

Penola Primary News

Friday, 3rd July 2026: Issue 7

LEADERSHIP

Principal: Sam Currie

Hi Families,

We have had yet another fantastic term at Penola Primary, with our students demonstrating great personal growth both in and outside of the classroom. It was fantastic to see nearly 100% of families attend interviews last week, where your child's achievements and next steps were discussed.

Learning Expeditions Showcase – Wednesday 29th July (Term 3 – Week 2)

Throughout Term 2, all classes have worked incredibly hard on a Learning Expedition linked to the town of Penola. This has provided some amazing opportunities for our students to get out into the community and learn new things, as well as having local experts in their fields come into the school to pass on their wisdom and knowledge to our students.
To bring this wonderful experience together, we are hosting a "Learning Expeditions Showcase" on Wednesday, 29th July (Term 3 – Week 2) in our school gym, from 5:00–6:30pm, where all classes will share their learning journeys and their final products with us.
We strongly encourage all students and families to attend to see first-hand the impact Learning Expeditions have had on our students and our engagement with the local community. The students have worked incredibly hard this term and it will be great for them to share their learning with their families.

SunSmart Policy Update

Late this term, our Governing Council reviewed our SunSmart Policy, and has made the following key changes:

- Wide-brimmed hats are to be worn in Terms 1, 3, and 4 at ALL times.
- Wide-brimmed hats are to be worn in Term 2 when the UV rating is above 3.
- Sunscreen supplied by the school will be SPF 50 or 50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen.

For any other minor changes and to view the full policy, please find it on our school website.

Canteen Update

We are very excited to announce that Marcia Gregory will be joining our school and working as our canteen manager in Term 3. Marcia comes with a wealth of experience in the food and catering industry, having run the Coonawarra Store for 15 years. We look forward to what Marcia will bring to our canteen and school community.

While welcoming Marcia, we are saying an enormous thank you to Maryke, who has taken on this role for the past three and a half years and has done an outstanding job in every aspect. The quality of food, the daily operations, the attention to detail in ordering and maintaining budgets, fundraising initiatives, facility upgrades, the increased role of student helpers and the way Maryke supports them, and perhaps the biggest inclusion in Maryke's time, the "Dig In Dinner," all deserve special mention.

The role Maryke has played in so many aspects goes above and beyond that of a canteen manager and we thank her for her dedication and commitment to the role and our school.
While Maryke steps away from the canteen, we will still have her within our school as an SSO for the remainder of the year, which we are thrilled about.

Term 3 Staffing

Following Sam McDougall's permanent move to Millicent North Primary as Principal, we are now in a position to place people in positions within our school for the remainder of the year.

Jess Skeer will continue in her role as Senior Leader for the remainder of the year. Jess has done an outstanding job over the first six months and will continue to lead our school and support our teachers and students in Wellbeing, Curriculum, and Pedagogy for the remainder of the year.

Jess will continue to work 0.8 (4 days a week) for the remainder of the year. In Term 3, this will be 0.6 (3 days a week) in her Senior Leader role and 0.2 (1 day a week) as acting Principal, as I reduce to 0.8 (4 days a week) for a short period of time.

It is also exciting to announce that Hannah Pollard will remain our F/1B teacher until the end of 2026. Hannah has settled into our school seamlessly and we are thrilled that she will continue in her teaching role for the remainder of the year.

We are also pleased to let you know that we are welcoming back Bridgette Cutchie in an SSO role next term. Bridgette will be back with us on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, working across multiple classes.

Have a fantastic break and I look forward to seeing everyone back refreshed in Term 3!

