

SCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT



School number: 0175

Updated: 9/2025

School name: Hawker Area School

Hawker is a small rural township in the Flinders Ranges. Although starting out as a service centre for the surrounding cropping and grazing land today its economy is based on the pastoral and tourism industries.

Schooling first began here in 1880 and the first stone building was erected in 1883. The school started catering for secondary students in the early 1900's becoming a higher primary school, a special rural school and then an Area School.

The school is a vibrant student- centred learning environment with excellent facilities for staff and students. A wide range of challenging curriculum is offered both face to face and through distance education. The school has a strong focus on literacy and numeracy. These are supported by a range of practical based cross-curricular subjects such as Tech Studies and Home Economics across all year levels which allow students to incorporate these basic skills within wider learning situations.

As with many rural and remote communities the population of Hawker has declined in recent times. This has caused a corresponding decline in the student population. The school became a Senior Secondary by-pass school in the early 1990s. In recent years the school has been working hard to re-establish a Senior Secondary curriculum, reintroducing face to face subjects, brokering school-based apprenticeships, and investigating the use of ICT and Shared Delivery to increase the number of subjects offered.

1. General information

- **School Principal name:** Daren O'Neill
- **Year of opening:** 1883
- **Postal Address:** PO Box 132, Hawker, SA, 5434
- **Location Address:** Wirreanda Terrace, Hawker, SA, 5434
- **DECD Region:** Far North Partnership
- **Geographical location:** 388 kms from Adelaide GPO
- **Telephone number:** 08 86 484 003
- **School website address:** www.hawkeras.sa.edu.au
- **School e-mail address:** dl.0175.info@schools.sa.edu.au

February FTE student enrolment:

February FTE Enrolments	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Primary – Special, N.A.P. Ungraded etc.							
Reception	5	4	6	5	6	5	2
Year 1	2	3	4	6	5	4	5
Year 2	3	6	3	4	7	3	4
Year 3	5	1	6	3	4	5	5
Year 4	3	6	1	6	4	3	4
Year 5	2	3	7	2	7	2	5
Year 6	2	2	4	6	2	4	2
Secondary - Special, N.A.P. Ungraded etc.							
Year 7	3	4	2	3	6	1	6
Year 8	1	2	5	2	3	2	1
Year 9	0	1	2	2	2	2	2
Year 10	2	0	0	2	1	0	2
Year 11	0	1	0	1	2	1	0
Year 12	3	2	3	0	2	0	2
	31	34	43	42	51	32	40
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Male FTE	19	17	24	25	32	18	23
Female FTE	21	17	19	17	19	14	17
School Card	11	10	10	12	2	4	6
Aboriginal FTE Enrolments	18	16	22	19	21	13	12
NESB Total (persons)	18	16	10	10	9	7	8

- **Student enrolment trends:**

Enrolments vary according to district employment opportunities.

- **Staffing numbers**

Tier 1 Primary 3.2 FTE, Secondary 3.2 FTE

Tier 2 Open Access 0.5 FTE, AIT 0.1, **Special Education 0.260 FTE**, EALD 0.085 FTE, Teacher Librarian 0.4 FTE, Ancillary Staff – Permanent 71 hours per week, Student Wellbeing Leader 0.1, AET 0.408

- **Public transport access:**

There is no public transport access to Hawker. Most students walk to school or arrive by car. A school bus service is available for students living beyond the township.

- **Special site arrangements:**

Hawker Area School is part of the Far North Local Partnership. Hawker Childhood Services Centre is located adjacent to the site and there is a close working relationship between both entities.

2. Students (and their welfare)

General characteristics:

Hawker Area School has a small but diverse student cohort. A third of all students live on properties outside the town and travel to school either by private vehicle or school bus. Approximately a half of the students identify as Aboriginal with about ½ of these having Aboriginal English as their first language. Nine students are identified as Students with Disabilities. The small cohort means that there is a lot of room for individual attention for these students.

Students are in multi-level classes which allow teachers to extend or further support students as the need arises.

Student well-being programs:

All teachers at Hawker Area School have Pastoral Care responsibilities. Social and Emotional Learning programs are incorporated across the school's curriculum, with the emphasis that the programs must support student learning.

Student support offered:

Intervention is supported in each classroom with SSO allocations to support student learning in a differentiated environment. This especially focuses on literacy and numeracy support.

