



SCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT

Updated April 2026

School number:	0798
School name:	Urrbrae Agricultural High School
School Profile:	Specialist Agricultural High School

Specialist Agricultural High School

Urrbrae's unique nature and environment is based on its genesis and purpose as per Peter Waite's 1913 bequest to the State. Peter Waite was an innovative South Australian pastoralist with extensive holdings in the North East of the state. The purpose of his bequest was to build and develop an Agricultural High School to train and educate boys in modern farming techniques. The school was opened in 1932 with an enrolment of 60 boys. In 1974, the first Urrbrae girls were enrolled. Today Urrbrae has an enrolment of over 1000 students, with both genders equally represented.

The school consists of educational buildings and facilities along with a 40-hectare (114 acres) farm. Originally only part of the farm was used for teaching programs. The Waite Agricultural Research Institute conducted agricultural trials in a majority of the paddocks until the mid-1960's when the whole property was given over to school use. At this time the Certificate of Agriculture, a two-year specialist course, was introduced in Years 11 and 12.

With industry support, a Suffolk sheep stud and Poll Hereford cattle stud were introduced and added to the other sheep, cattle, poultry, bees, pigs, horticulture and vegetable enterprises on the farm. Later Boer goats, horses, aquaculture, aviary birds and alpacas were added to the livestock projects conducted at the school.

Today Urrbrae's education programs reflect the school's motto of "Science with Practice". Urrbrae's emphasis on agriculture, technology and the environment drive the curriculum, and there is a heavy emphasis on linking theory to applied practices wherever possible.

In conclusion Urrbrae continues to honour Peter Waite's bequest and fulfil its purpose of educating our students in modern contemporary farming approaches, ranging from agribusiness training to tertiary based Veterinary education.

1. General information

School Principal	Todd George
Deputy Principal	David Price
Assistant Principal, Agriculture	Vince Fleming
Assistant Principal, Effective Learning	Ryan Tripney
Assistant Principal, Wellbeing	Paul Jessen
Assistant Principal, Learner Agency	Damien Kelly
Year of opening	1932
Postal Address	505 Fullarton Road, Netherby SA 5062
Location Address	505 Fullarton Road, Netherby SA 5062
Partnership	Mitcham Plains
Portfolio	Mount Barker 2
Geographical location	6.8km from centre of Adelaide CBD
Telephone number	8274 7455
School website address	www.urrbraehs.sa.edu.au
School e-mail address	dl.0798.admin@schools.sa.edu.au
February FTE student enrolment	

February fte Enrolment	2024	2025	2026
Year 7	189	188	179
Year 8	185	191	186
Year 9	202	186	191
Year 10	185	197	185
Year 11	183	174	188
Year 12	189	181	158
Total	1133	1117	1,087
FLO (2024) TL (2025/26)	31	45	44
School Card Percentage	9.80%	9.40%	8.10%
Students with Disability %	5.35%	4.58%	8.74%
First Nations students %	3.0%	3.0%	2.67%

- Member of the *Inner South Curriculum Alliance (ISCA)* focussing on VET delivery to member schools which include:
 - Australian Science and Mathematics School
 - Blackwood High School
 - Brighton Secondary School
 - Hamilton Secondary College
 - Mitcham Girls High School
 - Seaview High School
 - Springbank Secondary College
 - Thebarton Senior College
 - Unley High School
 - Urrbrae Agricultural High School

- Partner with **TAFE SA (Horticulture)** co-located on site. Sharing of facilities and staff expertise with regard to Certificate and Diploma level courses offered at Urrbrae TAFE.
- **Nursery and Garden Industry of SA** shares some office space at Urrbrae and facilitates industry connections into both the School and TAFE SA (Urrbrae).
- The **Nature Education Centre** is also located at Urrbrae in a purpose-built facility. The Centre interacts with school programs such as the Marsupial Centre and Urrbrae Trails. The Centre also supplies assistance and resources for the teaching of Science, Biology and Environmental Studies in primary schools.
- **Urrbrae Wetland** is a joint project between Department for Education (Urrbrae) and Mitcham Council. The Wetland site serves two purposes; as an educational/environmental exemplar and as a flood mitigation measure for Cross Road and its surrounds. Urrbrae has the responsibility for providing educational/environmental programs for student audiences ranging from pre-school to undergraduate levels. Mitcham Council is responsible for maintenance of the site and clearing of debris carried through water flow. A community organisation “Friends of the Wetland” meets regularly and have working bees to ensure a native plant propagation and planting program is maintained. This group’s aim is to vegetate the Wetland area with plants that existed before European settlement in SA.