Thanks,

Sam Currie

Family and Friends Volunteer Group Report

The Family and Friends Volunteer group has had a busy start to the year, adding a substantial sum to our fundraising total. We had just under $18,000 to spend this year and, after asking staff what they thought was needed, we are thrilled to be able to purchase the following:

- Remaining rooms to be recarpeted (2 rooms)
- New tables for the JP classrooms
- JP sandpit cover
- JP whiteboard
- STEM resources – textbooks that will be used across all year levels
- iPad apps requested by staff to aid student learning
- Year 2/3 / Bus Stop Outdoor Area – to spruce up the area and give the Year 2/3 students and those waiting for the bus something to do/enjoy while waiting for the bus and at recess/lunch
- Year 6 graduation presents
- New reading folders for incoming students

We have two more events for the year: the Father's Day Stall and the swim carnival food stall.

A huge thank you to everyone who volunteered their time, baked goods, wrapped presents and helped in any way to help us reach our fundraising goals. We are very grateful for the support we receive.

Thank you,

Jen McCulloch

Thank a First Responder Day

On Wednesday, 10 June, Penola Primary School and McKay Children's Centre proudly participated in Thank a First Responder Day.

We were fortunate to welcome our local police officer, Rhys, along with Ryan and Libbi from the South Australian Ambulance Service. Our students had an amazing opportunity to explore emergency vehicles, ask questions, and learn about the vital work our first responders do to keep our community safe.

A heartfelt thank you to all first responders for your courage, dedication, and service. You inspire us every day!





















Building Connections Across Generations: The Grand-Buddy Program

At Penola Primary School, our Grand-Buddy Program has been fostering meaningful connections between students and older members of our community. Each student is matched with a Grand Buddy—an older friend—creating opportunities to share stories, participate in activities, and, most importantly, build lasting friendships.

The program goes far beyond simply having fun together. For our Grand Buddies, it brings companionship and reduces feelings of loneliness. For our students, it's a wonderful way to learn empathy, show kindness and respect, and understand the importance of caring for others.

When young and old come together, everyone benefits. We learn from one another, share life experiences, and strengthen our community bonds. The Grand-Buddy Program reminds us all that friendship truly knows no age limits.

We feel incredibly fortunate to be involved in such a rewarding initiative this year and would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Amanda Flint for her dedication and organisation.



Meet Our Grand Buddies



Ron (85)
Ron once dreamed of becoming a fisherman but spent his career driving trucks. His favourite school subject was Nature, and as a child, he enjoyed playing chasey, football, and fishing. For Ron, the best part of the Grand-Buddy Program is getting to know the students. His advice is simple: "Be happy and enjoy your life."



Pauline (84)
Pauline fondly remembers being quite fit in her youth, with PE as her favourite subject. She loved playing softball and basketball, and fulfilled her goal of becoming a nurse. Pauline's favourite aspect of the program is seeing all the students. She encourages us all to "be good and enjoy life."



Carol (79)
Carol enjoys nothing more than family gatherings. At school, she excelled at typing and relished games like hopscotch and knuckle bones. She recalls a simpler childhood without social media or mobile phones and enjoys mixing with the students through the program. Carol's advice: "Be responsible and try hard at school."



Merle
Merle is "as young as she feels"! She enjoyed walking to school and playing hopscotch. She points out how lucky today's children are to have so many entertainment options compared to her own youth. Merle cherishes being around young people and her advice is: "Behave, be nice to elderly people an
d don't be cheeky."

Meet Our Grand Buddies

Jean (83)
Jean remembers her childhood as challenging due to wartime, but also filled with sport such as netball and tennis. Her favourite subject was Maths, and her happiest memory was her father returning from war. She later worked at a telephone exchange. Jean enjoys seeing children have fun through the program. Her wise words: "Be kind, take notice of older people, and don't take the wrong path."



Alan "Spud" (99)
Soon to turn 100, Spud's childhood was filled with football, cricket, rabbit hunting, and barefoot runs to school. He became the farmer he aspired to be as a child. Spud's advice to students: "Play sport."



Marlene (86)
Marlene grew up loving all sports, particularly basketball and running, and pursued a career as a nurse. She refers to her younger days as "the good world," and enjoys seeing students participate in the Grand-Buddy Program. Her advice: "Enjoy yourselves and have fun."



