

MINLATON DISTRICT SCHOOL

2 NORTH TERRACE, MINLATON, SA 5575 • (08) 8853 2346



Dear families and friends,

Throughout this year, our school has been buzzing with curiosity, creativity, and a genuine Zest for Learning. We know that curiosity and creativity are key drivers of deeper learning, helping students develop problem-solving skills and a love for lifelong learning. With this in mind, we've been expanding Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) across all classes - an approach that nurtures students' natural curiosity, encourages them to ask meaningful questions, and empowers them to take ownership of their learning.

We're thrilled to share some of the fantastic ways our students have embraced this approach, making their learning experiences richer, more engaging, and more memorable. For instance, students have been exploring their passions through highly creative projects - one class even composed and recorded their own original songs, which allowed them to express themselves, collaborate with peers, and showcase their unique talents. The results of these passion projects have been truly inspiring, with students demonstrating exceptional commitment and pride in their work.

We've also seen remarkable success integrating digital tools into everyday learning. Programs such as Minecraft have been used to bring class topics to life in dynamic new ways, helping students build, design, and explore ideas with enthusiasm and depth. These digital platforms have supported strong teamwork and problem-solving skills, while also preparing our students for the digital world they're growing up in.

Another highlight of our IBL journey has been the growth in students' questioning skills. Across different year levels, students are encouraged to pursue their own questions and investigations, developing the ability to think critically and creatively. Initiatives like Genius Hour give students dedicated time to dive deeply into topics that fascinate them - from scientific explorations to practical problem-solving challenges. By following their curiosity in this way, students not only gain deeper knowledge in their chosen topics, but also learn how to learn - formulating questions, researching answers, and sharing their discoveries with others.

Open-ended projects and collaborative learning tasks have also provided students with valuable opportunities to develop resilience and confidence. Whether working independently or in groups, they have shown persistence, adaptability, and a readiness to tackle challenging questions - essential skills for lifelong learning. These experiences not only support their academic growth but also help them grow into capable, curious, and confident young people.

Of course, nurturing curiosity begins right from the start of schooling. In our Early Years (Junior Primary), we embrace play-based learning - a research-backed approach that enhances young children's curiosity, creativity, and foundational skills. Through structured play, students in these early grades develop social, cognitive, and language skills in an engaging, natural way. Research confirms that play-based learning improves problem-solving abilities and academic outcomes, all while keeping students excited about coming to school.

For example, one of our Reception classes recently turned a math lesson into a fun, movement-filled game to learn about positional language. The children danced to music with beanbags, and when the music stopped they had to place their beanbag on top of, next to, or under various objects as instructed. There was plenty of laughter as well as learning, and this playful activity helped the concept of position "click" for our young learners. It's amazing how a simple change of approach can spark such enthusiasm and understanding in children.

MINLATON DISTRICT SCHOOL

2 NORTH TERRACE, MINLATON, SA 5575 • (08) 8853 2346



Meanwhile, in our primary years, students are stepping up as confident, independent learners as well. In Year 3, students recently wrote and performed their own original stories for their families - giving them an authentic audience for their work and a joyful boost in their literacy skills. You can imagine the pride on their faces as they shared their stories! Opportunities like this show students that their learning has real purpose and value, which in turn fuels their motivation to keep learning.

As students move into middle school, we continue to integrate curiosity-driven learning across the curriculum. For example, in Home Economics, students have been building their real-world skills by planning, preparing, and presenting meals, while in Civics they deepened their understanding of our Constitution by conducting thorough research and presentations. These practical and inquiry-based experiences make learning more engaging and relevant, and help students see the connections between their classroom lessons and the world beyond the school gates.

Our senior students have also been tackling some impressive projects that blend hands-on learning with creativity. In Year 11 Metalwork, students recently designed and built a number of standout pieces - including a guitar stand, a fire pit, a forklift cage, a metal-framed table, and even a custom ute tray. Bringing these ambitious projects to life required precision, innovation, and problem-solving, and the results showcased the high level of skill and perseverance our students have developed. Not to be outdone, our Year 12 Home Economics class capped off their year with a “Baking to Impress” challenge, where each student created and decorated an elegant cake from scratch. This allowed them to demonstrate their culinary creativity and confidence in a deliciously fun way.

One of the most inspiring examples of student agency came from our Year 12 Physical Education class. Two students, Layla and Tayah, took it upon themselves to design and run an intensive netball coaching program for younger players. This student-led project allowed them to share their passion for sport while developing their leadership and communication skills – and it had a fantastic impact on the younger students who benefited from their coaching. It’s a great reminder that when students are given the chance to lead, they rise to the occasion and learn as much as they teach.

As you can see, all these initiatives - from playful lessons in Reception to ambitious projects in Year 12 - share a common goal: to ignite students’ curiosity and give them an active role in their learning. When students are genuinely curious and engaged, their learning naturally goes deeper and becomes more meaningful. Our teachers have found that giving students more voice and choice in the classroom leads to higher enthusiasm, ownership, and motivation to learn. It also helps them develop critical thinking and independence as they learn to solve problems on their own. Importantly, tackling challenges in a supportive, student-driven environment builds their resilience and confidence - we see them persist longer and handle setbacks better because they feel in charge of their learning journey. By promoting curiosity and student agency in these ways, we are not only boosting academic achievement but also preparing our students for a lifetime of learning and growth.

Looking ahead, we’re excited to continue building on this work and nurturing that zest for learning in every student. We will keep providing even more opportunities for students to inquire, explore, and create, and we’ll support our staff with the tools and training they need to deliver rich, meaningful learning that connects to the real world. By doing so, we help students see the purpose in what they learn and how it relates beyond the classroom.

