although we are noticing an increase in migrant families into our school from a variety of both English and non-English speaking backgrounds. A large number of students are from two income families while approximately 20% are on school card, 8% of Primary students are on a Negotiated Education Plans and a 6% of Junior Primary students have NEP's.

We are however seeing a marked change in our community with a number of families experiencing trauma and complexities which has had an impact on their children.

1. General Information:

- School Principal: Deborah Hemming
- Deputy Principal: Sue Schmidt
- Year of opening: 1898 (1980 – on present site)
- Postal address: 18 Education Road,
Happy Valley SA 5159
- DECS Region: Southern Adelaide
- Distance from GPO: 18km
- Telephone Number: 08 8381 7166
- Fax Number: 08 8381 6041
- School website address: www.happyvalley.sa.edu.au
- School e-mail address: dl.0171.info@schools.sa.edu.au
- Child Parent Centre (CPC): No
- Out of School Hours Care (OSHC): Yes. The school has an OSHC program that provides before and after school care. It also has a vacation care program.

- Student enrolment:

Year Level	2015	2015	201
Year Level	Male	Female	Total
Reception	23	18	41
Year 1	22	16	38
Year 2	22	15	37
Year 3	11	11	22
Year 4	29	21	50
Year 5	15	15	30
Year 6	13	11	24
Year 7	16	17	33
Total	151	124	275

- **Student enrolment trends:**

Over the last few years our numbers remained reasonably stable. Our predicted Junior Primary enrolments for 2016 are looking very positive this shows the potential for growth in the few years.

- **Staffing numbers:**

Teaching staff – 17.00
SSO hours per week – 189.0
Co-ordinator – Teaching & Learning
Counsellor

- **Public transport access:**

Public transport is available to the south and north of Happy Valley School. Services running north – Chandlers Hill Road via Blue Hills Road and South Road to the city or an alternative to the Marion Shopping Centre. Another service runs via Hub Shopping Centre, Valley Road and Main Road to the city or an alternative via Murrays Hill Road and Coromandel Parade. A service to the south is available via Fraser Avenue, Reynell Road with transfer at Reynella to Noarlunga Centre.

- **Special site arrangements:**

Happy Valley is a member of the South Valley Precinct (Partnership) which includes;
Aberfoyle Park Campus Preschool, Chandlers hill Kindergarten, Flagstaff Hill Kindergarten, Flagstaff Oval Kindergarten, Happy Valley Kindergarten, O'Halloran Hill Kindergarten, The Hub Preschool, Aberfoyle Hub R – 7 School, Braeview School R – 7, Craigburn Primary School, Flagstaff Hill PS Thiele Primary School, Aberfoyle Park High School and Flinders University.

2. Students (and their welfare)

- **General characteristics:**

Happy Valley School has families from a range of socio economic backgrounds. The student population is predominately of English speaking background with 5% NESB and 1% Indigenous students. A large number of students are from two income families while 20% are on school card, 8% of Primary students are on Negotiated Education Plans and 6% of Junior Primary students have NEP's.

- **Support offered:**

The school amalgamated the JP and Primary sections at the beginning of 2013. We have a Principal, Deputy and 1 co-ordinator & a counsellor who work as a collaborative leadership team.

- **Student management:**

There is a good understanding of our student behaviour code across the whole school community. Our behaviour Management Code was modified and reviewed in 2012 and is reviewed annually to refine aspects. Very strong endeavours are made to make the environment safe and harassment free. Our Behaviour Policy and any consequences for student actions are well known and publicised.

- **Student government:**

We have a Future Leaders Forum (SRC) and our year 7's undertake a range of school community services.

- **Special programmes:**

A Learning Assistance Programme (LAP) and Early Intervention Programmes operate in the school. Staff has received training in the "Play is the Way" Programme, where teachers learn strategies that empower students to manage their own behaviour, improve their emotional intelligence and increase their chances of success in life. Using a common language across the school is part of this. We also use social skills intervention programs "What's the Buzz" and "Way to A". We are a SAKG (Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden) school and all year 3-7 students spend a single period each fortnight in the garden and a double period in the kitchen, teaching them lifestyle skills about growing, harvesting, preparing and sharing fresh, healthy food.