The Grand-Buddy Program is a testament to the power of intergenerational relationships. We look forward to sharing more memories and laughter as the year continues.
Please join us in thanking our wonderful Grand Buddies and celebrating this special program at Penola Primary School.

JP Games - Sports


















Going Country at the Disco

On Thursday night, our Year 4, 5, and 6 students enjoyed a fantastic evening at "The Wild" Country Theme Disco, proudly organised by the SRC. Our school hall was filled with the sights and sounds of country fun as students arrived dressed in all sorts of creative western-inspired outfits.

The SRC did a wonderful job planning and hosting the event, providing a safe and exciting atmosphere where everyone could dance, enjoy good music, and have fun with their friends. It was great to see so many students getting into the spirit of the theme and making the most of the evening.

Thank you to the SRC for their leadership and hard work, as well as to all staff and volunteers who helped support the event. Your efforts ensured a memorable night for our Year 4, 5, and 6 students. We look forward to more great SRC events in the future!















Environment Group
Earth Keepers Camp

Earlier this term our Environment Group travelled to the Naracoorte Caves to participate in the Earthkeeper's Training Camp. They shared this experience with groups from 7 other schools, where they learned more about how all living things in earth are connected. On day 1 they investigated munchlines, discovered how energy and materials are at cycled over and over and found time capsules that gave them a glimpse into how the world has changed. They even met someone from the future! On day 2 they immersed themselves in the environment, used all their senses to connect with nature and made pledges about what changes they will make to lessen their impact on earth. They earned 2 of the 4 keys they need to become fully fledged Earthkeepers. Tyrel, Otis, Jim and Harvey were excellent representatives for Penola Primary throughout the camp and walked away with the knowledge and enthusiasm they will need to make a difference. Great work team!

Tyrel also recorded some of his observations and wanted to share it with you.

My Magic Spot - By TSL

The distant whoosh of a helicopter flying overhead, silenced by a gush of wind howling through the trees. The singing chirp of birds and a sudden SCREECH! A cockatoo flying overhead, the laughing of a kookaburra a distant pledge. The bumpy, not to mention rough Sheoak beside me peels its bark. A few stumps sit lonely, free for a companion. Bridal Creeper makes the contrast of the ground bright green. Leaves signal to me that the wind has picked up. In a cage of trees quite relaxing actually. Besides all that the distant murmurs of great survivors talk to me about how they coped with change, their home destroyed. To our success we changed what we destroyed. These days will be remembered FOREVER!!!







Inspiring Visit from South East Primary School Music Festival Director

We recently had the pleasure of welcoming Shylie, the Music Director of the South East Primary School Music Festival, to our school for a special workshop. During her visit, we worked on a selection of songs, focusing on areas where we needed support, as well as highlighting the pieces we are already performing confidently.

Shylie's expert guidance was greatly appreciated and has helped inspire and prepare us as we continue working towards our Term 4 performance.

We were also joined by students and staff from Kalangadoo Primary School and Mary MacKillop, making it a collaborative and memorable experience for everyone involved.



SAPSASA - Netball







We are delighted to acknowledge the fantastic achievements of our talented students—Laila, Sophie, Amy, Harvey, and Jack—who were recently selected to represent the Mid South East and South East Country at the SAPSASA Netball competition.

Throughout the week, our students displayed exemplary sportsmanship, demonstrating genuine teamwork, determination, and respect both on and off the court. Their commitment to fair play and supporting their teammates was evident in every match. These qualities truly reflect the values we uphold at Penola Primary School.

We are incredibly proud of how Laila, Sophie, Amy, Harvey, and Jack carried themselves, representing our school with integrity and pride. Such achievements are a testament to their hard work and positive attitude.

We would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our dedicated coaches and the families who provided wonderful support and encouragement. Your guidance and commitment have been invaluable in helping our students reach these milestones.