MINLATON DISTRICT SCHOOL

2 NORTH TERRACE, MINLATON, SA 5575 • (08) 8853 2346



We are incredibly proud of the way our students have embraced curiosity and taken charge of their learning this year. I also want to thank you, our families, for your ongoing support - whether through encouraging your child's interests at home, participating in school events, or partnering with our teachers. Your involvement truly makes a difference and helps make our school a place where every child is empowered to learn, grow, and shine. We remain committed to ensuring that our school is a community "Where Everyone Thrives".

Warm regards,

Andrew Dickinson - Principal

*FOLLOW US ON
FACEBOOK*



WWW.MINLATONDS.SA.EDU.AU

CONGRATULATIONS

It's a girl!

Mrs Cox recently gave
birth to a sweet baby
GIRL!



Mrs Cox



Miss Lu

It's a boy!

Miss Lu recently gave
birth to a beautiful baby
BOY!

MISS G, WHAT HAS YOUR YEAR R/1 CLASS BEEN UP TO LATELY?

Students have been busy exploring, creating, and learning through play-based activities. They've brought stories to life with puppets, decorated our paths with colourful chalk drawings, and crafted native Australian animals. We've also enjoyed making and flying kites, building farms, practising counting with pom poms, and trying our hand at guided drawing. These activities have sparked imagination, developed fine motor skills, and built teamwork - all while having fun!



Canberra/Ski Trip 2025

A group of 17 MDS Year 10/11 students joined together with 10 students from Port Broughton Area School to spend a week in Canberra and Perisher from Saturday 2nd August – Saturday 9th August.

Students from our school have recently undertaken an education tour of the national capital. Students were given the opportunity to participate in a variety of educational programs with a focus on Australia's history, culture, heritage and democracy. The Australian Government recognises the importance of all young Australians being able to visit the national capital as part of their Civics and Citizenship education. To assist families in meeting the cost of the excursion the Australian Government is contributing funding of \$270 per student under the Parliament and Civics Education Rebate program towards those costs. The rebate is paid directly to the school upon completion of the excursion.

Places visited in Canberra included ANZAC Parade, Australian National Botanic Gardens, Mount Ainslie, Embassy Drive, International Flag Display, Australian War Memorial, Parliament House, Australian Institute of Sport, Snowy Hydro Discovery Centre, Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House and the National Gallery of Australia. A highlight of the trip was the group involvement in the Last Post Ceremony with George selected to lay a wreath as a sign of remembrance along with a Port Broughton student.

After 3 days in Canberra the group travelled through the picturesque town of Jindabyne before staying at Sponars Chalet and spending 3 days at Perisher. Students had ski lessons each day and then had the opportunity to test out their skills on the slopes with some fantastic snow conditions and a great attitude from those involved.

It was fantastic to see the friendships develop between the two schools over the course of the week and our students always represented the school well. Thanks to Mr White and Miss Oatway for attending the trip, and also Mr Turra and Mrs Patterson from Port Broughton for their organisation. We are now looking forward to the 2027 version of the event for our current Year 8 and 9 students.

Haleigh Soph > *The Canberra camp was an amazing and educational trip. The skiing/snow was a main highlight for me.*

Emmie Sullivan > *Some of my personal highlights was Parliament House because it was fun seeing all the rooms. Skiing was a highlight because it taught me how to do a skill I haven't learnt yet and it was cool learning with my friends even if I kept falling over.*

Kaydence Rossack > *I liked the whole experience, meeting new people and building closer connections. I enjoyed that everyone was happy the whole trip. I loved seeing the snow and learning how to ski.*

James Cook > *Watching everyone constantly stack it on the first day was phenomenal*

George Bennett > *Mint, would recommend*

Ella Thompson *One of the most memorable moments was how everyone on the bus reacted to seeing snow out the window as we drove up to Sponars Chalet. Besides the snow, new Parliament House was my favourite place we visited. I learnt lots about the meaning behind some of the customs that take place. Overall, a great trip.*

Canberra/Ski Trip 2025 cont.

Yr 10/11 students



Mrs Oatway &
Yr 10/11 students

Emmie



Yr 10/11 students, including Elijah & Ethan



Ethan Grinhamn > *I liked the ski trip a lot. What I really enjoyed was the actual skiing and I enjoyed the War Memorial, learning the stories. It was really nice to see how much everyone improved from day 1 to day 2 skiing, that was my main highlight seeing myself and others improve.*

Levi Digby *I thought it was amazing, a once in a lifetime trip*

Elijah Rothe > *My favourite places we visited were the War Memorial, AIS and the ski fields. I enjoyed staying at Sponars Chalet which was a 10 minute drive from Perisher.*

Mia Warrior > *The ski trip was the best highlight of this year. Canberra itself was fun and seeing the War Memorial was one of my favourite places we visited. The overall best part that I think everyone was looking forward to was skiing. Being in the snow for the first time was an experience of a lifetime, being able to improve my skills and ski with friends. Overall, the trip was amazing and I most definitely recommend it to anyone.*

August 2025

Thu 28
 Year 3-4
 SYP Hot
 Shots

Fri 29
 Year 5-6
 Girls
 Football

September 2025

		Wed 3	Thu 4	Fri 5		
		Year 4-5 Camp	Year 4-5 Camp	Year 4-5 Camp		
Mon 8						
STUDENT FREE DAY						
Mon 22				Fri 26		
SAPSASA Track & Field				2pm dismissal, last day of Term 3		