SCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT

ST. AGNES PRIMARY SCHOOL (Pre-school- Year 7)

School number: 1091 (Primary) 1620 (Pre-school)
School Name: St. Agnes Primary School (Pre-school- Year 7)

1. General Information

Part A

School name : ST AGNES PRIMARY SCHOOL
School No. : 1091 (Primary) & 1620 (Preschool)
Principal : Mrs Karen Post
Postal Address : 250 Smart Road, St. Agnes 5097
Location Address : 250 Smart Road, St. Agnes 5097
Region: Northern Adelaide
Distance from GPO : 16 Km
CPC attached : Yes
Phone Number: (08) 8 263 3541
Fax Number: (08) 8 396 1716

July FTE Enrollment

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Female FTE

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Complexity Points history
Since 1975, St. Agnes has attracted 1 Base Placement point for each year and 0 complexity points making an annual total of 1 point per year since opening.

Part B

Senior Leader:

Mrs Michaela Rankin (0.6 Administration and 0.2 School Counsellor)

Email address
dl.1091.info@schools.sa.edu.au

- Preschool attached

The school has a vibrant pre-school under the main roof in the junior primary area of the school. There is a 0.6 teacher and currently 18 SSO hours with school based temporary hours to support students. Under the universal access funding agreements, the pre-school runs a 15 hour per week programme. The Preschool operates Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

- Staffing

The tier one staffing consists of 9 teaching classrooms, with 4 tandem teaching partnerships. NIT programmes consist of 0.6 German, 0.6 The Arts and 0.6 P.E. The Senior Leader shares the Year 1 classroom and currently manages the special needs and intervention programmes in the school including line management of class based SSO’s.

The Tier 2 staffing is incorporated in the human resources budget and is utilised to provide SSO support for 4 students with learning disabilities. (2 receive a ‘D’ level of support and 2 receive a level ‘A’)

The teacher librarian time is 0.6 and she works collaboratively with staff to plan, teach and assess units of work.

Flexible initiative staffing is incorporated into the human resources budget and is used to provide release time to provide professional development opportunities for staff, provide SSO hours for the resource centre, teacher support, additional student support and employment of a computer technician. The PAC support the Principal in the decisions about the human resource budget, after consultation with all staff.

The school has an entitlement of 83 SSO support hours and the vast majority of these hours are aligned to permanent SSO’s. 5 SSO’s currently work in the school.

- Enrolment trends

Over recent years enrolments have been steady and slowly climbing with resurgence particularly at the pre-school and reception level. The school commenced the school year with eight classes in 2013, 2014 and with a ninth class in 2015. Class sizes in the 3-7 sector of the school range from 25-30 students. Depending on numbers, class configurations have changed over recent years.
In 2015 the school has the following configuration of classes: 1 X R class, 1 x R/1 class, 1 x year 1 class, 2 x year 2/3 classes, 1 x year ¾ class, 1 x year 4/5 class, 1 x year 5/6 class and 1 x year 6/7 class.

The Pre-school has a capacity of 30 students and enrolments have been close to capacity for the past 3 years. There is a play group run by parent volunteers in the Pre-school every Friday and this programme is important as it gives the local community a first look at what Pre-school is like.

- **OSHC**

The OSHC programme operates in the school in a separate building adjacent to the Pre-school. Up until the end of 2013 the OSHC service was run and staffed by Modbury South Primary School - at the beginning of 2014 the St Agnes Primary School became independent of Modbury South Primary School and now manages the service. It offers before and after school care, support on pupil free days and vacation care.

- **Year of school opening - 1975**
- **Public transport access**

Public transport access on several bus routes interconnected with Modbury Interchange and Adelaide via O’Bahn transport network.

2. **Students (and their welfare)**

- **General characteristics**

St Agnes School is a smaller, preschool to year 7 metropolitan school established in a natural bushland setting. The local community focus of our school results in:

- A positive interaction amongst students, staff and parents and friendly, family-like atmosphere with ease of communication.
- An acceptance by younger and older students of each other (promoted through opportunities in Forum Groups and ‘Big Buddy’ reading programme)
- The availability (due to smaller numbers) of spacious facilities and outdoor areas and ease of access to areas such as the computer suite, the resource centre, the gym and a variety of play areas.
- Increased opportunities for students to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular school activities.