The school works with visiting Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapists and other support workers from various organisations to provide support to students with disabilities.

The class teachers, and the Principal provide general student counselling.

Headspace visits the school every two weeks, working with all classes and offer counselling to students aged 12 and above.

Career counselling is provided for students in Years 7-12. Course counselling is provided for students in Years 10-12.

Student management:

Student behaviour is managed consistently across the school in a supportive, rigorous, success-orientated culture. This is underpinned by commonly agreed classroom and yard rules with negotiated consequences.

Student government:

The students of Hawker Area School all participate in SRC decision making.

Each class meets to discuss school issues, fundraising opportunities and student suggestions. These are brought to the SRC Meetings which are held every two weeks.

Special programmes:

Children's University, Instrumental Music, Sporting Schools Program, SAPSASA and Secondary Sports, Interschool Sports Days and Swimming Carnivals.

Key School Policies

School Improvement Plan and other key statements or policies:

Goal 1 - Improve student achievement in Maths.

Goal 2 - Improve student achievement in Reading.

Goal 3 - Improve student achievement in Writing.

Recent key outcomes:

In **2020** the External Review commented on the impact of the school's efforts with the directions from the 2015 External Review.

The current principal has been in the position for over 3 years, and actions were taken to address the previous ESR directions. These include:

Improvement in understanding student achievement and growth has been achieved. This was through staff participating in workshops to analyse and synthesise student data, and to develop teaching programs and approaches to the teaching of individual students. Learning data is recorded electronically and is available to staff at school and home. The school has changed the reporting and assessment processes to include progress checks for both secondary and primary students, incorporating personalised student goal-setting and the tracking, review and modifying of student goals throughout the school year. Student goals are recorded in the formal reports, which is favoured by parents interviewed. The main achievement data reviewed focuses on early years literacy in reading, comprehension, spelling, writing and NAPLAN. Regular performance and development plan (PDP) meetings examine learning data and confirmation of teaching practices implemented, through observations of teachers in lessons, both formally and informally. Effective evidence-based teaching practices and approaches undertaken by the school were developed through professional development programs that focus on teachers developing plans that are aligned with school improvement plan goals. Adoption of daily writing activities in all primary classes, and explicit teaching of identified text types, provided the catalyst for improved literacy across years 3 to 7. Staff have been involved in the Learning Design Assessment and Moderation strategy, along with the STEM 500, to support both reading and mathematics. Staff undertook the online course 'Learning Differently in Contemporary Classrooms', aiming to improve the use of evidence-based teaching practices, particularly in the area of assessment for learning. This work is continuing.

Elements of the previous directions are still to be addressed and actioned in conjunction with the strategies identified in the school improvement plan (SIP).

Outcomes of the External School Review 2020

The strength of the school is its community feel and diversity. Recognised by all people interviewed, was that the principal and teaching team have influenced the focus of the school's priorities and the continuity of learning. The school is effectively using improvement planning and monitoring processes to raise student achievement and providing effective conditions for student learning.

The principal will work with the education director to implement the following directions:

Direction 1 Strengthen the focus on improved student learning through furthering effective structures to monitor impact and progress towards goals and practice actions against the success criteria of the SIP.

Direction 2 To enable students to be partners in their learning, strengthen teacher knowledge and action to embed student agency into the formative assessment and feedback processes between students and teachers, to impact on students' capabilities and self-drive to improve.

Direction 3 To ensure a culture of high expectation from all students with their learning, embed teaching practices and structures within the learning environment that are student-centered, aspirational and improvement-focused.

Statement of purpose:

Hawker Area School provides a safe, caring environment where students, staff and parents work and learn together. The school recognises the right of all students to have

the opportunity to develop to their full potential through experiencing success. The schools current focus is on giving students skills and abilities to be successful in the 21st Century.

This provides the framework for Hawker Area School's core business:

- Social inclusion and respect
- Learning and thinking
- Cooperation and communication
- The basic right and need for Literacy and Numeracy
- Planning for future directions

Staff members at Hawker Area School:

- Work in a professional and collegiate manner
- Are flexible, tolerant and tactful
- Have the best interest of students at heart
- Demonstrate and model good time management skills
- Are positively persistent
- Have good communication skills
- Are friendly and approachable
- Respect confidentiality
- Want to be part of the community
- Are willing to take on new roles and have the opportunity to do so
- Engage in professional development and are multi-skilled
- Are able to teach across age and year levels
- We consider this ethos in our work.

