

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

MINLATON 150

TERM 2 CALENDAR

1/2 MELALEUCA VISIT

Edition 2 2026



MINLATON DISTRICT SCHOOL



WWW.MINLATONDS.SA.EDU.AU

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

APRIL 2026

Celebrating Learning, Community and Connection

by Andrew Dickinson

Over the past month, Minlaton District School has experienced a strong sense of momentum, culminating in the **highly successful 150th anniversary celebrations**. This milestone was far more than an event, it was a genuine whole-school effort that brought together students, staff and families in a shared purpose: showcasing learning and strengthening our connection with the community.

The open afternoon was an outstanding success, **welcoming more than 500 visitors**, with a further 100 community members joining us on Saturday morning. What stood out most was not just the numbers, but the atmosphere across the school. Visitors consistently commented on the warmth of the environment, the pride evident in our students, and the high quality of learning on display.

Throughout classrooms and learning spaces, students confidently shared their thinking, explained their processes, and spoke with genuine ownership about their work. This ability to articulate learning is a powerful indicator of deep understanding, and **it was clear that students valued the opportunity to present to a real audience.**

Their behaviour, engagement and pride were frequently highlighted in feedback from the community.



The learning showcased across the school reflected a strong and consistent focus on authentic, connected learning. In Design, Innovation and Enterprise, Year 5 students designed and built carnival-style games for community use, while Year 6/7 students developed digital event portfolios using Canva, producing posters, tickets and promotional materials. In Design and Technology, students explored “Then and Now,” comparing traditional hand tool construction with modern CAD and machine-based production.

We had 500-600 visitors at MDS during the Minlaton 150 celebrations!

Across History, Community and Identity, students engaged deeply with local context. Years 3/4 investigated significant local buildings and how they have changed over time, while Reception to Year 1 students explored “Minlaton – Then, Now and Me” through play-based learning. In Years 1/2, students created historical landmark brochures, profiles of local people and watercolour artworks of historic buildings. The Minlaton School Archives displayed in the gym further reinforced this connection, **showcasing magazines, memorabilia and photographs** that captured key moments in the school’s history



In Science and inquiry learning, students explored genetics and plant science, comparing traditional cross-pollination with modern genetic engineering.

1990: The year Minlaton High officially evolved into MDS R-12

English and Humanities learning was equally authentic, with Year 6/7 students completing a Community Memoirs Project, **interviewing local residents** and transforming their stories into written pieces. Middle School students engaged in poetry and writing workshops inspired by themes of identity and change, while Year 8/9 students explored real-world literacy through documentary-style analysis of changing careers and industries.

Senior students demonstrated strong analytical and applied learning. Year 12 Society and Culture students examined youth culture over 150 years through video analysis, while students in flexible learning pathways highlighted evolving opportunities through VET and apprenticeship programs. Across the school, there was also a clear focus on how teaching and learning has evolved, with displays showcasing contemporary practices alongside historical approaches.

Creative expression was a key feature of the event, with a Middle School art exhibition in the gym presenting student interpretations of Minlaton’s past, alongside interactive printmaking **activities that engaged visitors directly in the learning experience.**

This work is underpinned by the dedication and collaboration of our staff. The level of planning, teamwork and shared commitment required to deliver an event of this scale should not be underestimated. It was a collective effort, and one that reflects the strength of our professional culture. Importantly, it has reinforced the value of connecting learning to real audiences and purposes; an approach we will continue to build on.

Alongside this, we are continuing to see **positive trends in student engagement** and wellbeing. Attendance remains steady, and there is a noticeable sense of connection and belonging across the school. This reflects the consistent work of staff in building strong relationships and creating supportive learning environments where students feel known and valued.

Operationally, the school has continued to run smoothly. Staffing has remained stable overall, with short-term adjustments managed effectively to ensure continuity of learning. Planning for Term 2 is already well underway, with a clear focus on maintaining the momentum generated through the 150th celebrations and **continuing to embed high-quality teaching and learning practices.**

- Connection fuels learning -

Looking ahead, **two exciting initiatives** will further strengthen our approach to authentic learning. Two primary teachers will begin work on a Learning Expeditions project, an inquiry-based model that engages students in extended, interdisciplinary investigations connected to real-world contexts, often culminating in authentic products or exhibitions beyond the classroom.



In addition, two Middle School teachers will lead an Industry Partnerships project in collaboration with Yorke Peninsula Council, focused on the local algal bloom issue. This will provide students with the opportunity to **engage with a real environmental challenge** affecting our region, working alongside external partners to explore causes, impacts and potential solutions.

Finally, we have recently been advised that Greg Hackett will not be returning in Term 2. Our immediate priority is to ensure continuity of leadership and stability for staff and students throughout Semester 1. At the same time, we are beginning to consider longer-term planning around our staffing profile and leadership structure to ensure we are well positioned moving forward.

As always, thank you to our students, staff and community for the role you play in making Minlaton District School such a positive, connected and forward-looking place to learn.



**Minlaton
District School**
'By Deeds Not Words'

Hello, from Melaleuca!

On Friday 20th March, our Year 1–2 class enjoyed a very special visit to Melaleuca Court Nursing Home. This excursion was a wonderful opportunity for students to connect with members of the community and learn from their life experiences.

During the visit, one of the highlights was making colourful paper hats together, which sparked plenty of creativity, laughter, and teamwork. It was heartwarming to see the children and residents sharing ideas and helping one another.



Students also spent time interviewing the residents about their lives in the past. They asked thoughtful questions and listened with great interest to stories about childhood, school days, and how life has changed over the years. This activity not only supported students' speaking and listening skills but also helped them develop empathy and appreciation for different generations.

The visit was a meaningful and memorable experience for everyone involved. Our students demonstrated kindness, respect,

and curiosity throughout the day, making both the school and themselves very proud.



We would like to thank the staff and residents at Melaleuca Court Nursing Home for their warm welcome and for sharing such a special day with us.

Olivia: I had a lot of fun at Malleluca making the paper hats.

Sloane: I really liked asking Michelle questions and having her help me make a paper hat.

Lucy: It was really fun getting to know the residents and what the past was like.

Harvey: It was fun making and folding the paper hats with Mr Murdock.



FREE
EVENT

YORKON

Games Convention

MINLATON TOWN HALL - APRIL 17-18



REGISTRATIONS ESSENTIAL
SCAN THE QR CODE OR VISIT
NMM.YORKE.SA.GOV.AU



SCHOOL FEES DUE IN TERM 2



We celebrated Harmony Day
on Friday 10th April

2026

APRIL

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		14 School Holidays	15 School Holidays	16 School Holidays	17 School Holidays	
	20 School Holidays	21 School Holidays	22 School Holidays	23 School Holidays	24 School Holidays	

2026

MAY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	4	5	6 7-8 Bball	7	8 11-12 Careers Trip	
			13 Cross Country			
		19 Yr 10 immun isations 2 nd dose			22 7-9 Netball Carnival	

2026

JUNE

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		2 9 A Side Footy				
		9 Student Free Day				