



## SCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT

Updated: February 2023

**School number:** 0905

**School name:** BLACKWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

### School Profile:

Blackwood High School's vision is to educate students to be inspired to achieve, to respect others, to learn about the importance of community and traditions, and to be responsible and active as local and global citizens.

The school has three core values of Care, Achievement and Respect encapsulated through the school motto of 'Inspiring Achievement and Respect'. We believe that young people learn best when they feel valued, listened to, challenged and, most importantly, when they feel cared for and safe. We use restorative practices to support students in their interactions with each other. We value self-reflection as a tool for personal growth and development. Links to the community to broaden student opportunities are actively sought. This includes relationships with business, industry and the tertiary sector.

The school delivers a comprehensive curriculum informed by the mandated Australian Curriculum and the South Australian Certificate of Education.

Staff utilise ICT to enhance student learning. This is supported through wireless access across the school and the Daymap Learner Management System which all staff, students and families have access to.

Students can apply for our Specialist Netball and Football programs. Also, students have the opportunity to participate in a range of co-curricular activities which include the Performing Arts, debating, sporting competitions and STEM related activities.

# 1. General information

- School Principal name: Mr Chris Brandwood
- Deputy Principal name: Mr Jason Loke
- Year of opening: 1961
- Postal Address: PO Box 1075, Blackwood SA 5051
- Location Address: 4 Seymour Street, Eden Hills SA 5050
- Department for Education Region: Southern Adelaide
- Geographical location: 11km from Adelaide Centre
- Telephone number: 08 8278 0900
- Fax Number: 08 8278 0999
- School website address: [www.bhs.sa.edu.au](http://www.bhs.sa.edu.au)
- School e-mail address: [bhs.info994@schools.sa.edu.au](mailto:bhs.info994@schools.sa.edu.au)
- February FTE student enrolment:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Year 7</b>	-	-	-	205	189
<b>Year 8</b>	201	202	204	210	209
<b>Year 9</b>	196	210	214	210	222
<b>Year 10</b>	229	198.62	191.2	202	211
<b>Year 11</b>	188	218.4	176.6	187.25	210
<b>Year 12</b>	148	152.99	191.57	160.11	167
<b>Sp</b>	0	0	0	5	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	962	982.01	977.37	1177.36	1212

School Card holders TBC

NESB Total (Persons) 156

Aboriginal FTE Enrolment 12

Student enrolment trends: Gradual increase in enrolments over the last 5 years

- **Staffing numbers** (as at February 2023 census):

<i>Principal</i>	1
<i>Deputy Principal</i>	1
<i>Assistant Principals</i>	3
<i>Senior Leaders</i>	2
<i>Coordinators</i>	14
<i>Teachers</i>	57
<i>Student Wellbeing Leaders</i>	2
<i>EALD</i>	0.086
<i>ASETO</i>	7.7 hours
<i>Support Staff (BHS)</i>	1097 hours

- **Public transport access**

A wide network of Adelaide Metro buses service the school. The buses stop within the school grounds and students are supervised at the bus stops by teaching staff. School buses have routes to and from Blackwood Station and Interchange, Marion via Flinders Medical Centre and Shepherds Hill Road, Belair (both Main Road and Kalyra Avenue), Hawthorndene, Flagstaff Hill, Reynella and Aberfoyle Park (via Black Road and then Murrays Hill Road or Main Road), and Coromandel Valley. There is a train service at Coromandel Station on the Belair Line.

Buses for excursions can be booked from a local contractor if Adelaide Metro and rail services are not convenient.

- **Special site arrangements**

Blackwood High School is a member of the Department for Education Mitcham Hills Partnership which includes Belair, Bellevue Heights, Blackwood, Coromandel Valley, Eden Hills and Hawthorndene Primary Schools as well as six local preschools. The partnership manages the improvement of children and young people's learning and wellbeing outcomes through a networked approach to strategic leadership and learning.