3. Key School Policies

- **Site Improvement Plan and other key statements or policies.**

In 2015 our Priorities have are

Priority 1 – Providing a guaranteed and viable curriculum

Priority 2 – Improving Engagement for Learning – Teaching for Effective Learning

Priority 3 – Student Wellbeing and Engagement

We have divided the school into 4 Learning Teams. Each Learning Team is responsible for developing multiple strategies to enhance the learning of their students. We use the DuFours Professional Learning Community model melded with TFEL and ASoT (Art and Science of Teaching) pedagogy.

Core Business – Key Elements/Achievements/Trends

Happy Valley School's Core business is to deliver **quality teaching and learning in a supportive environment**: one that is safe, caring and success oriented for all students. Through our interactions with parents and student we aim to develop a culture that reflects our core values and principles.

Wellbeing across our school has been, and will continue to be, a high priority. All staff has been trained in "**Play is the Way**" and **Wilson McCaskill's** work has been **embedded into our school culture and Behaviour Management Policy** and practice. We also review our Behaviour Management Policy annually to "fine-tune" any difficulties.

While we only developed our **Bullying Policy** in 2009 we revisited this in the light of the Cossey Report recommendations and have developed new structures for reporting bullying and following up. This has been a work in progress and while we have a variety of strategies to counteract bullying we continually reflect on, and review what we do in order to reduce the number of bullying incidents.

We hold a "**bully audit**" regularly to collect data on bullying in order to check whether what we are doing in our classrooms makes a difference. This year we have changed what we do to gather data because, on reflection, we (the staff) realised that our data was not accurate.

It is our belief that **functional literacy and numeracy for all of our students** must be our prime objective and teachers continue to improve the delivery in these two areas and we have many strategies in place to support the acquisition of these skills.

We have always had strong commitment to **Early Childhood Learning** and a leadership structure that supports this. We believe that the importance we place on Early Childhood Learning lays the foundation for student's success throughout their schooling. It was this commitment that led to a strong community movement against amalgamation.

We have a commitment to providing success for all students. There are processes in place to **identify students with specific learning needs** and programs and resources organised to support these students, within the classroom. A **highly developed Early Intervention program** is another key element within this context and our **Learning Teams' Intervention and Enrichment**. We are working on formalising strategies.

The **most significant work** we have undertaken during 2014/2015 **has been our continued journey to improve student learning** and developing our school as a **Professional Learning Community** with four Learning Teams (Junior, Middle, Upper Primary and Leadership).

We have been part of a project which looked at using the work of **Richard and Rebecca DuFour** and the **TFEL document** to improve student learning outcomes. We are working towards becoming a High Reliability School.

Our work with our Professional Learning Communities are guided by 4 questions:

1. What do our students need to learn at each year level? (Essential Learning that are consistent with the Australian Curriculum)
2. How do we know if they have learnt it?
3. What do we do if they don't learn it?
4. What do we do if they already know it?

Besides the 4 questions above there are three “Big Ideas” that underpin all our PLT work

- **Focus on Learning** – That we accept that learning is the fundamental purpose of our school and therefore we examine all practice in the light of impact on student learning.
- **Building a Collaborative Culture** – That we are committed to working together to achieve our collective purpose. We cultivate a collaborative culture through the development of high performing teams.
- **Results Orientation** – We assess our effectiveness by results rather than intentions and we use data and information to promote continuous improvement.

We are developing our own “**Essential Learnings**” for Literacy and Numeracy across the school. As each Essential Learning area is developed so are **formative** and **summative** assessments and **reporting tools**.

Student learning is continually assessed by teachers using these told and reported to families so that parents can have a strong involvement in supporting their child’s learning. Parents receive a Student Achievement Record twice a year, which indicates the student’s standard of academic achievement for their year level in each subject, their work skills, social skills and thinking skills. These are consistent with the Federal Government’s expectations on reporting and currently either Australian Curriculum expectations for Maths, English, Science and History.

