

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

YEAR 12
UPDATE

TERM 3
CALENDAR

FAREWELL
TAMMY!

Edition 4
2026



Brianna lends a hand at the YP Alliance Formal

MINLATON DISTRICT SCHOOL



WWW.MINLATONDS.SA.EDU.AU

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

JULY 2026

End of Term 2 Bumper Edition

by Andrew Dickinson

As we reach the end of Term 2, I want to thank our students, staff and families for the energy, care and commitment that have shaped another full and productive term at Minlaton District School. This term has included strong learning growth, a range of co-curricular opportunities, and many examples of students engaging in work that is purposeful, challenging and connected to the world beyond the classroom.

One of the clearest examples of that real-world learning has been the outstanding Partnering with Industry work undertaken by our two Year 6/7 classes, led by Kate Oatway and Hannah Noonan. Through the inquiry question, "How can our community respond to environmental challenges like algal bloom?", students explored an issue that has affected beaches, marine life, tourism, local businesses and the broader identity of our coastal communities. Their final presentations showed not only what they had learned, but how thoughtfully they had considered the needs of the Yorke Peninsula community.

This was not abstract learning. It sat alongside a very real South Australian context. According to the State Government's algal bloom update site,

the bloom that began in March 2025 was linked to *Karenia* species harmful to fish and some marine animals, and although recent testing shows zero or low *Karenia* levels across most of the coastline, the bloom has still had a significant impact on the marine environment and on coastal communities. That broader context gave students a genuine reason to inquire, create and contribute.



What impressed me most was the depth and range of student thinking. In Hannah Noonan's class, students developed solutions including an awareness video based on interviews with students who live near local beaches, a QR Code Animal Challenge to help visitors learn about marine life as they explore different beaches, a "Protect Our Waterways" campaign encouraging small everyday actions to reduce pollution, an "Algae Alert" app, tourism promotion materials, a local business mega market, and a QR code shopping scavenger hunt designed to support local towns and traders.

In Kate Oatway's class, students proposed alert-system buoys, an accompanying buoy app, artificial coral farms, coral reef filter concepts, inland tourism campaigns, a Yorke Peninsula Monopoly-style game to raise awareness and support research and businesses, and a festival fundraiser model aimed at strengthening local trade. These were imaginative ideas, but they were also grounded in a serious attempt to connect environmental recovery with safety, education, local business support and tourism renewal.



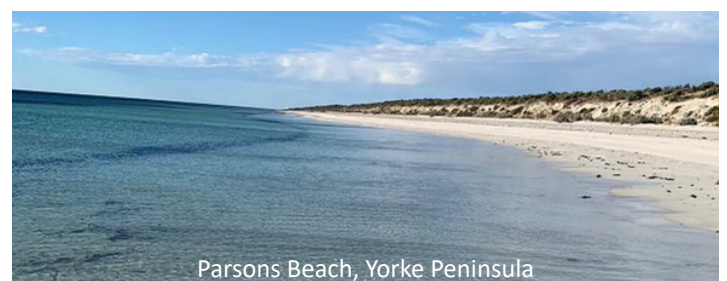
Principal Andrew Dickinson, Mayor Kylie Gray, YPC's Brooke Liebelt & teacher Kate Oatway

Several aspects of student voice stood out strongly. One group explained that their awareness campaign would “educate the community, raise awareness and encourage people to protect our environment”. Another described their app as helping people know where algal bloom is occurring and where it is safe to swim, fish and visit. Other groups focused on practical messages about protecting waterways, using tourism promotion to redirect visitors to other attractions across the peninsula, and encouraging support for local businesses through markets, games and scavenger-style activities. These responses show students thinking not only about the environmental effects of algal bloom, but also about wellbeing, safety, economy and community resilience.

We know that authentic learning grows when students can see that their thinking has purpose. Learning areas become powerful when students are invited to think and work in developmentally appropriate versions of expert practice. That is exactly what this project offered. Students were not asked to simply repeat information; they were asked to investigate a local issue, understand its complexity, and put forward possible solutions for a real audience.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Kate Oatway and Hannah Noonan for the quality of the learning design and the way they supported students to think deeply, creatively and practically. I would also like to acknowledge Yorke Peninsula Council for its partnership in helping connect classroom learning with a significant local issue.

This has been a fantastic real-world learning experience for our students, and they have clearly taken pride in researching local issues and developing solutions to help their community. I would encourage families and community members to keep talking with students about what they have learned, to support local organisations and businesses where possible, and to continue engaging with trusted local information sources about coastal conditions and environmental recovery. The official South Australian algal bloom site remains a useful source of current updates and advice.