4. Curriculum

Subject offerings:

The school is now offering a complete range of the Australian Curriculum. Where appropriate teaching staff are available, SACE Stage 1 and 2 subjects are offered face to face. The curriculum reflects the negotiated learning and teaching practices we promote.

Alternate Delivery Program

Hawker Area School is part of the Alternate Delivery Program offered by the Schools of the Far North Partnership and other areas. This provides specialised curriculum to support academic goals of students with pathways into Tertiary as well as VET careers.

Open Access/Distance Education provision:

The school uses distance education to promote a broad and balanced study program for students ranging in class years from 8-12. These subjects are predominately offered by

Open Access College. Students use Webex and Moodle as part of their Open Access subjects.

Special needs:

Individual programs are developed for students with special need and are supported by their class teachers, SSO's and the Special Needs Team Leader.

VET offerings (Flexible Industry Pathways):

These vary from year to year based on the needs and interests of our students. Recent offerings have included:

- Port Augusta Technical College provides students at Hawker with a VET pathway into apprenticeships and employment, offered from Year 10 upwards.
- Flexible Industry Pathways are offered through the Far North Partnership and other nearby schools.
- Other VET opportunities around the region are supported for students at Hawker.

Special curriculum features:

Yura Muda is taught face-to-face in Years F-9.

The school has a Horticulture program, which involves all students participating in the creation and maintenance of a traditional kitchen garden and a native (edible) garden.

EIF and AIF are taught face-to-face or through other delivery options.

The school delivers some SACE subjects face to face and access other options through Open Access and nearby schools.

Home Economics, Art and Design and Technology are taught face to face to our classes.

Ancillary support is used across all our F-12 classes including Technology Studies and Home Economics.

Low student to teacher ratios at our school further support student learning.

Teaching methodology:

Collaborative, student-centred methodology is promoted and supported with a focus on literacy, numeracy, and senior secondary studies. Teachers use Inquiry Based Approaches where appropriate.

The school has excellent ICT facilities with Interactive Active Panel TVs in all homegroup rooms, Science, the Library and Multipurpose Room. All our primary students have their own allocated iPads, which are regularly serviced and updated, whilst all secondary students have laptops, also regularly serviced and updated.

Wireless access to the Curriculum network is available throughout the school, this has been a focus for improved delivery since 2018, with the SWIFT program branching out to Hawker during 2020.

Student assessment procedures and reporting:

The school strives to provide regular and detailed information to parents and caregivers regarding student progress.

The school has a dual system of reporting.

- Term 1 and 3 – Parent /Teacher / Student Goal Setting interviews
- Term 4 – Open Night and Student showcase
- Term 1 and 3 – Secondary written reports for all subjects. Primary Progress reports.
- Term 2 and 4 Primary Written reports. Secondary End of Semester reports with homegroup teacher comment.

Joint programmes:

- Australian Sports Commission – Sporting Schools program

5. Sporting Activities

- The school organises a Sports Day and Swimming Carnival annually and is involved in joint carnivals with Leigh Creek Area School / Marree Aboriginal School. We attend the Quorn Area School Sports day and Swimming Carnival and participate in MNSEC Athletics and Swimming carnivals, and MNSEC teams in Adelaide if qualified.
- Students can participate in SASSA and SAPSASA sports competitions, as well as other regional sporting events.
- A sports complex adjacent to the school offers facilities for tennis, basketball, netball, golf, cricket and bowls.
- The school has access to a 20 metre pool that is used for term-time swimming lessons, swimming carnival and activities.

6. Other Co-Curricular Activities

General

Students contribute to the creation of the school's annual magazine.

School Assemblies are run by the students.

Presentation Night (Term 4) includes the students acting as MC's, presenting awards and performing. Every second year the school puts on a school play.

Students through Home Economics and Primary Kitchen lessons prepare meals for staff and occasionally planned community gatherings.

Students contribute to the organisation of Open Night for parents, caregivers and community members to showcase our schools learning opportunities.

7. Staff (and their welfare)

Staff profile:

Currently we have stable staffing within our teaching and ancillary workgroups, ensuring a healthy mix of enthusiasm and experience.