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

Blackwood High School provides a diverse and inclusive curriculum reflecting the needs of the local and wider communities and encourages all students to achieve excellence, personal best, in a safe and caring environment.

- **General characteristics**

The school community has high expectations and standards for student learning and achievement. The Australian Curriculum is delivered across Year 7 to 10 and the South Australian Certificate of Education for Year 11 and 12. Many opportunities exist for students to be involved in a wide range of co-curricular activities. Students take leadership roles within these co-curricular activities.

- **Student well-being programs**

A structured Pastoral Care Program is delivered by Care Group teachers across Year 7 to 12. The program focuses on four pillars:

- Protective behaviour and relationships which incorporates the Child Protection Curriculum
- Positive psychology
- Learning strategies
- Careers and pathways

The program is supported by a range of guest speakers.

The school has a Pastoral Care Worker who assists with social and pastoral care activities.

- **Student support**

Students are supported by Care Group teachers, the Student Wellbeing Leaders, the Youth Worker, the Pastoral Care Worker, Senior School Leaders and Learning Community Leaders and the Executive Leaders Team. The Student Wellbeing Centre supports students with routine matters. Case Management teams monitor students' progress and provide support for students' academic and social-emotional needs. Additional learning support is provided to identified students. Staff implement a range of strategies to support student learning and achievement.

## • Student management

There is an expectation that all students have the right to learn and all teachers have the right to teach. A Student Wellbeing Team, led by an Assistant Principal, supports teachers in the development of student wellbeing programs and the promotion of positive behaviours for learning. Case Management Teams at each year level monitor the progress of all students. These teams include an Assistant Principal, Learning Community/Senior School Leaders, the Student Wellbeing Leaders, the Personalised Learning Leader and the Student Pathway and Career Development Leader.

## • Student government

Students have the opportunity to positively influence and shape their learning experience and education to build a culture of excellence and school pride. Through involvement in Student Leadership initiatives, students share their own ideas, opinions, knowledge and experiences to inform school directions to help improve the school.

The Student Leadership comprises two formal committees or teams:

- The Student Wellbeing Team which supports the promotion of positive student wellbeing and the development of 'community' at Blackwood High School so all students feel safe, supported and have a positive connection to the school.
- The Learning Culture Team contributes to the development of excellence in teaching and learning at Blackwood High School so that all students achieve their highest potential. Students are involved in the analysis of data, learn to identify areas of action, contribute to discussions and provide feedback about teaching, learning and curriculum to improve the educational opportunities and outcomes for all students at Blackwood High School.

In 2020, the Prefect system was reintroduced at Blackwood High School. This includes two Year 12 Head Prefects and two Year 12 Deputy Head Prefects as well as five Year 11 Prefects. A range of opportunities in the Middle School further supports student leadership development across Year 7 to 9.

## • Special programs

There is a House system at the school which recruits students into major leadership roles in a variety of activities, particularly sport. The Houses of Madigan, Ashby, Mills and Russell enable students to participate and contribute to a House's achievements.

Year 11 students are involved as Peer Support Leaders and lead a range of activities for Year 7 students (and their parents/caregivers). This program supports the primary school students with their transition to Blackwood High School.

## 3. Key School Policies

The Blackwood High School Improvement Plan for 2022 – 2024 is informed by the Department for Education Strategic Plan - *Education for a Stronger Future*.

Our focus is on excellence - in learning, in achievement and in all that we do. As such we have identified three goals in our improvement plan:

- Increase student achievement across all learning areas (AC and SACE).
- Increase the number of students achieving Band 7 and above for Writing and increase the number of students in the High Bands.
- Increase the number of students achieving the Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA) for Numeracy and increase the number of students in the High Bands.

Across 2023, staff will collaboratively implement key actions and monitor impact on teaching and student learning to achieve stated goals.

In 2022, SACE completion was 98.61% with 99.08% of the grades at a C- or higher. 23.52% were in the A grade band (A+ to A-). A SACE Action Plan continues to inform improvement to support all students to be successful.