2. Students (and their wellbeing)

General characteristics

Students come from throughout the metropolitan area, and also from country areas. Students must apply to attend Urrbrae – there is no zone. The vast majority apply during Year 6 to start at the school in Year 7, with a small number of students joining the school in Years 8-12. 60-80% of students come from suburbs south of Adelaide and the Hills; this varies from year to year. Many students, often as many as 30%, are the only students from their primary school, and begin Year 7 not knowing anyone else; hence there is a strong focus on transition and forming relationships in this year level.

Student well-being programs

- Pastoral Care program for 50 minutes once a week, which the school calls Connection and Belonging (CaB), Child Protection, Career Strategies and Graduate Qualities across 7-12, and other year level specific foci in which The Resilience Project is delivered. Additional activities include 6-7 transition at Year 7, a community focus at Year 9, EIF support at Year 10, and Pathways support at Years 11 and 12.
- Home groups meet each morning for 15 minutes before commencing lessons for the day. At least one home group teacher works closely with Student Services staff to form a strong relationship between the student, school and home when the student commences at the school, and in most cases maintains that link with the student and their family throughout their time at the school.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities is offered including many agricultural clubs, and sporting teams.
- A Peer Support program is in place for Year 11 students to support transitioning Year 7 students.

Student support offered

- The Wellbeing Team provides planned, proactive and coordinated support for the emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing of students and families at Urrbrae.
- The Wellbeing Team is staffed with 2 Senior Leaders, 3 Coordinators, 2 Counsellors, 2 Pastoral Care Workers and works as a team with the Assistant Principal, Wellbeing.
- A combined focus on protective strategies, developing resilience and respectful, positive relationships is developed through the CaB program.
- Proactive support provided by Home Group Teachers in each Year 7, 8 and 9 home group.
- Year level-based case management approach to students, with interventions and outcomes documented and reviewed.
- Case management of students is supported by regular Student Review Team meetings with Department for Education staff.

Student management

Teachers develop with their classes a clear classroom behaviour code. Students are expected to follow this code and may be reminded of it or redirected in their behaviour. Parents are informed of persistent inappropriate behaviour through Daymap, email or by telephone. A Withdrawal Room operates during lesson time; in the Withdrawal Room students are expected to reflect on their behaviour, complete a contract signed by their parent/caregiver identifying how their behaviour needs to change, and discuss this with the teacher before returning to class.

Student leadership

- The Student Representative Council (SRC) has members from every year level who meet under the leadership of the SRC Executive and a Student Counsellor, in order to represent student ideas and concerns as well as to work on whole school initiatives. The SRC organises student events including Casual Days, School Assemblies and charity events.
- The Peer Leaders are attached to each Year 7 Home Group and have a high profile within the school as mentors to transitioning Year 7 students.

Student Wellbeing as a school priority

Wellbeing is recognised as one of two foci underpinning Urrbrae's Strategic Priority of Rigorous Learning. This focus is further developed through:

- The use of Positive Education research and strategies to raise awareness of what impacts on wellbeing, and increase teacher and student skills in building wellbeing.
- Ensuring that best practice at key transition points informs the work of school staff to support students.
- A coherent and relevant Pastoral Care program supports school-wide wellbeing for learning, and learning for wellbeing.
- Responsive and coordinated support is provided for students to make knowledgeable decisions about their post-school pathways.

3. Key School Policies

Site Improvement Plan and other key statements or policies

UAHS VISION STATEMENT

Providing **unique opportunities** for **learners** and **future innovators**.

