



SCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT

Updated: February 2023

**School number: 0106 (Cowandilla Primary School)
1567 (Cowandilla Children's Centre)
1894 (Cowandilla PS IELC)**

School name: Cowandilla Primary School and Children's Centre

School Profile:

Cowandilla Primary School and Children's Centre is located between Adelaide's airport and the city, just 4km from the GPO. We provide a wide range of services for families: Antenatal Care, Occasional Care, Parent Groups, Playgroups, Preschool, Out of School Hours Care, Intensive English Language Program and a choice of three languages. Mainstream classes average 23-28 in size, and children benefit from HASS, PE and IT specialist teachers.

Cowandilla has a very diverse school community with more than 50 languages spoken by staff, students and families. We currently have an Intensive English Language Program with five classes and 13 mainstream classes. Cowandilla is a Climate Change Specialist school where staff are knowledgeable about the scientific data around the issue. A portion of our science and HASS topics relate to the complex factors influencing climate change and its impact on our ecosystems. In the primary years of schooling we focus on involving children in experiences which connect them to the natural world. The students go on excursions that teach them about various habitats and the conditions needed to sustain those diverse habitats.

We have developed a Wellbeing program which is connected to the Personal and Social Capability Continuum from the Australian Curriculum, as well as whole school approach to the Zones of Regulation. Our learning focuses on developing students' skills to self-regulate, have a positive mindset, and enact our school values of Respect, Responsibility, Being Kind and their Personal Best. Through this learning we aim to skill children up to be more resilient, regulate their emotions, make strong decisions, and understand the impact of their behaviour choices on themselves, and others.

1. General information

- School Principal name: Katrina Sexton
- Deputy Principal's name: Deb Postema
- Year of opening: 1916
- Postal Address: 21 Jenkins St, Cowandilla
- Location Address: 21 Jenkins St, Cowandilla
- DECD Region: West Torrens Partnership
- Geographical location – i.e. road distance from GPO (km): 4km from GPO
- Telephone number: 08 84437800
- Fax Number: 08 82342445
- School website address: www.cowandilla.sa.edu.au
- School e-mail address: dl.0106.info@schools.sa.edu.au
- Preschool : which is part of our Children's Centre
- Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) service: Yes, includes After School Care & Vacation Care programs

- **February FTE student enrolment:**

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Primary & IELC	59	70	32	0	75
Reception	42	64	51	52	46
Year 1	50	44	62	51	47
Year 2	57	56	45	65	47
Year 3	62	58	53	44	55
Year 4	49	68	56	53	39
Year 5	38	50	75	60	42
Year 6	52	33	50	74	45
Year 7	42	48	32	0	0
TOTAL	451	421	424	399	399
School card percentage	33%	32%	30%	28%	30%
NESB enrolment	299	280	263	240	270
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) enrolment	18 (including Preschool)	26	32	22	15

- **Student enrolment trends:** Enrolments decreased in 2020, 2021 and 2022 due to COVID-19 and reduced enrolments and eventually closure of our IELP in 2022 and Year 7 students moving to Secondary School at the end of 2021.

- **Staffing numbers (as at February census):**

Principal 1.0
 Director of the Children's Centre 1.0
 Deputy Principal 1.0
 Assistant Principal IELP 1.0
 Student Wellbeing/ Support and Intervention Leader 1.0
 Digital Technologies/ Resource Centre Manager (Coordinator position) 1.0
 Class teachers: 13 mainstream classes
 Literacy Coach 0.2
 Numeracy Coach 0.2

IELP: 7.2
 Preschool teachers 1.8
 Librarian 0.6
 ACEO 12 hours per week
 Languages -- Greek, Italian, and Pitjantjatjara teachers (0.4 each)
 Support and Intervention Teacher 0.4
 Autism Inclusion Teacher: 0.2
 EALD teacher 1.2
 PE teacher 0.8
 Other NIT Specialist 0.9
 SSO 475.5 hpw
 GSE 30 hpw

- **Public transport access:** Public transport available on Sir Donald Bradman Drive, and Marion Rd

- **Special site arrangements:**

Cowandilla has a Community Use Agreement with the City of West Torrens. This means that the school grounds are considered part of the open space of the City of West Torrens. Community groups, particularly culturally and linguistically diverse groups, frequently use the inside and outside spaces.