## 4. Curriculum

### • Middle School

The Middle School (Year 7 to 9) and Year 10 Curriculum is consistent with the Australian Curriculum.

Year 10 students also complete the SACE Stage 1 Personal Learning Plan which is a compulsory subject.

The school is the only government secondary school in the Southern Adelaide area to offer the Special Interest Netball program in partnership with the Netball SA as well as the Football (Australian Rules) Interest Program which offers specialist coaching.

**Middle Years Curriculum Pattern**

		YEAR 7	YEAR 8	YEAR 9	
Required Units of Study	2 semesters	English	English	English	
		Humanities	Humanities	Humanities	
		Language (German/Japanese)	Language (German/Japanese)	Language (German/Japanese)	
		Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	
		Science	Science	Science	
	1 or 2 semesters	Health & Physical Education 1 semester OR Football or Netball 2 semesters	Health & Physical Education 1 semester OR Football or Netball 2 semesters	Health & Physical Education 1 semester OR Football or Netball 2 semesters	
		1 semester	The Arts	The Arts	The Arts (choose one subject from The Arts)
	Technology		Technology	Technology (choose one subject from Technology)	
	Choice Units	1 semester	Select one subject from below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Active Lifestyles: Art Focus</li><li>Active Lifestyles: HPE Focus</li></ul>	Select one further subject from below: <b>HPE:</b> Specialist Physical Education <b>Technology:</b> Food and Textiles, Mechatronics <b>The Arts:</b> Performing Arts, Visual Arts	Select three further subjects from below: <b>HPE:</b> Specialist Physical Education <b>Technology:</b> Food Technology, Electronic Systems, Material Construction, Textiles <b>The Arts:</b> Dance, Drama, Media Arts, Music, Visual Arts

### • Senior School

Students who successfully complete their senior secondary education achieve the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE). The SACE is an internationally recognised qualification that paves the way for young people to move from school to further education training and/or employment and is designed to enable students to gain the skills they need for their future, as citizens and employees.

The certificate is based on a two-year program of study and achievement: SACE Stage 1 is normally undertaken in Year 11 and SACE Stage 2 in Year 12. Subjects offered from year to year are based on student choice.

The SACE has been strengthened to ensure it meets the needs of students, families, higher and further education providers, employers and the community. The SACE provides a greater clarity about the skills and knowledge which students need to succeed in their chosen pathway and provides greater flexibility for students to combine school, study off campus and work to successfully achieve their goals.

### SACE Stage 1 and Stage 2

The school offers a comprehensive range of SACE Stage 1 and Stage 2 subjects. Further details are available on the Blackwood High School website, [www.bhs.sa.edu.au](http://www.bhs.sa.edu.au). There are subject options in each of the Curriculum Areas of the Arts, English, Health and Physical Education, Humanities, Languages, Mathematics, Science and Technology.

### Open Access provision

Open Access may be accessed by students wishing to study a subject, which is not offered by the school. Students may also gain access to the curriculum offerings at nearby schools for this purpose.

### Special Interest Programs

Blackwood High School has two Special Interest Sports Programs which begin in Year 7. The Special Interest Netball Program is endorsed by Netball SA, the program provides elite development in Netball for girls in Year 7 to 11. The Special Interest Football Program is offered to boys in Year 7 and girls in Year 10. The program is supported by nationally accredited coaches from the school, community and state Football associations. Applications and selection trials are held for entry into the Programs.

### Personalised Learning

The school has a significant focus on meeting individual student learning needs with one of the school's leadership positions providing high level leadership in this area. Students with identified learning needs are offered extra class support. Acceleration, enrichment and extension are offered to those students who are identified, by teachers and parents/caregivers, as being gifted and talented.

### International Student Program

The school conducts a highly successful International Program with students studying at Blackwood High School for periods ranging from a term up to five years. Students from Asian and European countries enrol in the school. There is an active program for short and long term stays and exchanges through the Department for Education - International Education Services, particularly with Asian countries.

