

# End of Year Principal Message

If I had gazed into a crystal ball at the end of 2019 when I accepted the position as Principal of this beautiful rural school, I certainly would not have predicted the series unusual events that have unfolded this year. In fact, none of us saw it coming! 2020 has been like no other in the history of this school but in the history of all schools across SA, across Australia and the world. For our entire community - COVID-19 has brought about many challenges, uncertainties, and a lack of toilet paper! One thing we would be sure to agree on is no better place to live and work in, than our beautiful Eyre Peninsula!

Covid-19 forced our school to make many changes since March- we had school on-line, hosted virtual events and missed our friends. As we moved forward into some unknown territory, our newly developed school values of *Accountability, Innovation, Resilience and Respect*, took on a whole new level of meaning.

As this 2020 comes to a close, it is incredibly important to pause and celebrate all the wonderful things that occurred here at the Poonindie Community Learning Centre - not only before, but during the adversities. It has been a year filled with rich and dynamic learning experiences, academic growth and achievements, sporting accomplishments and significant improvements in the facilities here at this school.

## Some of the notable achievements this year include:

- Significant growth over a 6-month period, in persuasive writing (a focus of our Site Improvement Plan) with 91% of our students demonstrating growth.
- Impressive Pat Reading and Pat Maths scores including 100% of our Year 7 cohort meeting the Standard of Education Achievement in mathematics.
- A whole array of exciting excursions aligned to our curriculum focuses including a memorable trip to the Tacoma and Axel Stenross Museum, an engaging expedition to search for echidna scat in the local area, as part of the CSIRO Echidna Project (Adelaide University) and a Peter Coombe concert in Tumby Bay.... just to name a few.
- Termly special days including Wheels Day and Wet and Wild Day organised by our Student Representative Council. What a wonderful job this group have done to keep the morale high during a difficult year, led by our school captains Fletcher Beard and Taj Williams.
- On the sporting front - there have been many highlights including our combined Small Sports School at Ungarra and the most recent SAPSASSA softball event in which our Poonindie boys, who joined the LEP boys' team, won all but 1 game against their state rivals.
- Our main facilities upgrade this year has been the nature play area and sustainable gardening beds. These new areas have provided endless hours of enjoyment for our students. Early in 2021, we will see the instalment of an automated emergency siren and a major refurbishment of the outdoor storage shed into a multi-purpose room to house a range of learning opportunities. In addition, we will receive a facility grant of \$60,000 which will see further improvements including the renovation of our student toilets.

I extend a huge acknowledgement to the awesome Poonindie staff team – the teachers and SSO's are nothing short of amazing and dedicate themselves day in and day out to deliver a high-quality curriculum, as well as teaching kindness, resilience, and respect. We are sadly losing 3 shining stars: Tammy Stratford (Tam has been connected to this school for 20 years which is a remarkable effort), Mikaela Heath and Jenny Silver yet we shall open our doors to welcome 2 fresh faces, with Briony Tempest and Hamish Rowsell to join the Poonindie troops!

Poonindie parents, guardians and Governing Council members – truly *"it takes a village to raise a child"* – thank you for transforming your homes into a classroom during the lockdowns whilst juggling your own work commitments from home. Thank you for making the time and effort to teach and support our students and staff.

Best of luck to our graduating Year 7 cohort who are transitioning to High School. Your journey of success has only just begun; we cannot wait to hear of your achievements and adventures as you embark on your next chapter of schooling. We know that you will *"Fly high and see far"*.

In closing, it has been an absolute honour to lead this school in 2020. In my 34 years of teaching and leadership experience, the Poonindie students are by far a standout in terms of the respect, kindness, and inclusiveness they show toward one other and their full engagement in learning. Every day this year I have reminded myself of how lucky I am to be here.

A very happy festive season to those who celebrate Christmas; to all, stay safe and healthy over the January holidays and recharge for a new year! Its onwards and upwards for 2021!

Warm regards

Sally Cormack