Parents and children up to the age of 8 access many programs in the Children's Centre including Occasional Care, playgroups, anti-natal and immunisation services

2. Students (and their welfare)

- **General characteristics**

The student population is extremely diverse with many different cultural groups represented, and there are approximately 50 languages spoken by our students and families. There are currently 15 Aboriginal students from Preschool to Year 6. The rich diversity of cultures is a feature of our school that is highly valued. We support all students to gain an appreciation for each other's culture whilst working to ensure each cultural group maintains their own identity. Our population is quite

transient with many students regularly changing schools. A third of our students receive School Card.

In 2006 an Intensive English Language Centre was established at the school. The program was paused at the end of 2021 and reopened mid Term 1 2022.

Our preschool offers 2 group sessions, Group 1 – Monday & Tuesday, Group 2 – Wednesday & Thursday. There is also a playgroup in the preschool on Friday mornings as well as several other playgroup sessions provided during the week in the Children's Centre.

- **Student well-being programs**

We have a Student Wellbeing Leader who provides support to students. We use Restorative Practices and are currently implementing a whole school approach using the Positive Behaviour Intervention and Support framework as well as implementing the Zones of Regulation to embed Self-Regulation strategies into classroom and school learning programs.

Parents can access a social worker, psychologist, and speech therapist, and attend parenting and men's programs through the Children's Centre.

- **Student support offered**

Literacy and Numeracy coaches who are teachers released 0.2

Student Wellbeing/ Support and Intervention Leader,

Digital Technologies/ Learning Resources Manager/ Librarian,

Support and Intervention teacher 0.4

Specialist P.E. teachers,

3 EALD teachers each providing 0.4 support

AET (Deputy and Student Wellbeing Leader) ACEO and BSSOs.

BSSOs, Community Liaison Officers and interpreters help with communication between families and school.

The Children's Centre has a social worker, Community Development Coordinator, psychologist, speech therapist, OT and nurses to support families.

Out of School Hours Care offers education and care services before and after school and during school holidays.

- **Student management**

A Behaviour Education Code, which was developed collaboratively with staff, students and parents, provides the framework for our behaviour education program. Restorative Practices and the Zones of Regulation program are used across the school.

- **Student Agency**

Students play an important role in decision making at Cowandilla, from informal classroom discussions regarding curriculum direction and involvement in their own learning, to more formalised experiences such as class meetings and student committees. Senior students are elected to represent the student body and these leaders play an important consultative and management role within the school.

- **Special programmes**

IELP, Aboriginal Education; Greek and Italian Language programs; EALD; Scaffolded Literacy Practices; Support and Intervention, Festival of Music Choir and Junior Choir. Many students in years 5 and 6 are volunteers in the Climate Change Student Action Group.

3. Key School Policies

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

Priority areas are Literacy, Mathematics, Wellbeing, and Learning with Digital Technologies.

Our school values are “**Respect, Responsibility, Being kind and Personal Best**”

Our School Vision: **Through Education We all Become Active, Global Citizens**

Climate Change Specialist School

Cowandilla has been committed to teaching about climate change and reducing our ecological footprint since 2004. The process has involved the staff learning about the current research in climate change. Teachers focus on climate change in their science, maths, arts, technology and humanities lessons.

The Climate Change Student Group is involved in many activities to mitigate the effects of climate change. We intend to help children take action against climate change so that they can feel optimistic about the future.

In 2015 Cowandilla Primary School became a Climate Change Specialist School. Our Climate Change Leaders are often asked to share the school’s environmental journey with other teachers and leaders.

- **Recent key outcomes:**

Literacy and numeracy are foundation skills upon which a great deal of learning for school and life is based. Before school begins each term our teachers design learning with our maths and literacy coaches to make sure they are familiar with the curriculum expectations for these learning areas. The Curriculum literacy and numeracy coaches bring a specialist knowledge that they share so that teachers

understand the scope and sequence of each year level and the topic knowledge essential to develop a rigorous cohesive curriculum. The focus for mathematics in the early years has been on building students' expertise in knowing how our Base 10 number system works and the skills to calculate and to solve unfamiliar mathematical problems.

There are strong links between the Preschool Quality Improvement Plan and the Site Improvement Plan to support continuity of learning for children and students.

Our 2022 SIP indicates improvement in numeracy and literacy.