MISSION STATEMENTS

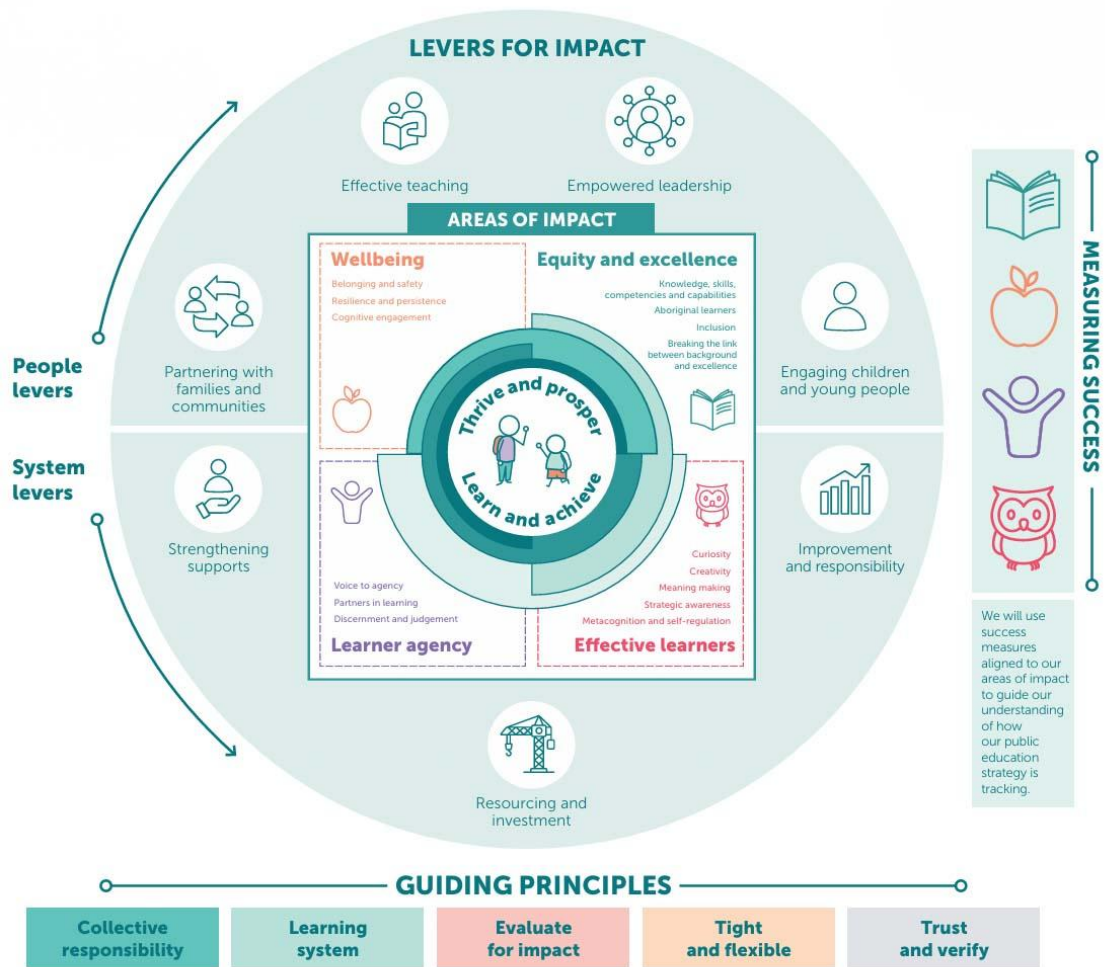
To be an **innovative educational leader** in Agricultural and Horticultural Science, Technology and the Environment.

To **develop engaged citizens**, with **creative and critical minds**, a **strong social conscience**, and a **love of learning**.

To **foster resilience**, **independence**, **personal responsibility** and **respect for others**.