The school has well maintained grounds with the Tea Tree Gully Council (owners of the green open space/ oval) maintaining it (cutting and watering) through their budget. Recent additions include a new $2.2 million gym, the redevelopment of the Resource Centre to include a purpose built computer room (30 computers) and two upper primary classrooms. Classrooms are all open space (except for the 2 upper primary classes)

The majority of students are from English speaking backgrounds and those with other cultural backgrounds usually speak English at home. There are currently 6 students from Aboriginal backgrounds. The ration of boys to girls is relatively even however in previous years the positive male imbalance was more significant. Approx. 15% of students are now supported by the School Card Scheme.
• Student management

Generally the students are very well behaved. Classes have negotiated rules and consequences for appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. Classes use time out and buddy class structures to support each other and the leadership team provides support when it is necessary. For inappropriate yard behaviour, students spend time in the ‘Focus Room (re-think time) and their parents are notified by letter. The school recently reviewed and updated its grievance procedures and anti-bullying procedures in line with the Cossey review and the leadership team reports back to the Governing Council with data from office time out and Focus Room visits. The school uses the ‘Keys to Success’ from the Programme Achieve social skills programme and this forms the basis for our ‘foundation week’ activities in week 1 of each school year. During this week, the school has a daily co-ordinated programme of activities, as well as sessions where students are informed of specific school policies around anti-bullying, addressing grievances etc. Programme Achieve is also used in day to day teaching programmes in an ongoing basis.

• Student voice programmes

Student ‘Forum Group’ s are an established part of authentic student voice programmes at St. Agnes. Groups of students from year 3 to year 7 participate in Forum Groups. At the beginning of each year, year 7 students are invited to write an application against set criteria, to be a forum group leader and these applications are judged on merit by a panel consisting of 2 staff reps and student reps from years 2-6. Each teacher is responsible for the staff leadership of one of the Forum Groups. They work together for 45 mins every second week with whole school assemblies on the other week.

• Additional Programmes

The school offers an extensive NIT music programme and instrumental programme. The Music programme includes Festival of Music Choir, Junior Choir, Recorder and Violin. Additional private lessons are offered during school time in Percussions (Drums) and Guitar. Singing is also offered.

Students are encouraged to nominate for S.A.P.S.A.S.A. (Primary School sport) events and when numbers are sufficient, school teams are supported in intra-district competition. Since 2007 staff have participated in the Eat well, be Active programme, in particular the ‘Blue Earth’ P.E. programme. All staff have been in serviced and trained in Blue Earth and this programme has continued to be funded through a series of ‘Eat well/Be Active grants.

3. Key School Priorities

• Core Business

The core business of St. Agnes School is teaching and learning with a focus on continual improvement at the centre of everything we do. Staff work in P.L.C.’s (professional learning communities) to ensure they continually share and update their Pedagogy.
For the past 2 years the School’s main priorities on its S.I.P. (site improvement plan) have been Numeracy, Literacy (Reading Comprehension) and Effective Teaching & Learning. The school has been heavily involved in the N.A.R.’s (Northern Adelaide Region) Reading comprehension focus in previous years and staff explicitly plan, teach and assess Reading skills used in Reading Comprehension. Staff have been implementing Natural Maths Strategies and involved in the DECD Mathematician in Residence program.

- **Site Improvement Plan (S.I.P.)**

Our school’s motto is ‘Learning today, leading tomorrow’ and our school values are:
- Personal excellence - aiming for your own excellence, no matter what the task.
- Respect - for yourself and others.
- Courage - to take risks and have a go!
- Responsibility - responsibility for your own learning and behaviour.

The site improvement plan emphasises quality teaching and learning with the key priorities:
- Literacy Reading Comprehension
- Numeracy
- Effective Teaching & Learning

Our current S.I.P. talks about our vision: Our students will be successful, confident learners with personal best achievement in all subject areas through high levels of literacy, numeracy and learning skills.

As a learning community at St. Agnes we believe:
- Learning is enhanced when teachers have the opportunity to share professional knowledge on an ongoing basis.
- Students are more engaged in their learning when the curriculum is innovative, challenging, rigorous and relevant to their life experiences.
- Learning is enhanced when students are provided with a variety of learning processes that actively engage them in deep creative thinking, skills development and problem solving (enquiry based).
- Expectations for work and assessment are explicit.
- The learning environment is safe, caring and supportive for all.

4. **Curriculum**

- **Subject offerings**

Subjects offered are consistent with the Australian Curriculum. Specialist areas include: Music (NIT), German (NIT), P.E (NIT)
• **Other specialist curriculum areas**

Specialist instrumental tuition is available in violin, cello, recorder, guitar, drums and voice. The school has a choir and junior choir. The senior choir proudly participates in the Festival of Music performance each year at the Festival Theatre.