### Vocational Education and Training (VET)

Blackwood High School is part of the Inner South Curriculum Alliance, which allows our students to access VET courses with Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) at Blackwood High School and other Alliance schools. Students are also able to access VET courses offered by a range of external providers.

VET is an excellent opportunity for young people to build industry level skills and achieve a nationally recognised qualification while also having the qualification contribute to their SACE completion (and ATAR calculation for completed Certificate III courses).

Through VET, students can access school based apprenticeships and traineeships.

Students undertaking VET study are monitored and provided appropriate support by the Case Management teams.



## **Career Education**

Students and parents/caregivers have access to the school's careers website, which can be accessed via our webpage under portals or directly at [www.blackwoodhighcareers.com](http://www.blackwoodhighcareers.com). The site has a wide range of information and links about in school and post school options, workplace learning and pathways advice, which are useful for both students and parents/caregivers. Students have a secure student area, which is delivered through the school's pastoral care program across each year level. This student area features career education tools and employability tools such as CV templates and digital portfolio builders.

## **Extension Studies**

Year 12 students may access Extension Studies topics at Flinders University which count towards their Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). Students also have opportunities to connect with other universities as part of their Year 12 studies.

An additional support to these students is the ongoing development of the Daymap Learner Management System which offers blended learning opportunities and flexible options for students who need to complete their studies outside of traditional school hours.

## **Teaching methodology**

Teachers are encouraged to use a wide range of teaching methods to cater for the learning needs of all students. In the Middle School, Year 7 and 8 Care Group teachers teach their care group for at least two subjects. This approach enables the development of positive and affirming relationships with a significant adult which supports students (and their parents/caregivers) in their transition to Blackwood High School.

All students have access to the internet and the school intranet. Through the support of parents/caregivers, students have access to laptops to support their learning. The school provides teachers and curriculum based support staff with a laptop. Classes use the Daymap Learner Management System to enhance teaching and learning and to support home-school communication.

## **Student assessment procedures and reporting**

Every subject, at all year levels, has an assessment plan which is issued to students and parents/caregivers within the first four weeks of each semester via Daymap. Staff use Daymap to provide ongoing feedback to students about key assessment tasks identifying strengths and areas for further development to improve student learning.

For Year 7 to 11 a mid-semester progress and end of semester report is issued for each subject resulting in four reports across the year. In Year 12, three reports are provided - at the end of Term 1, 2 and 3. Teaching staff use the Accelerus reporting software to produce reports.

Student Learning Progress Conversations are held twice a year at the end of Term 1 and Term 3.

## **Joint programs:**

Blackwood High School is a member of the Mitcham Hills Partnership. At times, Blackwood High School runs a number of programs with schools within the Partnership.

## **5. Sporting Activities**

The school has a strong sporting focus, fielding teams in a large variety of sports in a diverse number of competitions. These include state-wide zone, knock-out as well as many special events. A high proportion of students in the school are selected for state teams. Teachers are encouraged to help coach and supervise sports teams.

## 6. Other Co-Curricular Activities

Each year, a large number of Performing Arts students from across the disciplines of Music, Drama and Dance participate in school and public performances. The school is also involved in the national Dance Star competition.

Debating, Literacy, Science, Technology and Mathematics competitions are other examples of the many activities in which students participate.

Students have extensive opportunities for involvement in student exchange programs both in and out of the school. Special programs exist in the learning areas of Japanese and German.

Year 10 students have the opportunity to attend a week-long Snow Trip in Term 3 of each year. Year 9, 10 and 11 students have the opportunity to visit Canberra in Term 2 each year. Students in Year 10 and 11 have the opportunity to participate in the biannual World Challenge.

A range of student leadership opportunities exist which include the Prefect system, Student Wellbeing Team, Learning Cultures Team, House leadership roles and the Peer Support Program, which supports student transition from Year 6 to 7.