Strategic Planning

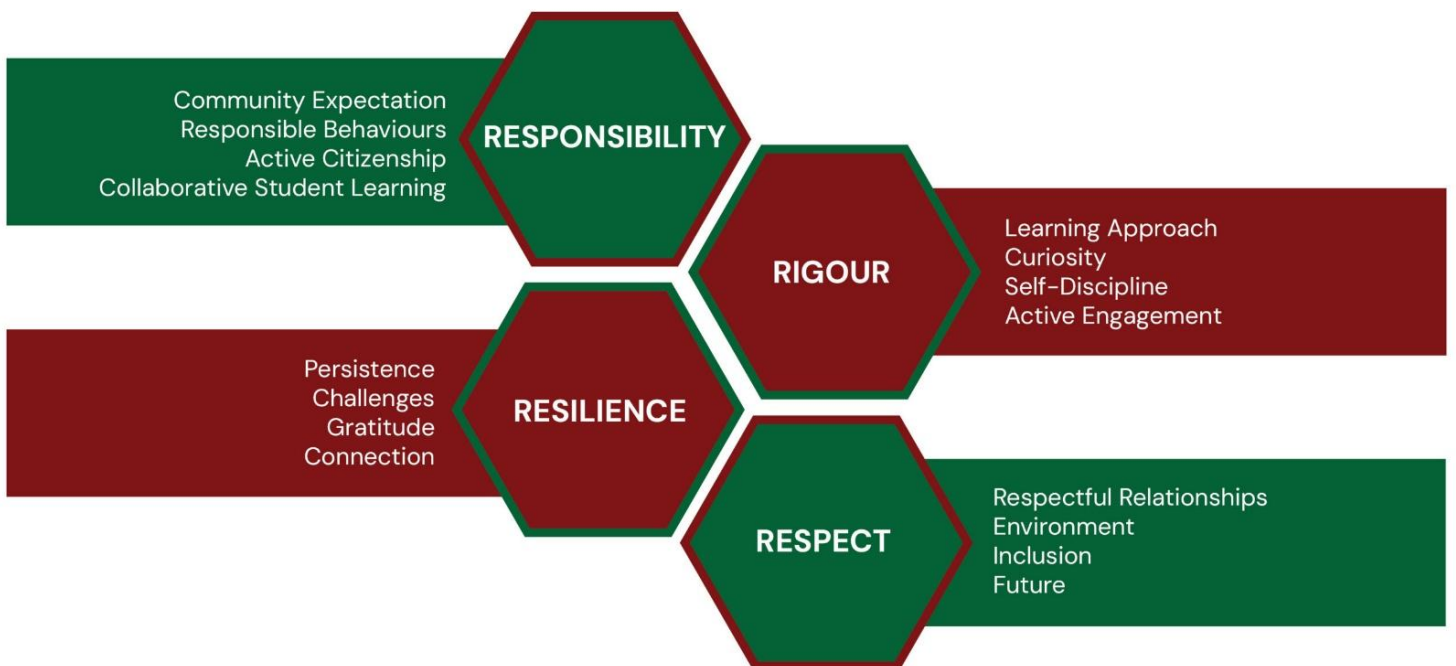
Refer to the School's Site Learning Plan 2026 on our web page www.urrbraehs.sa.edu.au



Our Urrbrae school values are **Respect, Rigour, Responsibility and Resilience**. These school values are very important to us, and all our dealings with each other at school revolve around them.



URRBRAE AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL



Recent key outcomes

Refer to the School's Annual Report 2025 on our web page www.urrbraehs.sa.edu.au

4. Curriculum

Subject offerings

Urrbrae Agricultural High School is the only comprehensive special interest agricultural secondary school in South Australia. It is recognised as a centre of excellence in student learning with a focus on agriculture, technology and the environment. These subjects are integrated across the school curriculum. Alongside these specialist subjects, Urrbrae students study the normal range of secondary school subjects, except Languages other than English, or can choose from specialised Agricultural, Automotive and Engineering Certificate courses at senior school level.

- General Year 7 – 12 curriculum.
- SACE (Stage 1 and Stage 2).
- South Australian Curriculum (Years 7 – 10). Languages (other than English) are not offered, however students wishing to undertake a language course can be accommodated.
- VET (UAHS and Alliance offerings).
- School Based Apprenticeships.
- Some Stage 1 and Stage 2 subjects are offered in conjunction with Mitcham Girls High School and Unley High School (The Alliance). These offerings differ from year to year and are dependent on demand.