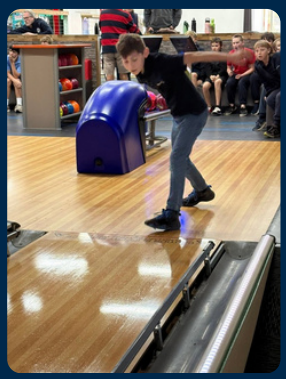
Congratulations once again to Laila, Sophie, Amy, Harvey, and Jack! You have made us all at Penola Primary School very proud.

Variety Games -Ten Pin Bowling

On 16 June, Jim, Xander, Tyrel, and Rylan proudly represented Penola Primary School as the “Penola Pins” at the recent Variety Games 10 Pin Bowling Tournament. The team demonstrated great enthusiasm and sportsmanship throughout the competition, with Tyrel impressively earning the award for the highest individual score. Following their fantastic efforts on the lanes, the group rounded off their exciting day with a well-deserved celebration at McDonald’s.

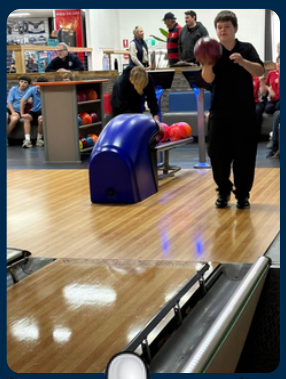












Round Robin Basketball









CANTEEN NEWS:
Canteen Manager: Maryke Van der Merwe

Canteen News

TToday, we say a special thank you to Maryke, who has been an outstanding Canteen Manager for the past three and a half years. Her dedication and hard work have meant so much to our school community. We are delighted that Maryke will continue at Penola Primary School as an SSO for the rest of the year.

We also warmly welcome Marcia Gregory, who brings many years of food and catering experience, as our new Canteen Manager from Term 3.

A special thank you to Chloe and Amy for presenting flowers and a card to Maryke on behalf of the school.



Canteen Duty (Term 3)

FRIDAY, 24th July - Anna McGregor
FRIDAY, 31th July - Tracey Lamont
FRIDAY, 7thAugust - Amy Hill

MARK YOUR CALENDAR
Important dates for Term 3, 2026

20th July - Term 3 starts
29th July - Learning Expedition Presentation Evening

Contact Us:

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Curriculum, Pedagogy and Wellbeing Senior Leader: Jess Skeer
Governing Council Chairperson: Matthew McGregor

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Respect, Responsibility, Inclusivity

Penola Primary School
Term 3, 2026 Calendar

PENOLA PRIMARY SCHOOL

1	20/7	21/7	22/7	23/7	24/7
2	27/7	28/7	29/7 Learning Expedition Presentation Evening 3.00pm-6.30pm	30/7	31/7
3	3/8	4/8	5/8	6/8	7/8 **Assembly - 5/6 A**
4	10/8	11/8	12/8 MASA Quiz Night Yr 5/6 @ PHS	13/8 Hot Shots Tennis Yr 3-6	14/8
5	17/8	18/8	19/8	20/8	21/8
6	24/8	25/8	26/8	27/8	28/8
7	31/8	1/9 Music in my Suitcase Performance	2/9	3/9	4/9
8	7/9	8/9	9/9 Year 4/5 Camp →	10/9	11/9
9	14/9	15/9	16/9	17/9 STEM Bright Futures Yr 5-6	18/9 **Assembly - 5/6B**
10	21/9	22/9	23/9	24/9	25/9

Respect, Responsibility, Inclusivity

Penola Primary School SunSmart Policy

This policy applies to all school events on and off-site

Rationale

A balance of ultra-violet (UV) radiation exposure is important for health. Too much of the sun's UV radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Sun exposure in the first ten years of life is a major factor in determining future skin cancer risk.

Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones and muscles, and for general health.