Parsons Beach, Yorke Peninsula

YPSA: building a brighter future for Yorke Peninsula students

One of the most significant pieces of work happening across our region is the continued development of the Yorke Peninsula Secondary Alliance, or YPSA. YPSA is a partnership between seven public secondary schools on the Yorke Peninsula: Port Broughton Area School, Kadina Memorial School, Moonta Area School, Ardrossan Area School, Central Yorke School, Minlaton District School and Yorketown Area School. At its heart, YPSA is about a very simple but powerful idea: students should not have to leave their local community to access strong senior secondary pathways, broad subject choice, industry connections and high-quality post-school preparation.

YPSA was established because small, geographically spread country schools face challenges that large metropolitan schools often do not. On our own, each school can find it difficult to sustain every senior subject, every specialist pathway and every industry opportunity. Together, however, we become something much bigger. Through YPSA, students are not limited only to what can be offered at one site. They are connected to a regional network of schools, teachers, industries, training providers and communities working together to improve opportunities for young people.

This year we have submitted a nomination for the Public Education Awards, in the Excellence in Collaborative Partnerships category, to recognise the work of YPSA

and the way it is transforming opportunities for students across the peninsula. The nomination is not simply about celebrating a program. It is about acknowledging a model of public education that is genuinely innovative. YPSA shows what is possible when schools stop working in isolation and instead take collective responsibility for every young person in the region.

Families can learn more through the YPSA website at www.ypsa.au. We also encourage families to view the YPSA promotional video here: <https://canva.link/zc6v964nvigt0os> and the YPSA information booklet here: <https://canva.link/ybuotik6steylvr>

The strength of YPSA is that it connects students to more than a timetable. It connects them to a pathway. Students are supported to think carefully about their interests, subject choices, SACE, VET, university, apprenticeships, traineeships, employment, work experience and future goals. Through the YPSA Pathways Survey and our shared planning processes, schools are able to better understand what students want to do and then use that information to plan future subject offerings, possible shared delivery, Flexible Industry Pathways, immersion opportunities and local industry links.

YPSA also gives our students access to a broader range of experiences. This includes Local Delivery subjects, where students may access subjects through another YPSA school; Flexible Industry Pathways connected to real workforce areas; industry immersions; work experience; and targeted Year 10,

Year 11 and Year 12 experiences that help students move from exploration, to activation, to readiness. These opportunities help students make informed choices, build confidence and see a future for themselves beyond school.

In many ways, this puts YPSA students in a stronger position than students in many metropolitan settings. Large city schools may have size, but YPSA has scale, connection and purpose. Our students can access the combined strengths of seven schools while still being known, supported and valued in their own local school. They can build relationships with teachers who know them well, remain connected to family and community, and still access broader subject and pathway opportunities through the alliance. That combination is powerful.

There is something very special about growing up in the country. Young people in our communities are not anonymous. They are known by name. Their achievements are noticed. Their challenges are seen. Their families, schools, sporting clubs, employers and community groups are often deeply connected. This gives students a strong sense of belonging and responsibility. It also means learning can be connected to real people, real places and real opportunities. Through YPSA, we are building on these strengths rather than asking students to leave them behind.

For many years, country families have sometimes felt that students needed to move away or attend larger schools to access better opportunities. YPSA is changing that story.

The message we want our students and families to hear is clear: you can stay connected to your local school and still have a strong future. You can grow up in a country community and still access high-quality pathways. You can be part of a small school and still benefit from the shared strength of a much larger regional network.

At Minlaton District School, we are proud to be part of YPSA. We believe it represents the future of regional public education: collaborative, practical, student-centred and deeply connected to community. The work is still growing, and there is more to do, but the direction is clear. The future for students in YPSA schools is bright, and we want our young people to see that their best opportunities can begin right here on the Yorke Peninsula.

Thank you again to our students, staff, families and community partners for a strong and productive Term 2. I hope everyone enjoys a safe and restful break, and I look forward to all that next term will bring.

Andrew Dickinson
Principal



Halfway There: Year 12s Spotlight

Our Year 12 students are well into the final stretch of their schooling, with just 66 days remaining until their last day of formal classes on Friday 30th October.

This year's class consists of 12 students.

The Year began with the YPSA Combined Year 12 Retreat in Week 1 of Term 1, providing a great opportunity to connect with other YP Year 12 students and set goals for the year ahead.

Our Class of 2026 is a diverse and hardworking group. Four students are completing school-based apprenticeships, **eight have been part of our school community since Reception** and several have now celebrated their 18th birthdays and have officially joined the ranks of adulthood!