Open Access/Distance Education provision

- Open Access Options (especially in terms of Languages).
- Open Access negotiated and accessed on case-by-case basis.

Special Needs

- Individual Education Programs (IEP) and specific student learning needs are identified through the selection process and subsequent student transition information.
- Support is available to identified students in classroom and practical learning environments, with appropriately trained teaching staff and SSOs.
- Curriculum modifications are usually in relation to task design and assessment requirements.
- The Special Education Coordinator and a number of teaching and SSO staff assist with Negotiated Education Program (NEP) students.
- Modified English and Mathematics classes occur at all year levels, 7 – 12.

Special curriculum features

- Agriculture, Science, Technology and Environment focus.
- Selective entry of all students based on interest in these areas.
- Students undertake compulsory Agriculture subjects in Years 7, 8 and 9, and are then able to choose Agriculture subjects in Years 10 – 12.
- Cross disciplinary subjects related to school foci – Sustainable Futures, Urrbrae Trails.
- Peer Leader Program – selected Year 11 students are trained as mentors who work with Year 7 classes to assist with their transition to high school.
- Integration of agricultural show experiences at all year levels – significant involvement in Royal Adelaide Show and participation and competing at the Mount Barker Show, Mount Pleasant Show, Paskeville Field Day, Karoonda Field Day etc.
- Trade Training Centre facilities and auspice programs in the areas of Engineering and Automotive Maintenance.

Teaching methodology

Urrbrae is known as a leading-edge educator in the foci areas of Agriculture, Environment and Technology. The foundation of teaching at Urrbrae is the link between theoretical knowledge and practical application; preparing

young people for a future in which they are active, contributing citizens. Learning is enhanced through a teaching environment which encourages and supports ongoing interaction between educators, agricultural professionals, and relevant industry experts. This collaborative approach supports problem and inquiry-based learning grounded in contexts of real-world ideas, problems and issues. Students have significant exposure to practical, 'hands on' learning, both in the setting of the Urrbrae farm and in a range of authentic contexts including community, industry and other work environments.

Urrbrae students have access to laptop technology to support their learning with Urrbrae's Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) scheme or purchasing a laptop through the school. This ensures that students have access to teaching materials and online resources for all subjects, either at home or at school. Teachers' classroom practices are changing to accommodate different approaches to learning that take advantage of this access. Various technologies are utilised to enrich face-to-face instruction and personalise learning for students. Many rooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards, and students are able to access the online networks both within the classroom and on the extensive agricultural grounds of the school.

Teachers are encouraged to continually revise and refine their pedagogical understandings and practices through a range of professional development opportunities, both within the school setting and in broader educational settings. A significant proportion of professional development is focused on emerging areas of research and initiatives in relation to the school foci, and ensuring that students have access to networks of professionals in the field to support them in their learning.

Student assessment procedures and reporting

- Learning and Assessment Plans provided to parents via Daymap
- Assessment tasks and support materials on Daymap
- Individual assessment results lodged on Daymap
- Formal reporting – 1 report at the end of each term of study
- Subject report inclusions – subject grade, topics studied, behaviour and attitude indicators, lesson attendance data
- Home Group report inclusions – behaviour and attitude indicators, extra-curricular activities, school attendance data
- Reports uploaded on Daymap for parents to access
- Other reporting bodies include VET, Open Access, School of Languages and SACE. These reports are also provided to parents
- Parent teacher interviews held in term 1. All teachers at all year levels are available for parents to discuss their children's progress
- Ongoing regular feedback provided to parents via email, phone calls, Daymap messaging, meetings etc.
- Progress reports undertaken by Year Level Managers at regular intervals to identify students at risk
- Achievement data analysed by Year Level Managers every term

Joint programmes

- Site shared by TAFE with Horticultural focus
- Other organisations on site include the Nursery Garden Industry SA, Landscaping Association of SA
- State funded Nature Education Centre on site
- The Urrbrae Wetland, whose education programs are incorporated into the school's curriculum offerings, is located on the western Urrbrae grounds
- Provision of a Pathways Manager to provide information and support to parents and students for Apprenticeship Pathways
- A very close working relationship exists with the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society. Urrbrae students are involved in stewarding and assisting with judging across a range of competitive classes – wool, honey, sheep and cattle; as well as providing the bulk of the students who work within the Agricultural Learning Centre, which is jointly operated by DfE and the RAHS. As a part of the livestock focus of the school, the DfE Animal Ethics Committee has chosen to hold all of its meetings at Urrbrae.