Learning Conversations are held formally once a year where students and their parents are invited to discuss the student’s learning and set goals and targets for new learning.

4. Curriculum

- **Subject offerings:**
A comprehensive school curriculum is in operation with the LOTE being Japanese and further time offered in Physical Education. Numeracy, Science and Literacy are focuses with classroom methodology and identification of individual students needs being a priority. The school is also well regarded for its choir performances and musical instrument program. Students take part in national Maths, English and Science competitions. In 2011 commenced Arts and Drama lessons to all classes.
- **Special needs:**
SSO’s with expertise in working with students with special needs is employed to support students with learning disabilities in the Junior Primary. We also use several experienced SSO’s to support our older students with identified learning needs. Students who may take longer to master learning skills or need further extension are supported by working with teachers in small groups through our PLC’s (Professional Learning Communities). A QuickSmart Maths intervention program has a number of upper primary school students participating. We have several very experienced volunteers overseen by our CPW and Leadership. This has offered both individual support for student and structured programs that are gender specific. We also run a LAP program.
- **A counsellor:**
A counsellor has been appointed for the first 6 months of 2015 and works with teachers on well-being of students.

- **Special curriculum features:**
We have a focus on physical education and school choir. Each year we run a Pedal Prix team. specialist teaching areas are Physical Education, Japanese and The Arts (Dance, Drama, Music)
- **Teaching methodology:**
All students are given every opportunity to succeed academically, to develop their emotional intelligence and build positive social relationships. Students have high access to a variety of learning technologies, incorporating modern ICT facilities to meet the needs of young people in a changing world. We have built a collaborative culture and work in teams through our Professional Learning Communities where all staff are guided by a clear and shared purpose for student learning.
- **Student assessment procedures and reporting:**
Parents receive 2 written reports, the first in the middle of Term 2 and the second at the end of Term 4. We have Learning conversations (parent/teacher/student interviews) occurring straight after the mid-year reports.
- **Joint programmes:**
A comprehensive transition is in operation for preschool to reception. We have strong links to Chandlers Hill Kindergarten and students from the kindergarten visit the school on a weekly basis.

5. Sporting Activities

Each year the school has a number of sporting events, such as sports days and carnivals, swimming and aquatics and pedal prix. Daily fitness is conducted across all year levels. Physical education and competitive team sports are areas where the school is highly regarded for its contribution to district representation in a number of SAPSASA sports. Many students are involved in out of school hour's sport.

6. Other Co-Curricular Activities

General

Strong links are maintained between our school, Chandlers Hill Kindergarten and our two local high schools.

Special Days and Functions

Examples of these are Sports Day, fundraising events, discos, assemblies, Year 7 graduation, visiting productions/bands, aquatics/swimming. Each year our Year 7's have their school camp in Canberra, a fabulous opportunity to learn and explore our history and the democratic process as it works in Australia.

7. Staff (and their welfare)

We have a both male and female staff members. There is a small change over of staff each year.

Staff support systems:

Leadership Team: The Leadership, Junior, Middle and Upper School PLC's meet weekly to share and plan. We have a coordinator in Literacy and Numeracy. We make the best use of our pupil free days for quality Professional Development which develops whole school common understandings.

Performance Management

Senior staff meet with all staff twice a year.

Staff utilisation policies

Some Special Education time is converted to SSO hours to provide direct support for students with learning difficulties. SSO staff members are employed to implement the Early Intervention Programs using targeted funding and also the Early Years Literacy program.

Access to special staff

A Guidance Officer visits the school regularly each term offering teacher and parent support and assessing students' learning potential. A Speech Pathologist visits the school regularly to assess and monitor students' speech and language development and offers training and development to staff. Other Government and Non – Government specialist staff are accessed as need arises. Instrumental music is taught to DECS and private providers. We have both a kitchen and garden specialist who each work 0.4 preparing and running cooking and gardening sessions in our Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden program.

Other

There is an active social committee in the school which co-ordinates a varied staff social programme.