• **Special Needs- intervention**

St. Agnes school has a comprehensive intervention programme and this is currently co-ordinated by the Senior Leader as part of her admin role. Her role includes: managing the referral process (co-ordinating meetings with SSO’s teachers and parents), NEP review meetings, requests for interagency support for students at risk, co-ordinating SSO support and E.S.L. support and monitoring attendance and co-ordinating action plans when necessary. ‘Rocket Reading’ is a reading intervention programme that is unique to our school. This programme is used to identify students who are reading below SEA reading target levels and getting them onto an intensive reading support programme (computer based programme based on PM benchmarks) to help bring them up to the targeted reading level. It runs for 3 mornings a week before school and SSO’s take responsibility for the day to day running of the programme.

• **Teaching pedagogy**

Staff work in P.LC.’s in year levels of junior, middle and upper primary. NIT providers and the teacher librarian work collaboratively within one of these groups. Staff plan some units of work collaboratively using the S.M.A.R.T. target framework (Strategic, measurable, ambitious, resourced and timely) particularly in the area of Reading Comprehension. Other planning is based on teacher interests and strengths. The school has excellent ICT (information and communication technologies) facilities and teachers integrate their use into learning programmes. All classes have an interactive white board (SMART board) as do other learning areas, such as the library and even the staff room. Most classes have two computers each as well as access to a well-equipped computer suite (30 computers).

• **Resource Based Learning**

The teacher librarian (0.6) has outstanding ICT skills and works collaboratively with the staff in planning, teaching and assessing innovative RBL programmes.

• **Assessment procedures and Reporting**

Each term we use a variety of class, sub group and whole school assessment and reporting methods to collect and analyse data and report back to key stakeholders. The school has ‘whole of school agreements’ across all year levels around what kinds of testing/ assessments are done and in what terms. Assessments are done in week 8 of terms 1 and 3 and the data is entered by staff online in Eduportal. This information is then ‘rolled over’ in EDSAS each year, so beginning of year class data is available on day 1 for teachers.
Each term reporting to the community is done in different ways including:

* Term One- ‘Reverse interviews’ where parents/caregivers are given a 10 minute time slot to come in to talk about their child’s perceived strengths and areas for development, using a generic proforma that they fill out and bring along. Parents do all of the talking and the time limit of 10 mins is enforced.

In term one we also have: 15 minute 3-way interviews, involving teachers, parents and the students.

* Term 2- Formal written reports.

* Term 3- Twilight ‘Learning Expo’ (open night) where community comes in to see the school working and the special and unique programmes that the school offers.

* Term 4- Formal written reports.

5. Sporting Activities

Students at the school participate in a daily fitness programme that is based around ‘Blue Earth’ activities. Our school has its own unique ‘Nature walk’ track that classes often use to go out of the school for walks. Students regularly participate in S.A.P.S.A.S.A events including athletics, cross country, netball, football, swimming etc. Our school is fortunate enough to have a small group of dedicated parents who organise an out of hours T-ball team and the team plays against other schools on Saturday mornings. Opportunities for involvement in football and cricket teams are available through district teams or joint local clubs. Sporting clinics are a regular feature at our school throughout the year and include: Auskick, soccer, tennis, basketball etc.

6. Other Extra-curricular activities

The year 6/7 students are involved in the choir and we also have a junior choir both of which are managed by the Music teacher. The Christian option program is an optional presentation to year’s 4-7 students in term 4. Each term staff and students are involved in negotiated whole school themes and events, such as Book Week, Sports Day, etc. Our school is a proud participant in the Premier’s Reading Challenge and also ‘Book Cup’ for older students. Students get to compete against other local schools in a test of knowledge of a set selection of novels that have been selected for the competition.

7. Staff Profile

The school currently has a good mix of experienced and recently graduated teachers providing a good range of expertise and experience. The school has 15 teaching staff with a small number of part-time teaching partnerships across the classes. The majority of these teachers are permanent with 4 contract teachers usually employed each year.

- Leadership Structure

Currently Principal (1.0) and Senior Leader (0.6 admin)
**Staff support systems**

School priorities are the main driver behind professional learning with weekly staff meetings being held each Wednesday night. Most staff meetings occur on site (there is an interactive white board in the staff room and library) however on occasions the school attends cluster training with other schools off site. Staff are given the opportunity to broaden their professional learning through attending offsite training that is relevant to their needs and the needs of the school. PLC’s meet 2-3 times a term to promote professional learning and dialogue and it is an expectation that on returning from P.D. staff share this with the rest of the staff at PLC’s and or staff meeting.

SSO’s are also encouraged to attend training to further their professional learning and there is a dedicated budget for them to attend. Currently there is one permanent finance SSO who provides financial support. Two permanent SSO’s provide clerical, administrative and class support. Two temporary SSO’s provide a clerical and class support.

**Performance Development**

The school recently developed its own performance development policy and this was ratified by PAC. This involves termly performance development meetings with staff and their line manager to discuss learning programmes, goals etc. Performance development is shared between the Principal and Deputy for staff within the school. Detailed written feedback is given to staff at least twice a year. We are currently exploring the TfEl review tools handbook to begin to include feedback given to each other by peers, in a safe and supportive environment.