5. Sporting Activities

Statewide Knockout Sport, VISTA Zone sport, SASSSA Sport, Southern Zone Sport, House Sporting events, Annual Ski Trips.

6. Co-Curricular Activities

Agriculture and Farm

Alpaca Club, Aquaculture Club, Barn Market, Bee Club, Cattle Club, Farm Support, Goat Club, Heifer Club, Horse Club, Marsupials Club, Mount Barker Show, Mount Pleasant Show, Nature Education Centre, Paskeville Field Day, Pig Club, Plant Club, Poultry Club, Reptile Club, Royal Adelaide Show, Sheep Club, Steer Club, Student Agricultural Committee.

Arts

Jazz Combo, Six Plus Ensemble, Stage Band, Student Arts Committee, Vocal Ensemble.

Environment and Technology

Australian Youth Climate Coalition, BEBRAS Computing Challenge, Biogas Project, Digital Leaders, Environmental Focus Group, Informatics Competition, PICSE Scholarship, Programming Club, River Murray Group, Tech Showcase, Trees for Life, Wombat Camp, Youth Environment Council.

Student Wellbeing

Community Connections, Formal Committee, Jumper Committee, Peer Leaders, School Council, Student Exchange Host, Student Representative Council, Cows for Cambodia, Youth Advisory Committee.

Faculty

ANZAC Day Assembly, Australian Maths Competition, Curriculum Committee, Geography Competition, Heywire Competition, History Competition, MASA Quiz Night, Mathematics Challenge, Meet the Writers Festival, Oliphant Science Competition, Plain English Speaking Award, Premier's Reading Challenge, Reconciliation Week, Remembrance Day Assembly, Writers Club, Young Writers' Award, Mortlock Scholarship Awards.

7. School Facilities

Buildings and grounds

General learning areas (Arts, English, Mathematics, Environment and Humanities and the Student Centre) are housed in circa 1950's buildings. In the late 90's Urrbrae Education Centre was formed and included the amalgamation of TAFE (SA) School of Horticulture on site. When the redevelopment was finished in 2000, new buildings included: a shared administration centre, repositioned farm, Urrbrae/TAFE individual and shared facilities, new science labs, student cafeteria and canteen, staff room, farm shed complexes, TAFE lecture rooms adjoining grounds for turf courses and propagation areas. The farm also gained new buildings for Aquaculture, a Winery and Piggery, as well as sheep shearing facilities.

In 2010 School Council developed and funded a project to replace our dilapidated Agriculture Teaching Centre. Within six months this ambitious project saw the completed construction of the new Urrbrae Agricultural Science classroom block, adjacent to our existing glass houses, propagation sheds, plant hardening areas and Year 8 gardens.

Heating and Cooling

All teaching blocks and staff areas are serviced by reverse cycle air conditioning systems, which are a combination of timed systems and split systems (manually operated).

Specialist facilities and equipment

- **Farm:** The farm area is 42 ha (104 acres) and accommodates animal husbandry, an orchard, lucerne cropping and general feedlot areas. Our agricultural focus is heavily dependent on this area for the delivery of our courses. Specialist areas such as piggery, aquaculture, honey production, winery and the marsupial

enclosure is also used in our approach to Science with Practice (our school motto). Equipment (tractors etc) are maintained at industry standard or higher.