## 7. Staff (and their welfare)

### • Staff profile

Most staff choose to remain at the school for long periods of time. However, given the size of the school and the profile of the staff, there is an ongoing comprehensive induction program. Blackwood High School has staff that are highly experienced in both curriculum and leadership and a number of teachers have Advanced Skills Teacher accreditation.

### • Leadership structure

The leadership structure consists of: the Principal, Deputy Principal, three Assistant Principals, a Business Leader, two Student Wellbeing Leaders, Curriculum, Leaders, Pedagogical Leaders, a Student Pathways and Career Development Leader, a Personalised Learning Leader, Learning Community (Year Level) Leaders and Senior School Leaders.

### • Staff support systems

Staff are highly collaborative and belong to a range of teams which include Curriculum, Middle School, Senior School, Year Level and Teaching teams. Shared office spaces promote high levels of collaboration and the sharing of curriculum and teaching practice.

All staff are expected to participate in structured professional learning to advance whole school goals around student learning and improve classroom practices.

A personalised Induction program supports new staff to the school.

### • Performance and Development

The school's Performance and Development processes are explicit and focus on professional growth, through ongoing professional learning, shared practice and professional relationships. Each term, staff participate in professional learning conversations with their line manager to support their performance development and to assist them in the achievement of their professional goals which align to the school's Site Improvement Plan. Formal written feedback is provided twice a year.

### • Staff utilisation policies

The school aims to deploy teachers in their field of expertise. Staff are also encouraged to broaden their fields of expertise.



- **Access to special staff**

The school has an entitlement of Department for Education Instrumental Music lessons. The school liaises with all Department for Education personnel involved with Aboriginal students, Students with Disabilities and Flexible Learning Option (FLO) Case Managers.

## **8. Incentives, support and award conditions for Staff**

The school does not attract any additional support or award conditions for staff.

## **9. School Facilities**

- **Buildings and grounds**

The school is located in the Adelaide foothills which provide an attractive backdrop to the surrounding sports fields.

The majority of teaching areas are of solid permanent construction, organised in a compact arrangement on the school site. The school has a lift, ramps, shower and private toilet facilities for students with disabilities. All areas of the school are air-conditioned.

The staffroom is reserved for communal activities and all staff have office/work space in other locations in the school. Staff have networked IT access in all staff work areas. Teaching staff are provided with a school laptop to support communication processes, curriculum planning, teaching, assessment and reporting.

The school has a comprehensive IT network facility with full wireless connection to support teaching and learning throughout the school.

The school utilises a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program to enable a ratio of 1:1 computers for students. Specialist subjects such as Photography provide student access to specialised IT applications to support learning.

Specialist facilities include the:

- state of the art Performing Arts Centre completed in 2001 with outstanding support from the local community.
- \$3M, four room, Visual Arts Centre opened in April 2004.
- co-located Blackwood Community Recreation Centre located on the school site which opened in February 2004. This facility has two indoor courts, one specifically for school use with school male and female change rooms and a separate office connected to the school network to accommodate all Health and Physical Education staff.
- Advanced Technology Centre, previously the Technical Studies area, which was redeveloped as part of the Trade Training Centre initiative.

Significant site funded works have been completed over recent years to support student learning and wellbeing. This includes:

- a multi-purpose courtyard
- restructuring the front of the school to provide shelter for students along the school bus way
- a shelter connection between the Resource Centre and the Senior Learning Centre
- a new Resource Centre
- a new Student Wellbeing Centre
- a new Canteen and Conference Room
- Senior Outdoor Learning Space
- Outdoor Heating

The school received \$2.5M STEM Works funding in 2016, with building works completed in June 2018. This facility, called the Imagination Centre, brings together Science, Mathematics and Technology to support innovative curriculum and pedagogical practices.

