Whyalla Special Education Centre

103 Nicolson Ave
Whyalla Norrie SA 5608
P (08) 8645 7261 **F** (08) 8645.1255
E: dl.0559.info@schools.sa.edu.au
www.whyallasp.sa.edu.au

SCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT

School Number: 0559

School Name: WHYALLA SPECIAL EDUCATION CENTRE

Whyalla Special Education Centre is a Foundation to Year 12 specialist public school for students living with an intelectual disability and complex learning needs.

Whyalla Special Education Centre is located in the Council of Whyalla and is adjacent to Nicolson Avenue Primary School in Whyalla Norrie.

Our proud history of providing high quality education since 1963 as Whyalla Special School has continued after relocating to our new site under our new name, Whyalla Special Education Centre.

This state of the art facility opened in 28 January 2014 and has been purpose built for our students and their specific requirements. High quality assistive technology is a feature in all learning areas. Our school has a focus on being eco-friendly to the environment, and as such, we have energy and water saving systems in place.

Our school motto “Independence through education” reflects the values of our school. We value quality teaching and learning to ensure our students have the opportunity for success. This is reflected in our school culture.

Our students are engaged in learning experiences where a strong emphasis is placed on communication and independence. Our school programs are based on either the Abilities Based Learning and Education Support Curriculum (ABLES), for those students working below Reception level and the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), for those students working above Reception level. All students access an individualised learning program.

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1. General Information

School Principal: Karryn Greenbank

Year of Opening: Whyalla Child Occupation Centre 1962

Whyalla Special School 1963

Whyalla Special Education Centre 2014

Location Address: Russell Street, Whyalla Norrie 5608

Postal Address: 103 Nicolson Avenue, Whyalla Norrie 5608

Email: dl.0559.info@schools.sa.edu.au

DECD Partnership: Whyalla

Telephone Number: 08 8645 7261

School Enrolment:

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
F-7	16	44	37	39	45	46
8-12	43	19	22	21	19	18
Total	**59**	**63**	**59**	**60**	**64**	**64**

Student Enrolment Trends:

Enrolments at Whyalla Special Education Centre have remained at or near full, over the past four years.

Staffing Allocation (2017):

Leadership Structure:

Principal A4: Karryn Greenbank

Teaching Allocation: 9 FTE, 1 PT (9 Females 3 Males)

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Ancillary Allocation: 13 FTE , 2 PT (14 Females 1Male)

Vacation Care: Currently no Vacation Care available

OSHC: Currently no OSHC available

Classes:

In 2024 there are eight classes consisting of:

Junior Primary: Sheoak, Acacia, Mallee

Primary: Myall, Banksia and Cassia

Secondary: Wattle and Eucalypt

Whyalla Partnership:

The Whyalla Partnership has a positive reputation for collaboration and innovation between sites. Sites included in the Whyalla Partnership are:

Whyalla Special Education Centre
Whyalla Town Primary School
Nicolson Avenue Primary School
Memorial Oval Primary School
Long Street Primary School
Fisk Street Primary School
Hincks Avenue Primary School
Stuart Primary Campus R-6
Whyalla Secondary College
Gabmiddi Manoo Children and Family Centre
McRitchie Crescent Children's Services
Neta Kranz Children's Centre
Norrie Stuart Children's Services Centre
Whyalla Stuart Children's Centre
Win Newby Kindergarten

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2. Students

Whyalla Special Education Centre is a school for students (aged 5-18 years old) who are living with an intellectual disability including students who have severe and/or multiple disabilities. Approximately 50% of our students live with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Students travel from all parts of Whyalla to attend our school.

All students have a documented One Plan that contains individual goals that can be set in collaboration with families, teachers and service providers. These are reviewed in weeks 5 and 10 of each term.

Class numbers average eight students per class. The classes are formed according to age and ability. Each class is allocated one teacher and one School Services Officer (SSO). Some classes may have more SSO's due to the different complexities of their students.

Each year students and staff elect two School Captains. School Captains are responsible for being role models for other students and are called upon to complete special duties such as giving tours to visitors.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC):

AAC is used to assist students in developing and complimenting their communication skills. At Whyalla Special Education Centre, staff are highly skilled in using these modes to model to, and communicate with students. Most of our students use Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display (PODD) or AAC apps on iPads. These are used in combination with other modes of communication including key word signing, Picture Exchange Communication System, aided language displays and verbalisation.

Student Well-being Programs:

The Department for Education, Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum is delivered to all students at our school.

3. Key School Policies

Whyalla Partnership and wider community:

- Is supportive and involved in our school
- Has high expectations of the school
- Has high expectations of their child's learning
- Values the school and its staff

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Core Business:

Our core business is the delivery of quality and engaging teaching and learning programs to all students, so that they can achieve independence and success. We do this by working collaboratively with the student's therapists, other allied health specialists and families, encouraging the support of our wider community and developing clear communication, decision making and reporting policies.

Moral Purpose:

To provide high quality educational opportunities for our students who have complex learning difficulties and disabilities**.** With the focus being on students attaining successful communication skills and independent living skills,

Post School Pathways:

Our students work towards independence from their first day at our school. Our staff continue to explore potential pathways for our students, including Day Options, engagement with Community Bridging Services as well as Open Employment opportunities and leisure and recreation activities.

Site Improvement Plan Priorities (2024):

Whyalla Special Education Centre students will strive to achieve their full potential and succeed in all aspects of life by becoming:

- Independent learners who use their curiosity, imagination, initiative and develop their problem-solving skills.
- Motivated and determined individuals who engage in a variety of learning opportunities.
- Adults who apply self-control and confidently communicate
- Independent in daily routines, duties, and interacting with the social world(society) around them.