- **Tech Studies:** Urrbrae applied for and received a Trade Schools grant and has subsequently re-equipped both Tech Studies and Agriculture with industry level equipment. Agriculture has installed exemplar John Deere GPS systems as well as up to date stock weighing machines.
- **Science:** The 2000 Urrbrae redevelopment equipped the school with a new Science block incorporating 8 labs, a preparation area and staff room. The Science labs were commensurately equipped for Animal Science, Ag Studies, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, general Science, and Geology.
- **Resource Centre:** Consists of 3 separate seminar rooms as well as an open centre area, which provides 3 class areas, study area as well as staff offices. Collections are comprised of hard copies, e-books and Wi-Fi access to the school systems.
- **Home Economics:** Urrbrae has two self-contained Home Economics buildings. Maximum class size is managed at approximately 24 students. The facilities are well equipped and reflect industry level equipment. In addition, we have a Skill Centre building which contains 4 industrial stove/oven combinations, industrial dishwasher and fridges.
- **Sports Facilities:** Sports facilities at Urrbrae service our own PE and Outdoor Ed programs and consist of the following: Climbing wall tower, 2 tennis courts, basketball courts, school gymnasium, football oval, soccer pitch and ½ Olympic size swimming pool. After hours, many of the facilities are heavily used by community groups.
- **TAFE:** A TAFE SA campus is located on site at Urrbrae Agricultural High School, providing students with access to vocational education and training. The campus offers nationally recognised qualifications in agriculture, horticulture, and related industries. This arrangement supports practical, industry-relevant learning pathways for students in an established agricultural setting.

Student Facilities

Student Administration/Front Office staff provides support to students in relation to information and movement, financial services and first aid.

Student facilities are provided in Urrbrae's Canteen/Common Room/Staff Room building which includes hot water facilities, microwaves, tables and seating.

The School Canteen provides a wide selection of hot and cold food daily.

Staff Facilities

Each staff member has access to their own email address and account, which allows staff to access school files from home. All teaches have a laptop to support teaching and learning. The staffroom is located next to the Canteen and is used by staff at recess and lunchtimes.

Access for students and staff with disabilities

Urrbrae has ramps built for students to access our learning areas, however there is still considerable difficulty in using wheelchairs on the farm. Not all farm areas (eg paddocks, vineyard, orchard) have easy wheelchair access.