Our PAT Maths Years 3-6 results indicate that overall, 83% of students are at, or above the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement requirement for their year level.

Our PAT Reading Years 3-6 results indicate that 87% of students are at or above the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement requirement for their year level.

4. Curriculum

- **Subject offerings:**

- R-6 students experience a balanced curriculum in the eight learning areas: English, Mathematics, The Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Science, Technologies, Languages, and Health and Physical Education.
- Languages Program (Italian and Greek) Pitjantjatjara is on hold for 2023.
- Scaffolded Literacy practices (based on the work of Vygotsky, Bruner and Gray) are used across all year levels at Cowandilla Primary.
- Learning in our Preschool is based on the Early Years Learning Framework.

- **Open Access/Distance Education provision:** N/A

- **Special needs:**

Classes are arranged based on the belief that small class numbers are beneficial to all students (R-6). We therefore strive to structure our staffing to reflect this. At the beginning of 2023 we have 13 mainstream classes.

SSO time is allocated to supporting students that have IESP funding with their classroom learning.

Students with specific learning needs, are supported by the Support and Intervention teacher and leader, Bilingual Support Officers, or School Support Officers.

Aboriginal students each have One Child One Plan to outline their Learning and wellbeing goals. The ACEO connects home and school, advocates for Aboriginal students and advises the staff team. The Aboriginal Education Team meet every three weeks.

EALD students are supported by three EALD teachers. Because of the

numbers of EALD students in each classroom all teachers are trained in the theory that explains how our English language works. This very specific knowledge enables teachers to be very targeted and explicit with their teaching and monitoring of literacy development.

A Student Review Group (including partnership support services staff) meet every three weeks and oversee the delivery of intervention and support for students with additional needs.

- **Special curriculum features:**

- In 2023, our school offers specialist programs in Languages (Greek, Italian), HASS and PE.
- Our school staff work closely with our ACEO and AETs to support the learning programs of Aboriginal students, connections with families, and to provide support for teaching Aboriginal perspectives across the curriculum. We celebrate Reconciliation Week and continually strive to bring about Reconciliation.
- We have a well equipped Resource Centre and promote reading for learning, and pleasure. We participate in the Premier's Reading Challenge every year.
- Effective use of digital technologies in our learning programmes is a priority. We have a modern computing network, using Mac computers. Each classroom has a networked computer connected to a Promethean Interactive Panel. There are 14 computers available for class use in the RC, and Interactive Panels in the shared learning spaces, including in our Language teaching spaces, the hall and the Resource Centre.
- In 2013 we introduced iPads into our learning programs. In 2023 we have a 1:1 iPad program (1 school owned iPad per student) across our year 3 – year 6 mainstream classes, and shared iPads in our Early Years classes. Teaching staff have access to a staff iPad, and laptop. Class based SSOs also have a staff iPad.
- We have a high speed fibre-optic internet connection.

- **Teaching methodology:**

There is a strong emphasis on a team approach to catering for student needs. All classes have access to specialist teachers from EALD, Aboriginal Education and Special Ed. SSOs work in the classroom alongside the class teacher, or withdraw students for specific help where appropriate.

Currently all mainstream are using the Teaching and Learning Cycle and Scaffolded Literacy Practices as a teaching methodology. This is an explicit teaching strategy that uses functional grammar and aims to scaffold students for success in writing, reading and spelling. An external consultant works with teachers to assist with planning, and provides coaching and feedback to support their classroom practice. Two literacy coaches work alongside teachers modelling explicit literacy teaching using model texts.

We also work with an external Mathematics consultant who is mentoring our Mathematics Curriculum Leader to assist teachers with planning, supporting

pedagogical development, and provides feedback to assist with student learning.

Supporting learning with Digital Technologies is a school priority. Staff are supported by a highly skilled technical team, led by the Digital Technologies Coordinator (Resource Centre Manager).

- **Student assessment procedures and reporting**

Assessment is managed through class teachers' observations and formative assessment, which includes ongoing tracking and monitoring, goal setting and reflection with students. We collect whole school data to help us monitor progress with English and Mathematics. Individual testing of students also occurs through the Support and Intervention program and the Year 1 Phonics, PAT & NAPLAN tests. Literacy levels are assigned to all students twice a year.