The staffing combines well and practises flexibility to best support the needs of the student and each other.

At times there are opportunities to teach across the school.

Leadership structure:

The Principal has overall leadership over the site, with individual staff being offered opportunities to lead in areas of expertise. Decision making is a collaborative process with regular consultation on between all staff regarding site issues.

Staff support systems:

Due to the size and remoteness of the site a high degree of collegiate support has developed amongst the staff at Hawker Area School. Collaboration and professional learning occurs through the Far North Partnership. Staff are supported by the role of

the Pastoral Care Worker as well as through DfE supported employee assistance programs.

Performance Management:

The school has a strong focus on performance management that supports staff in their practice. Performance management for teaching staff is based on AITSL.

All staff are encouraged to undertake regular training and development linked to the current site priorities and individual goals.

Staff utilisation policies:

Where possible staff teach in their area of specialisation. Classroom Support SSO's are used to support our Read Write Inc curriculum and are provided for students with special needs, in addition to broad support across all learning areas.

Access to special staff:

Specialised support is accessed through the Education Office in Port Augusta and from Adelaide.

8. Incentives, support and award conditions for Staff

Shorter terms:

Schools in remote areas have shorter school terms. Hawker Area School closes one hour earlier in Terms 1/2/3 and one day earlier in Term 4

Travelling time: Not applicable

Housing assistance:

Teachers residing in country locations more than 40 kms from their 'home' are eligible for Government housing. The rent is subsidised at varying rates according to location. This subsidy is arranged automatically.

Housing available in Hawker is mostly three-bedroom houses with air-conditioning and floor coverings.

Medical and dental treatment expenses:

Employees who reside in Hawker by virtue of their employment are eligible for reimbursement of certain travel and accommodation expenses incurred when obtaining appropriate medical or dental assistance. This is referred to as the Non-Metropolitan Award. Time is also allowed for necessary absence from duty.

Locality allowances:

Employees' at Hawker Area School are eligible for Locality Allowance, with additional amounts for spouse and children.

Relocation assistance:

Staff at Hawker Area School are eligible for assistance with relocation expenses, travel, overnight accommodation, furniture insurance, and allowances for packing and accelerated depreciation of furniture. The following are **not** applicable to teachers: reimbursement of costs of connection/disconnection of services; redirection of mail and leave with pay when relocating.

Principal's telephone costs:

Principals appointed to Hawker Area School are entitled to reimbursement of the cost of basic rental and the cost of official calls.

9. School Facilities

Buildings and grounds

Most buildings are timber framed which have been reclad in hardiflex. The Samcon Community Library and Administration building was upgraded in 2001.

The Home Economics and Multi-Purpose rooms were upgraded in 2010.

The Technical Studies building was upgraded in 2012.

The student toilets were upgraded at the start of 2017.

The F – 2 classroom was upgraded in 2018.

A stone building used as a teaching space and is the oldest building on the site, parts of which have been heritage listed, is in good condition and classroom spaces recently renovated.

There is an irrigated grass playing field and a well-developed playground area.

The school is attractive, clean and well cared for.

In 2023 the school perimeter fence and interior fence project was completed, this has resulted in a totally enclosed school, with internal gates to regulate movement of students around the school.

Our paved outdoor play area has also been resurfaced in 2023 with a new cement surface laid, along with netball, basketball and tennis lines. New backboards and netball rings are also being installed.

In 2024 our Toilets for students with disabilities were completed.

In 2025 our COLA (Covered Outdoor Learning Area) was completed, providing students and community with an area for sporting and recreation as well as leaning activities.

Cooling

All classroom and work areas in the school are air-conditioned, with reverse cycle systems.

Specialist facilities and equipment

Specialist teaching areas include a Science Laboratory, a Technology Studies/Art complex, a well-equipped Home Economics kitchen and Multipurpose Area.

The school is equipped with modern telephone system, video conferencing equipment and internet facilities.

The school has an ongoing program of computer upgrading. There is a wide range of educational software provided

There are class sets of iPads for all primary students and each secondary student has a laptop. Two 3D printers have recently been purchased.

Classrooms are also equipped with computers, Active Panel TVs, printers, and refrigerators.