Also, the school received \$9M, as part of the Capital Works Program, for further facility development to support the transition of Year 7 students to high school in 2022. This also included a new Dance Studio, HPE classrooms, Photography and Visual Arts learning spaces.

- **Student facilities**

There is a canteen for all students. Senior School students have a Senior Learning Centre specifically for their use. This space supports independent study with a kitchen specifically for Year 11 and 12 student use.

## 10. School Operations

- **Decision making structures**

Decision making is based on consultation, negotiation and participation by those affected by the decision. The decision making process, therefore, does not rest in the hands of a few, but is participatory and strives for consensus. It rests on the premise that effective communication is required for informed participation. Individuals can influence decision making through committees and working parties, curriculum areas, year level teams, leadership, staff meetings, Governing Council and the Student Leadership Teams.

Generally, the School Leaders Team, which is comprised of the Executive Leaders, Senior Leaders, Curriculum Leaders, and Learning Community Leaders determines or approves decision-making processes for broad policy decisions.

The Principal is involved in all key school decision making and accepts responsibility for making decisions on behalf of the Department for Education. The Governing Council is very supportive. Its subcommittees include Finance and Facilities, and Canteen.

- **Regular publications**

The school newsletter is published twice a term and promotes achievements and school/community activities and events. The newsletter is posted on the Blackwood High School's website. A Curriculum Prospectus, Staff Handbook and Student Information Brochures are published annually. Copies of the Student Information Brochure (SIB) are sent to feeder primary schools for distribution. They are also available from the school. The school's website [www.bhs.sa.edu.au](http://www.bhs.sa.edu.au) is another source of information about the school.

The Cambium (school year book) is published each year with contributions from students and staff.

- **Other communication**

The school holds a number of parent/caregiver information evenings throughout the year. The school has a practice of returning, where possible, all calls and emails to parents/caregivers within 24 hours on working days. Posted on the school website are the email details of all teaching staff. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to make contact with the school in order to clarify information or to resolve concerns.

- **School financial position**

The school is in a very sound financial position. The annual budget of just under \$14M provides for staffing, curriculum and school operations. The Governing Council, through the Finance Advisory Committee, monitor the school budget across the year. The yearly budget is set and approved by the Governing Council.

## 11. Local Community

- **General characteristics**

The local community is both supportive and impactive in all aspects of running and promoting the school. The Hills community has a mixture of country and city influences. Preservation of and planning for environmental awareness and responsibility is a focus. There is strong support for the school in the local community. Rotary has a high profile in providing support for a number of programs, including career education, support for Youth projects and an annual Art Exhibition. The Rotary Club and other service clubs contributed towards the refurbishing of the Performing Arts Centre.

- **Parent/Caregiver and community involvement**

Blackwood High School has benefited from strong, active support from the parent/caregiver body. There is high, well informed participation from the Governing Council. Parents'/caregivers' voices are seen as critical in identifying and supporting opportunities for improvement.

- **Feeder or destination schools**

Most of the students who enrol at Blackwood High School come from the local primary schools: Blackwood, Belair, Bellevue Heights, Coromandel Valley, Eden Hills and Hawthorndene, with a significant number from Craighburn and Flagstaff Hill Primary Schools.

- **Local Government body**

Blackwood High School is in the City of Mitcham local government area and enjoys significant, ongoing support from the Council and the local and Federal Members of Parliament.

## 12. Further Comments

Blackwood High School has strong traditions of excellence in academic and co-curricular pursuits. There are high expectations that teachers will involve themselves in our professional learning community, valuing lifelong learning, positive relationships, and pedagogical practices that develop the capabilities and dispositions necessary for our students to continue to thrive. The integration of digital learning as a tool to enhance learning outcomes for students is valued and supported through a culture of shared practice and inquiry. Students and parents/caregivers are articulate and make their educational needs known. There is strong parental support for any activity involving their children.

A changing profile of students has meant an increasing need for staff to be flexible in their teaching approaches. The school offers a range of subjects that lead to tertiary pathways, training and employment.