Reporting structures include parent teacher interviews twice a year in which interpreters are frequently used. Teachers keep in close contact with parents to help support students with their learning and wellbeing.

- **Joint programmes:**

Our Children's Centre was built in 2010. SA Health staff work alongside the Community Development Coordinator and the Family Services Coordinator to deliver appropriate services and programs for families with young children.

The Children's Centre currently hosts a range of programs e.g. First Aid lessons, playgroups, access to a representative from the Australian Refugee Association, CAMHS and parenting groups. Occasional Care is offered twice a week.

The Director of the Children's Centre teaches in the Preschool and oversees the provision of services to the under 5s across the site.

The Children's Centre and the school work closely with West Torrens Council through their Library and youth programs. We have a community use agreement with West Torrens Council, for community use of our grounds out of hours.

5. Sporting Activities

- A large range of sports clinics are offered during the year. Senior students are actively involved in a variety of SAPSASA programs.

6. Other Co-Curricular Activities

- Because of the high multi-cultural component in the school community, the school focuses on many aspects of the cultures represented and participates in celebrations to recognise this diversity. Priority is given to Reconciliation, Harmony Day and multicultural celebrations and festivals.
- In 2023 the school will continue to have a Festival of Music choir and also

a junior choir.

7. Staff (and their welfare)

- **Staff profile**

Total staffing numbers are relatively high, due to additional support teachers and extra SSOs. There is a wide range of cultural diversity, and languages spoken by staff and this contributes to a rich and inclusive school culture.

- **Leadership structure**

Leadership structure includes the Principal, Deputy Principal, Director of Children's Centre, Assistant Principal IELC, Student Wellbeing Leader and Digital Technologies/Learning Resources Manager (Coordinator position). Because of the complexity of the school population, many aspects of leadership are shared across the staff according to skills.

Staff support systems

Staff work collaboratively in Professional Learning Teams, with support for planning being provided through concurrent release time.

The Deputy Principal helps teachers plan and implement the Scaffolded Literacy Practices and provides pedagogical and curriculum support aligned to the SIP.

An external literacy consultant and an external maths consultant also provide pedagogical and curriculum support aligned to our whole school approaches and improvement priorities.

The Learning Resources Manager (Digital Technologies Coordinator and Library Manager) oversees the work of the Resource Centre Team; supports teachers and students with the use of digital technologies; supports teachers with the implementation of the AC: Digital Technologies; and facilitates ICT Professional Development.

The computer network is maintained by a full time Computer Systems Manager, with the assistance of another part time SSO.

- **Performance Management**

All staff have an updated Performance and Development Plan and are expected to be involved in an ongoing cycle of continuous improvement and reflection of their practice. Structures and processes are in place to support staff to do this collaboratively and effectively. Teachers meet with a member of the leadership team early in the year and receive formal and informal feedback throughout the year. In Term 4 staff collaboratively reflect and share their progress with each other during Professional Learning Team meetings.

- **Staff utilisation policies**

Staff have the opportunity and are actively encouraged to be involved in specialist areas.

- **Access to special staff**

Support staff include EALD teachers, Special Ed. teacher, AET and ACEO, SSOs and BSSOs. A Community Development Coordinator and Family Services Coordinator are based at the Children's Centre building.

The school is adjacent to the Cowandilla Learning Centre.

8. Incentives, support and award conditions for Staff

- Complexity placement points: N/A
- Isolation placement points: N/A
- Shorter terms: N/A
- Travelling time: N/A
- Housing assistance: N/A
- Cash in lieu of removal allowance: N/A
- Additional increment allowance: N/A
- Designated schools benefits: N/A
- Aboriginal/Anangu schools: N/A
- Medical and dental treatment expenses: N/A
- Locality allowances: N/A
- Relocation assistance : N/A
- Principal's telephone costs: N/A

9. School Facilities

- **Buildings and grounds**

The school underwent a major redevelopment in 2001, with the refurbishment of classrooms, a new admin block, and relocation of the Preschool and Resource Centre. Additional transportable buildings were added in 2006 and again in 2008 to accommodate school growth, including the Intensive English Language Centre classes. Late 2017 the STEM Works building project was completed and saw the internal configuration of The Unit building changed to create a space to explore science, technology, engineering and maths. This is known as "The Hub". In 2020 an extension to the hall, the Multi-Purpose Room was built and is currently being used by OSHC and classes for cooking and other learning activities.