Student facilities

The school has a varied range of modern playground equipment complemented by the installation of 'soft fall' surfacing. Two playgrounds are used by our students at recess, lunch and as part of our learning activities. A new court area was constructed in 2023, including basketball, netball and tennis facilities, followed by the COLA in 2025. The oval has football goals at both ends, and we have a cricket net area with a mat surface. Our sports shed caters for a large range of sporting activities as part of the curriculum.

Staff facilities

Staff have access to a school car for travelling to training and development sessions, meetings and for transporting students.

Staff have access to the school's wide range of up-to-date information technologies. All teaching and in class SSOs are able to use a laptop or iPad in their work.

Access for students and staff with disabilities

All classroom areas and toilets have wheelchair access ramps.

In 2024 a Disabled Toilet facility was completed as part of the administration block.

Access to bus transport

There is a school bus available for use during school hours. Students using the bus are scanned on using the Roll Call app, which parents can use to assist in getting students onto the bus.

There is a small community bus available for hire.

The school owns a car that can be used for the transport of small groups of students on educational activities.

10. School Operations

Decision making structures

The decision making policy ensures that decisions are made based on democratic and collaborative processes.

A range of committees operate in the school including Governing Council, Finance (within Governing Council Meetings), Parents & Friends and Bus Committee.

Staff meetings are conducted weekly with whole school staff meeting held twice a term.

Regular publications

The school produces a twice termly newsletter and regular News Flashes to parents and other interested parties.

The local paper (Town Crier) features school news.

A school magazine is produced at the end of each year

Other communication

Hawker Area School has produced a Parent/Caregiver Handbook detailing relevant school information.

Diaries, communication books and handouts provide extra contact with parents and caregivers.

The school website is located at www.hawkeras.sa.edu.au

The school also uses the Schoolzine app and the school and library have their own facebook pages.

School financial position

The school is in a sound financial position.

Special funding

- Rural and Isolated Index Funding
- APAS Funding
- ALPI Funding
- School Sports Grant

11. Local Community

General characteristics

Hawker is the entrance to the Flinders Ranges and is situated thirty minutes drive, south of Wilpena Pound and four hours from Adelaide. The district population is approximately 500 with 250 people living in the town.

The history and ecology of the area, and the tourism they attract, has a major influence on the community. The presence of local businesses and small industry, National Parks personnel, the Adnamatna people as well as local pastoralists adds to the fabric of the local community.

The school is approximately one hour north of Port Augusta.

The area is semi-arid with an average rainfall of approximately 200mm per year. Summer temperatures and humidity can be high.

Parent and community involvement

Parents and the wider community take pride in participation in school life. There are many opportunities for parents and community members to be actively involved in school.

Feeder or destination schools

Hawker Childhood Services Centre

Other local care and educational facilities

The Hawker Childhood Services offers 15 hours of pre-school education per fortnight. The school and kindergarten collaborate to provide a high standard of Early Years education. A successful transition program prepares students for school.

Playgroup operates on a Thursday in term time and Day Care is offered by RICE on Fridays throughout the year.

The Community Library is based in the school and provides a well-resourced service to the residents of the district.

There is a hospital, ambulance service and resident doctor with visiting allied health workers from Port Augusta.

SES, CFS, RAA and the Royal Flying Doctor Service all service Hawker and surrounding districts.

The school is a member of an active branch of the Isolated Children and Parents Association (ICPA). This is a group working towards equality of educational opportunity for children in isolated areas.

Commercial/industrial and shopping facilities

There is based in Hawker, a grocery outlet, three service stations, an art gallery, one restaurant, one hotel, one motel, one caravan park and a local contracting company that provides plumbing and electrical services.

Australia Post, BankSA and the Commonwealth Bank have agencies within the town.

Other local facilities

Government agencies include the Police Station, Post Office, School, and Hospital.

Local churches hold regular services in the town.

There are numerous community organisations catering for the interests of residents including sporting clubs (golf, cricket, tennis and bowls), a well-equipped gym, a community group, Friendship Group and Walking Group.

Availability of staff housing

There is housing for teaching staff available in the township. Limited private rental opportunities also exist.

Accessibility

There is no public transport to Hawker.

All the main roads into Hawker are bitumen and are in good condition.

Local Government body

The Flinders Ranges District Council, which is based in Quorn forty minutes drive south of Hawker, provides local government services to Hawker and District.