While most students complete all of their learning in person on site, one makes a weekly commute to Ardrossan Area School for a math subject and another undertakes Legal Studies through Distance Education (online). We also have two Year 11 students stepping up to complete Year 12 subjects - one onsite here at MDS and the other via Kadina Memorial School.

One major milestone already ticked off is the completion of their compulsory Activating Identities & Futures subject. Their projects showcased an impressive range of interests and passions, including hatching and raising baby chickens, designing and building a fibreclass skim board, developing sports photography skills while managing a social media brand, and investigating the impact of social media use on teenagers.



As Semester 2 begins, students are now planning their home study schedules and preparing for the final stretch of their secondary education. **We wish them all the very best as they make the most of these final months and work towards achieving their goals.**

Farewell, Tammy!

A big thank you to Tammy as she finishes up her time as our Canteen Manager.

Over the last couple of years, Tammy has quietly made a big difference behind the scenes. She has streamlined processes, kept everything running smoothly and has always been someone we could rely on.

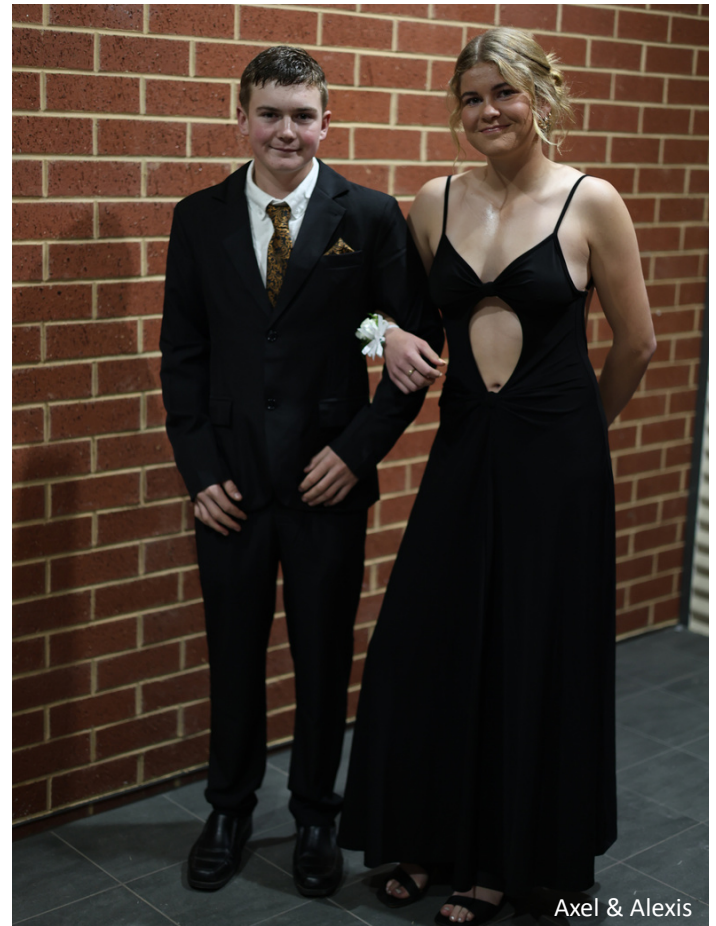
We'll certainly miss having Tammy as part of the MDS team and wish her all the very best for whatever comes next.



YP Alliance Formal

MDS was proud to host the 5th annual YP Alliance Formal, bringing together Year 11 and 12 students from across the Yorke Peninsula for an evening of great food, great music and even better company. It was giving good food, good dance moves and a chance to catch up with friends from across the Yorke Peninsula.

A huge thank you to everyone who helped make the night possible and to all the students who brought such a positive vibe to the event.



Axel & Alexis



Mrs Rothe in party mode



Amber, Addison, Amber & Claudia dressed to impress

CLOSED

Monday 31st August 2026
Student Free Day

&

Monday 7th September 2026
School Closure Day
for the
Royal Adelaide
Show



Author Visit - Amy Harvey

Term 3

Week

1

2

31st Jul - Balaklava Eistedfodd

3

4th & 5th Jul - Employment Immersion Days

4

11th Jul - Uni Presentation | 13th Jul - Yr 9/10 Basketball Carnival

5

6

7

31st Aug - Student Free Day (Monday)

8

7th Sep - School Closure Day for the Royal Adelaide Show (Monday)

9

14th - 16th Jul - Yr 3-5 Camp

10



Year 9-10 Football Carnival



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'Minlaton District School'



Prompt payment of school
invoices are appreciated



School Canteen

OPEN WED - FRI

Order lunch via QKR!

Cash or card accepted over
counter at recess & lunch
breaks

Holiday time!

See you all when school resumes Monday 19th July 2026