Goal 1: All students will engage in differentiated learning activities including community experiences which will be reflected in our reviewed reporting.

Goal 2: All students will demonstrate progress in personal and social capabilities.

Student Behaviour Management:

We have successfully in 2020, implemented the Positive Behaviour Management System, into our school community. Each week staff and student focus on a particular behaviour expectation, such as appropriate greeting or washing hands after using the toilet and before eating. The skill is taught and practiced for that week. The whole school community uses the same language and we share the same behaviour expectations. The program has been highly successful in supporting positive student

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behaviour and positive relationships, as is seen in our student behaviour data over the last years, and experienced in the peaceful atmosphere in our school.

Students who display challenging behaviour or behaviours of concern will have an individualised behaviour plan designed and implemented, in negotiation with their family. Our school adheres to the South Australian Education Departments School Discipline Policy in relation to student behaviour management. Our behaviour management policy is on our website.

4. Curriculum

Our school provides learning programs for the Reception to year 9 students, using the Abilities Based Learning and Education Support curriculum (ABLES), and the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). For the senior students (years 10–12), a modified South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) is offered.

All students' academic, communication and Social/emotional abilities are assessed regularly throughout each year. Staff are able to use the results of assessments and can, in collaboration with allied health professionals, use the data to create One Plan goals.

Literacy:

Literacy is a main focus in our teaching and learning programs. A dedicated engaging literacy block occurs daily. Our school uses the 4 Blocks to Literacy Framework, which has communication at its heart. Students experience daily activities in handwriting, working with words, guided reading and self-selected reading. Students' literacy skills are assessed twice a year, using ABLES student assessment and staff complete writing moderation twice a year.

Communication:

Students are encouraged to express their thoughts and ideas through a variety of communication modes. Students are provided opportunities to experiment with different modes and find ones that suit their need. Students' communication skills are assessed annually.

Numeracy:

The school is using the ABLES and ACARA curricula to explore mathematics and problem solving. Students' mathematics skills are assessed annually.

SACE Modified:

SACE modified, is offered to students in Years 10-12. Subjects include the Personal Learning Plan, Research Project, cross disciplinary studies, English, Mathematics and Health. The focus for our senior

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students is their post school pathway. Our students participate in work preparation programs with local providers and continue to be introduced to community bridging services and post school community services throughout their final year.

Parents are offered opportunities by staff and leadership to engage with local community providers, services and resources, particularly during their child's senior years.

Swimming:

Our students attend a weekly swimming lesson with Department for Education, qualified swimming instructors leading their class.

Subject Offerings:
Science, The Arts and Health are subjects taught by Non Instruction Time teachers.

Assessment and Reporting:

One Plan meetings are held with families in Term 1 , by week 5, when goals are set. The One Plan goals will influence the teachers planning and are re-visited every 5 weeks throughout the year. All student growth is documented, parents informed and a new goal set when success is achieved.

We use an assessment, planning and reporting program called ABLES at our school to assess all subjects and social/emotional skills. The program enables teachers to assess students using the four levels, that sit underneath the Foundation level of the Australian Curriculum. Those students who are able to engage in ACARA, use the Essential Math Assessment and Essential English Assessments annually.

5. Staff

Leadership Structure:

The school currently has one Principal and one Deputy Principal. The principal has Line Management of all teachers, School Service Officers and administration staff.

Performance Management:

Our school uses the Department for Education, Framework for Performance Management and all staff use a Performance Development Plan in discussion with their Line Manager to set goals and improve practice. This is aligned to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and Leaders.

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Principal Advisory Committee:

P.A.C. makes decisions about staffing and provides support to the principal in relation to staff deployment and other relevant issues.

6. School Facilities

Building and Grounds:

Our current site has eight classrooms in three buildings. These buildings also contain all inside learning spaces and Administration Areas. Two Teacher preparation areas and Library are also located in these buildings.

Each classroom has an inside and outside learning area, inside breakout space, teacher resource storage area, Interactive screen, a kitchen and toilet facilities.

A playground, oval, hall and library are utilised as alternative learning spaces.

Heating and Cooling:

All inside learning areas have reverse cycle air conditioning.

Specialist Facilities and Equipment:

Our school was purpose built for our students ever changing needs. Extensive options are available for staff to utilise as learning spaces. Our school centres around our Breezeway, a central walkway that links all our classes together. Students can order their lunch from BJ's Deli daily. Grounds are well maintained and our school is always well-presented. Students have opportunities to play in areas with synthetic and natural materials.

Access for Students and Staff with Disabilities:

All areas of our school are accessible for students and people with physical disabilities.

7. School Operations

Decision Making Structures:

Governing Council consists of parents and members of the wider community who are responsible for aspects of decision making for the school.

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Our school has a collaborative leadership model where all staff have an opportunity to participate in the decision making process.
There are a number of Professional Learning Committees that meet regularly to discuss and review current school improvement plan goals and future directions.

Newsletter:

A school newsletter is sent out twice a term, through the app.Dojo or hardcopy, to all families.

Communication with Families:
Communication with and between staff occurs through email, phone calls, Day Book, weekly staff bulletin and through the app Dojo.

Family and Community Involvement:
Families are always welcome at our school. We encourage families to become actively involved in all aspects of school life, including Governing Council, fundraising committee, and special school events such as sports day.