8. Incentives, support and award conditions for Staff

Building and grounds:

Our site consists of mainly solid construction buildings and 3 transportable buildings. The solid construction buildings provide general classrooms, resource centre and computing suite, withdrawal rooms and computing pods, wet areas and teacher preparation area. The transportable buildings provide Japanese, Garden/LAP and Outside School Hours Care. The staffroom and offices are located in one building and have been recently redeveloped in 2013/14 as part of the amalgamation of the two schools. We demolished 3 transportable buildings in 2011 to make way for our main Stephanie Alexander Garden.

We have substantial and attractive school grounds with some 2 hectares of grassed area at rear of the school for cricket, football and soccer. We have 2 playground areas, one with permanent shade protection, a small wetlands area, two asphalt areas which also cater for netball and basketball, and large asphalt area all under cover.

Heating and cooling:

All classrooms, teaching spaces and administration areas are fully air-conditioned for both heating and cooling. Our Activity Hall is heated.

Specialist facilities and equipment:

The school has a well-equipped Resource Centre catering for students, staff and parents. The Resource Centre uses the Amlib Computer System. We have a whole school computer network, which allows access to the Internet and a comprehensive range of software in all classrooms via SmartBoards, in computing pods, in the Resource Centre and in the computer suite. An Activity Hall is used for a range of curriculum activities and external hire.

Netball and basketball courts are located in two hard play areas. A large grassed play area is used for soccer, football and cricket. Within the grounds are two separate adventure playgrounds.

Sections of the school grounds have recently been upgraded and a large number of extra trees and shrubs have been established to beautify the entry to the south side of the school and the Outside School Hours Care area. Further grounds improvements will commence after the admin upgrade is completed.

Student facilities:

The canteen is available to students and staff 3 days a week and the managers are assisted on a roster basis by volunteer parents and trained student assistants.

Staff facilities:

Staff have up to date and well maintained ICT facilities available on their desk, in teacher prep areas and in our computing hubs and suites. All classrooms have Interactive Whiteboards (SmartBoards). All staff have email and internet access.

Access for students and staff with disabilities:

All buildings have wheelchair access and the campus has three disabled toilet areas.

Access to bus transport:

Bus access is very close to the school. Buses for excursions, etc are well managed out the front of the school.

10. School Operations

Regular publications:

Fortnightly Newsletters and a wide range of other school information is available through the school website. A school app, TIQBIZ, is used for communication including distributing notices and newsletters.

Other Communication:

Weekly staff bulletins, meetings and an electronic day book ensure clear channels of written communication. We have bulletin boards around and outside of school for Governing Council and members of the school community. The school board is used for photographic displays showing school activities. A Starting School Folder including a Parent Handbook is available for parents. We have a changeable large notice board at the front of the school.

School financial position:

The school is in a sound financial position.

11. Local Community

General characteristics:

Happy Valley is a highly sought after residential area. There are some local shops but the area is predominantly residential. Because of the proximity to Happy Valley reservoir, we have a lovely rural aspect.

Parent and community involvement:

Parents are very supportive and actively involved in the school through Governing Council, Parent Club, and other committees. They also support teaching programs through involvement in the Learning Assistance Program (LAP) and support in class and the SAKG program.

Feeder or destination schools:

There is a kindergarten opposite the school (Chandlers Hill Children's Centre) and there are three other kindergartens in the area which feed into this school.

There are two high schools in the area – Aberfoyle Park High School and Reynella East College, which most students move on to.

OSHC is provided for families in a school building both before and after school and Vacation Care is provided during school holidays. Students from Chandlers Hill Kindergarten also use the OSHC service.

Commercial/Industrial and shopping facilities:

We are 2kms from the Hub Shopping Centre and about 15-20 minutes from Marion Shopping Centre.

Other local facilities:

The school is adjacent to Bethsalem Village and a short walk from a new gym, a swimming centre and the CFS.

Local Government body:

Onkaparinga Council

12. Further Comments

Happy Valley School is situated in an attractive hills environment. The school is well resourced, well supported by its community and the teaching environment is friendly and collaborative.