The central yard area is paved and verandas and large shade structures provide shade to the playground and elsewhere in the yard. A Covered Outdoor Learning Area, built in 2010 and named "The Grassketball Court" by the students, provides all-weather shelter for physical activity and a number of court games. A new hall became operational in August of 2010. It is equipped as a performance hall as well as a sports hall. The school has had a 17m swimming pool for over 40 years.

The school has a Community Use Agreement with West Torrens Council. This has helped to develop the school grounds and provide facilities, such as a playground and outdoor seating for use both by the school, and by the Cowandilla community in general after school hours. The school has quite large grounds, sections of which are currently used (out of school hours) by community soccer and cricket clubs.

A variety of sustainable practices (in terms of water conservation, recycling, planting native vegetation, energy conservation, land care, vegetable and fruit growing, procurement practices and biodiversity projects) have been instigated to reduce our ecological footprint. The school promotes a culture of caring for the environment. The Climate Change Student Group lead many of the sustainable initiatives.

- **Heating and cooling**

All classrooms, teaching areas and admin areas are air--conditioned.

- **Specialist facilities and equipment**

The Children's Centre provides community facilities including Child Youth and Women's Health Services. A Community Development Coordinator and the Family Services Coordinator are based in the Children's Centre building and coordinate programs for families and children from 0-8 years old. Occasional Care runs on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. We have a Preschool, which hosts a playgroup on most Fridays.

We have a well resourced school library, with 14 computers for class use.

The school has a swimming pool which is used for swimming lessons for all year levels. In 2021 a vinyl liner was installed to upgrade the pool surface.

- **Student facilities**

The school has a modern computer network, centrally located Resource Centre, meeting room, Multi-Purpose Room, STEM-Hub, Covered Outdoor Learning Area, Performance/Sport hall, a swimming pool, and playgrounds for different age groups. Some adult fitness equipment is located between the oval and children's playground.

- **Staff facilities**

There is a staff lounge as well as a meeting room for weekly staff meetings and professional development.

- **Access for students and staff with disabilities**

All buildings have access for staff/students with disabilities.

- **Access to bus transport**

Public transport is available on Sir Donald Bradman Drive and on Marion Road.

- **Other**

West Torrens Council Library is located at the end of our street. Most students are members.

10. School Operations

- **Decision making structures**

Main decision making bodies are the Governing Council and Staff Professional Learning Teams. PAC is involved in decisions relating to staffing matters. Many decisions are made through discussion and consultation with staff, both at staff meetings and during PLT meetings. Governing Council employs the OSHC Director and staff.

- **Regular publications**

Newsletters are published three times a term and this is emailed to families.

- **Other communication**

School website www.cowandilla.sa.edu.au

School Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/CowandillaPrimary>

- **School financial position**

The school is in a sound financial position

- **Special funding**

The school receives some additional funding through grant applications.

11. Local Community

- **General characteristics**

Students are from a diverse range of backgrounds, and part of a highly multicultural community. There is a variety of socio-economic backgrounds among the school community, and some families are on school card. We have a number of students whose parents and grandparents all attended Cowandilla Primary School.

- **Parent and community involvement**

Parents are very supportive of school programs and value the respect for cultural diversity that they promote. We have a very committed Governing Council and membership reflects our cultural diversity. Our Community Resource Committee is a sub-committee of the Governing Council and are a group of parents/caregivers that are extremely active in building a sense of community across the whole site.

- **Feeder or destination schools**

Students exiting Cowandilla attend a range of high schools but predominantly Underdale High School, Plympton International College, Adelaide High School, Adelaide Botanaic High or Henley High School.

- **Other local care and educational facilities**

We have a Preschool located on site and working as part of the Children's Centre. OSHC and vacation care are also available onsite.

- **Commercial/industrial and shopping facilities**

Located in close proximity to retail facilities, 5 minutes from the airport and within 4 kms of the GPO.

- **Other local facilities**

West Torrens Community Library (Hamra Centre) is at the end of the street.

- **Availability of staff housing**

N/A

- **Accessibility**

Close proximity to the airport and to public transport.

- **Local Government body**

West Torrens Council

12. Further Comments

Staff, students and families value being part of our school community. There is a strong sense of continuity that supports student learning and wellbeing from birth to year 6.