Information about our school

Willunga High School is a comprehensive secondary school drawing students from both rural and outer metropolitan coastal suburbs. It is located at the hub of the Southern Vales wine and almond producing area, approximately 50 kms from the GPO. The student population is stabilising in the area of around 900. Students have widely varying socio-economic backgrounds, and educational and career aspirations. A fleet of 15 buses bring a large proportion of the students to Willunga High School from the surrounding towns and rural properties, with the majority of students having graduated from Myponga, McLaren Vale, McLaren Flat, Aldinga and Willunga Primary Schools. Willunga High has made a priority of developing and maintaining community involvement in the school and has developed strong links with the business community through its vocational courses.

Our school has clearly differentiated programmes for Middle School (Years 8 and 9) and Senior School (Year 10, Stage 1 and Stage 2). In 2011, Willunga High became the first mainland school in Australia to be connected to the National Broadband Network (NBN). This connection provides the school with lightning fast internet and the opportunity for staff and students to learn in new and exciting ways. As with all technology, the NBN will be an evolving mechanism and the school is committed to supporting students and staff to explore different ways of teaching and learning.

School Philosophy

The school philosophy emphasises positive relationships between teacher and learner. To support this, the school provides a safe, healthy and positive environment.

The Middle School focus is on learning communities where student-teacher relationships can be easily and effectively established. In Year 8, the homegroups form the basis of the teaching group for core subjects. Teachers work in teams, providing an educational framework based on a core of knowledge and skills which is relevant and valued by all. Each Homegroup has its own classroom where students are taught by a designated team of teachers. Students have regular access to specialist teaching in Science, Technical Studies, Home Economics, The Arts (Visual Arts, Drama & Music) and Information Technology/Multimedia.

Learning communities are formed on the basis of advice gained from primary school teachers and language choice. Home groups contain a mixture of gender and students from our primary schools.

Curriculum

The Year 8-10 curriculum is supported by the South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework (SACSA). Planning with and trialling of curriculum units is well underway, with a focus on the Australian Curriculum. Students learn best when they recognise the value and relevance of their studies. In the Middle School curriculum, we provide challenges for students and take into account their interests. Initiative, independence and decision making skills. Learning pathways in the Senior School offer a broad range of options which aim to provide flexibility and cater to the special interests and needs of students. Community learning opportunities are highly valued and both the academic and vocational pathways are supported.

A range of accredited Vocational Education and Training courses are offered and include Doorways to Construction (D2C), Furnishing, Hospitality, Information Technology, Community Services, Outdoor Recreation, Rural Operations and Food Processing (Wine). These courses allow students to develop industry related skills, whilst maintaining formal learning pathways.

Some of the extra-curricular activities available to students include involvement in community events such as After School Surfing, The Almond Blossom Festival, Student Voice, Australian Volleyball Schools’ Cup (Melbourne) and the Sports Coaching Academy.

Learning Support

Willunga High School caters for a wide range of student abilities. Our Learning Support Programme supports students on Negotiated Education Plans and those who need extra assistance with their learning. This occurs via regular staff training and development, in-class support, individual or small group activities in Learning Support. For Year 7 students, extra transition activities are provided throughout the school year to support those on Negotiated Education Programmes. For students who are identified with high intellectual potential, mentoring is designed to provide opportunities for extension, enrichment and challenge.

Facilities and Grounds

To support a successful transition to high school, students in the Middle School have clearly defined areas within the school. This works as a ‘safe area’ for them as they adjust to the new environment of secondary school. It also means that they can have some say about their environment. Through the SRC and integrated class activities, students are given a voice in improving and using their area.
In excess of $11 million has been invested in a building programme, with state of the art Middle School buildings and upgraded Home Economics and Technical Studies facilities now available to students and staff. The school’s Trade Training Centre is now complete and provides industry standard facilities for our VET students, particularly those undertaking Hospitality. Wireless technologies, Macbook innovations and interactive whiteboards provide outstanding ICT infrastructure throughout the school. Our extensive grounds feature large grassed areas, shade structures, seating zones, excellent sporting facilities (including an outdoor volleyball court) and well established agricultural areas. These include vineyards used for the production of our Waverley Park wine as part of the Viticulture course.

**Student Decision Making**

Willunga High School provides a range of opportunities for all learners. We actively encourage students to take responsibility for their personal and academic growth. Opportunities are given to students to develop leadership skills through Student Representative Council, class meetings, representation on Governing Council, Exchange Student Programmes, sports and the Arts.

**Student Wellbeing**

The development of effective student well-being programmes has been a focus for Willunga High School. A proactive Student Review Team meets twice a term to review programmes and update information relating to student support services. Students from Years 8-12 are given the opportunity to become involved in numerous programs such as Youth Opps, that support positive decision making and develop resilience.

**Behaviour Management Policy**

The school community follows a Code Of Conduct which is based on the school core values of RESPECT, FAIRNESS, RESPONSIBILITY, SAFETY and SUCCESS. The school emphasises and supports the rights of all students to learn and teachers to teach in a safe and secure environment.

Working cooperatively with families is an integral part of the Student Behaviour Management process. Our behaviour management system is designed to help students make positive choices and to be responsible for their own behaviour. Students are given the support and opportunity to change irresponsible behaviour and to work through issues or concern.

**Uniform**

In line with DECD policy, the Willunga High School Governing Council endorses the wearing of school uniform through a Uniform Policy. The Council and the school has an expectation that all students wear the designated uniform. The aim of this policy is to project a positive school image, enable economical and serviceable clothing, develop a high standard of appearance and ensure equal status among students. Sample uniform pieces are held at the school.

**Attendance**

All children aged between 6 and 17 years must be enrolled and attend school regularly. At Willunga High, student attendance is a high priority, as it is proven that student attendance is closely linked to successful outcomes at school.

Our school has an SMS messaging system to assist with early identification of non-attendance or irregular attendance to school and to lessons. This system will ensure early parent notification and response. The School Attendance Policy aims to enhance the process of parents and teachers working in partnership to support student success at school.

**Communication with Parents**

Open communication is encouraged across the school community at all times. The diary is a very important communication link with home. Homework is set by teachers on a regular basis and is recorded in the student diary.

Formal and regular communication are by means of formal reports each term, interview evenings, parent meetings, and the School Newsletter (the “Limited Edition”).

**Parental Involvement**

Parental involvement is highly valued at Willunga High, particularly within the Canteen and through representation on Governing Council. Parents are always invited to attend whole school events such as Sports Days, SANTOS, Principal’s Tours, Open Night, End of Year Assemblies and other celebrations.

**Year 7 to 8 Transition**

The Transition Programme at Willunga High School is scheduled throughout the school year and is a vital link with our feeder primary school students and parents. Regular visits and contact with Year 7 teachers and students are an integral part of the programme. Students participate in a series of activities to assist them in a smooth transition from primary to secondary school.

Year 8 teachers and leadership staff will also meet and work with Year 6/7 teachers in the primary schools to assist with the continuity of curriculum and ensure a smooth transition process. Information regarding academic achievement, student voice/leadership potential and students at risk is shared with key personnel and used to develop necessary support programmes.

Principal’s Tours are held each term. Alternatively, families are invited to contact the school for additional information or to arrange an appointment to tour the school.