**Staff utilisation policies**

The theme of ‘we all have a collective responsibility’ is strong at St. Agnes and there is a strong culture of team work and mutual support. Efforts have been made in the NIT programming to ensure that similar year levels have NIT at the same time, to give teachers the opportunities to talk and support each other. PAC provides support and advice to the Principal in matters relating to staff deployment.

**Access to support services**

The Para Hills District office is accessed for regional support services.

**8. School Facilities**

**Buildings and Grounds**

The school is located in natural vegetation and its setting attracts an abundance of bird life and promotes a semi-rural atmosphere of peacefulness and tranquillity. Koalas can sometimes be seen in the large number of gum trees within the grounds or surrounding school site.
The school consists of 3 open spaced units (apart from 2 enclosed classrooms in middle/upper primary) and the facilities are very spacious. Each unit contains a different level of schooling; West unit- J.P., North Unit- U.P. and East Unit- M.P. students.

All areas have easy access to great facilities such as the new gym, resource centre, computer suite and small hall. The resource centre has its own SMART board, student discussion tables, and ample floor space. Adjacent to it is the computer suite, housing 30 slim monitor computers. The school has a dual ISP and a fantastic intranet, which the resource centre teacher maintains. All rooms in the school are carpeted, have reverse cycle air conditioning and many have wet areas in their class too. The Pre-school is adjacent to the junior primary classrooms and is spacious and well equipped with its own SMART board, computers, and kitchen and outside designated play areas (including a vegetable garden).

The gym (B.E.R. federally funded project in 2010) has a ‘gerflor’ sports surface, kitchen and storage facilities, toilets as well as two huge sports storage areas. It also has a new staging and a wonderful sound system ideal for assemblies, performances and concerts.

The administration/staff room area was recently re-furbished creating a modern and professional first impression to visitors.

- **Cooling**

All buildings have reverse cycle heating and cooling systems

- **Student facilities**

The computer suite is extremely well equipped with 30 computers and a large projection screen for teaching classes. This is also open every lunch time for half of lunch play and is a much used facility. Staff and students have access to 1 or 2 computers per classroom and there is a second bank of computers in the East wing. Spacious play areas include cricket nets, large grassed oval area, 2 separate basketball courts and ample hard court areas.

- **Staff facilities**

The staffroom has kitchen facilities which were renovated at the beginning of 2013. The new gym has a brand new kitchen including an oven and counter servery that opens up to the main gym area.

- **Access for students with disabilities**

Ramps provide access points to the school and buildings. Handrails with 2 heights are attached to many ramps to support students with a physical disability. Disabled parking is available. The new gym has a disabled toilet as well as a shower facility. There is sick room used for the management of specific student issues as well as general school illness.
9. School operations

- **Decision making structures**

  Staff meetings are held every Wednesday afternoon. Decision making also involves PAC and the student Forum Groups when appropriate. There are lots of parents who volunteer in the school and contribute to the school. The school’s Governing Council has sub committees including: finance, dress code, fundraising, playgroup and facilities.

- **Leadership/ management meetings**

  Leadership/ management meetings are held at least once per week with a formal agenda set by the leadership team. Staff has the ability to raise issues through the leadership team and these are added to the agenda.

- **Regular publications**

  Newsletters come out every even week and are posted on the school’s website. Information includes upcoming calendar events, curriculum news, sports reports, acknowledgements etc.

- **Other communication**

  The school uses ‘Google Docs’ to create an online weekly bulletin where staff can type straight into the document for that week or upcoming weeks. This is also published in a hard copy format and distributed to staff each Monday morning. Teachers can access this document from school or home.

- **School financial position**

  Locally managed using the EDSAS Finance module

10. Local community

- **Parent and community involvement**

  Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in their child’s learning. Parent volunteers run a vibrant play-group that runs each Friday morning, out of the Pre-school. This group is often the first contact with families new to the school and provides support and information to families about the school and the programmes that we offer.

- **Feeder Schools**

  Most students come to St. Agnes from our own site pre-school and most year 7 students move to local High Schools. Modbury High and Banksia Park International High School are the main feeder High Schools.
• Local Government body

The City of Tea Tree Gully has a good working relationship with the school and has been supportive of requests from the school for assistance.

• Commercial/ industrial and shopping facilities

The St. Agnes Shopping Centre is located nearby on the corner of Hancock and North East Roads. The school is approx. 3 kms from Tea Tree Plaza, Modbury Hospital and Tea Tree Gully TAFE.

• Other local facilities

The new gym is available for hire to local sporting and other clubs.