Objectives

Penola Primary School's SunSmart policy has been developed to:

- Encourage the entire school community to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV index levels reach 3 and above.
- Work towards a safe school environment that provides shade for students, staff and the school community at appropriate times.
- Ensure all students and staff have some UV exposure for vitamin D.
- Assist students to be responsible for their own sun protection.
- Ensure that families and new staff are informed of Penola Primary School's SunSmart policy.

Staff are encouraged to access the SunSmart AV Alert at ***www.bom.gov.au/sa/uv*** to find out daily local sun protection times to assist with the implementation of this policy.

The school uses a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities during Terms 1, 3 and 4, and during Term 2 whenever UV levels reach 3 and above at other times.

Care is taken during the peak UV radiation times and outdoor activities are scheduled outside of these times where possible.

1. Clothing

Sun protective clothing is included in the school uniform and sports uniforms. The clothing is cool, loose fitting and made of closely woven fabric. It includes shirts with collars, longer style dresses and shorts and rash tops/t-shirts for outdoor swimming.

2. Sunscreen

- The school will supply each classroom with SPF 50 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen for staff and student's use.

Last Reviewed: 03/07/ 2026

- Sunscreen is supplied 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours.
- Strategies are in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors (e.g. reminder notices, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies).
- With parental consent, students with naturally very dark skin are not required to wear sunscreen to help with vitamin D requirements.

3. Hats

All students and staff are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears in Terms 1, 3 and 4. These hats include legionnaire, broad brimmed or bucket hats. Baseball or peak caps are not acceptable.

4. Shade

- A shade audit is conducted every three years to determine the current availability and quality of shade.
- The governing council makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the school grounds, particularly in areas where students congregate e.g. canteen, outdoor lesson areas and popular play areas.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all other outdoor activities.
- In consultation with the governing council, shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.
- Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
- Students who do not have appropriate hats or clothing are asked to sit under a shaded area during play or outdoor activity.

Staff WHS and role modelling

As part of WHS UV risk controls and role modelling, when the UV is 3 and above staff will:

- Wear sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside.
- Apply SPF 50 or higher, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen.
- Seek shade whenever possible.

Curriculum

- Programs on skin cancer prevention and vitamin D are included in the curriculum for all year levels.
- SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school homepage, parent meetings, staff meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and in student enrolment packs.

Review

The governing council and staff regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the SunSmart policy (at least every three years) and revise the policy when required.

Last Reviewed: 03/07/ 2026

SCHOOL EVENT:

PENOLA PRIMARY SCHOOL

LEARNING EXPEDITION

PRESENTATION EVENING



We invite all parents, families, and community members to a Celebration of Learning evening, hosted by the students of Penola Primary School. Come and discover how every student has contributed, explored, and celebrated Penola's history, agriculture, art and community through creative, engaging learning.

Wednesday 29th July

5:00 – 6:30pm

Penola Primary School Gym

Upper Primary: Mapping Our Memories

Middle Primary: Art in the Community

Junior Primary: Farm to Fork

PENOLA

OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE

McKay Children's Centre Penola

Mary MacKillop Penola

Penola Primary School

Also offering vacation care during school holidays.

Now located in the Penola Primary School Gym, our enhanced OSHC service offers a safe, engaging, and supportive environment for children. Contact us today about enrolment.

Providing a leisure-based after school and vacation care program for our local community.



Phone: (08) 8737 2535

centacare family connections program

Penola Playgroup

Thursdays

9:30—11am
Penola Primary School Gym
29 Riddoch St, Penola

Date	Theme
23 JUL	Winter
30 JUL	Exploring Colours
6 AUG	Farmyard Friends
13 AUG	Alphabet Antics
20 AUG	Science Week
27 AUG	Book Week
3 SEP	Fathers' Day
10 SEP	Building & Construction
17 SEP	Babies
24 SEP	Be Active



centacare.org.au

Join our Facebook Group

Contact us:
Family Connections Program
08 8303 6630
Di 0419 674 070
Sandra 0488 946 896

Healthy fruit kindly donated by She's Apples