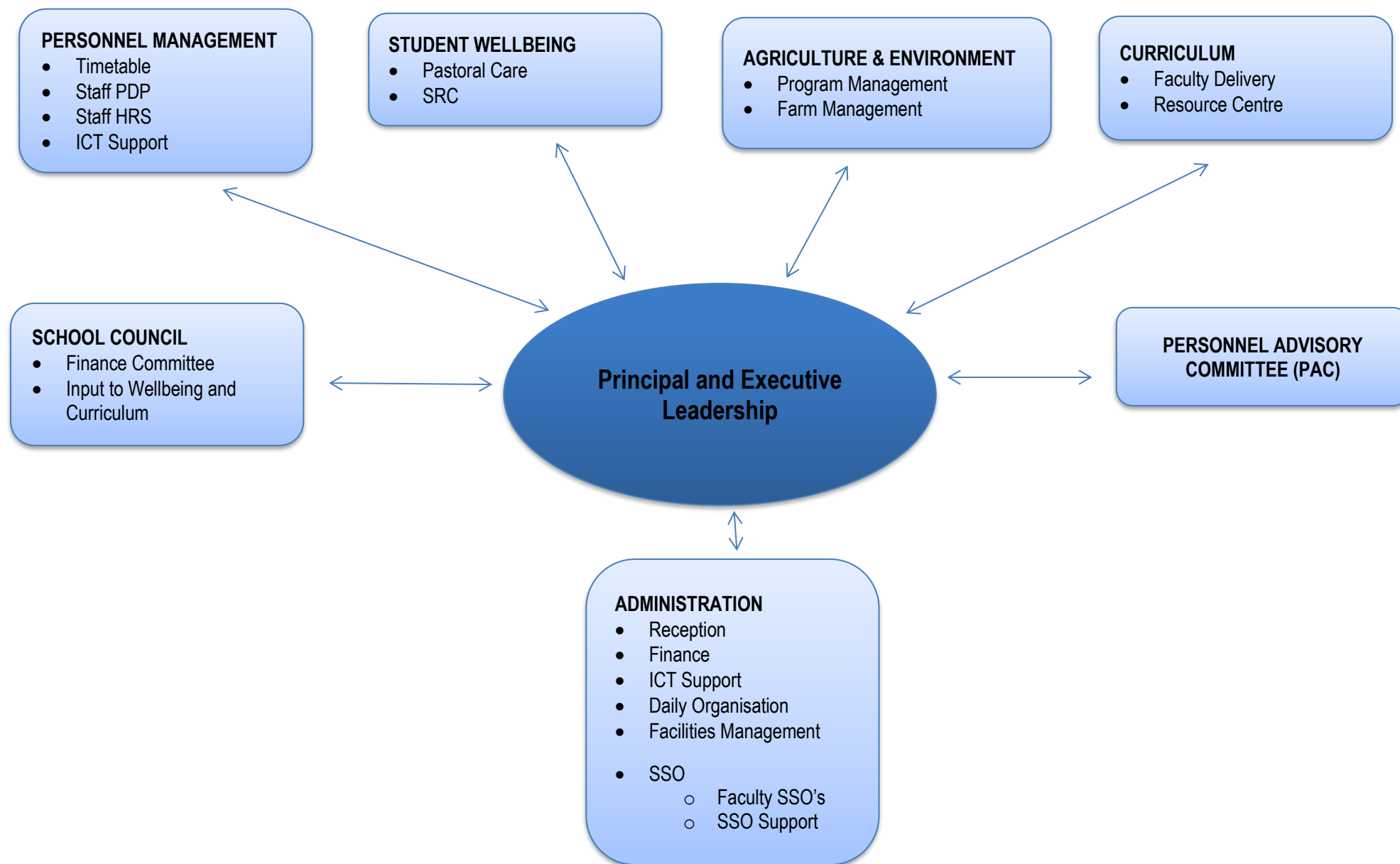
Public Transport Access

Travel to and from Urrbrae is provided through a network of public transport services across the metropolitan area. A range of bus companies provide morning and afternoon services leaving from Cross Road and Fullarton Road. Up to date information about connections, routes and timetables can be found at the Adelaide Metro

Website: Adelaide Metro

Phone: 1300 311 108 (7.00am – 8.00pm daily)

URRBRAE AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL ORGANISATION CHART



Publications and Communication

Parent communications, excursions and payments, newsletters, calendars and other school forms are distributed through EdSmart. The school also has a Facebook page.

A year 7-12 curriculum handbook is published annually.

Electronic daily notes are available for students and staff via Daymap.

Email is available to all staff within the school.

8. Local Community

General Characteristics

Urrbrae Agricultural High School is situated in Netherby, 6.8 kilometres from Adelaide's GPO. However, our student population is drawn from South Australia, as Urrbrae has no defined catchment area. This is due to the nature of our school specialising in Agriculture.

Urrbrae has an excellent relationship with our local community; residents, businesses and Local Council. The local community is residential, with Mitcham Shopping Centre serving the local urban community's needs.

Parent and Community Involvement

Parent and community involvement is high with parents being involved in an active Governing Council and volunteering to assist in our Canteen and Barn Market. Parents involved in agri-business and production also assist in sharing their expertise with our students via the agriculture subjects taught at Urrbrae. Urrbrae Old Scholars, who have returned to the land, also host Year 11 and 12 students at their "mixed" farms in either the mid-north or south-east each year. This gives present students a perspective on rural operations, and is valuable in researching future employment pathways.

Feeder or Destination Schools

A large number of different feeder primary schools contribute to Urrbrae's Year 7 intake. These were located as far away as the Fleurieu Peninsula, Murray Bridge, Gawler, Yorke Peninsula, Adelaide Hills and the greater Adelaide metropolitan area.

Other local care and educational facilities

Public high schools in close proximity are Unley High School and Mitcham Girls High School. Private high schools in close proximity are Scotch College, Mercedes College and Cabra College.

Commercial/industrial and shopping facilities

Because of our metropolitan location, access to local shopping and service facilities is immediate and simple due to their proximity. The closest main shopping centre is Mitcham Shopping Centre (Belair Road, Mitcham) with others being easily accessible eg Woolworths and Big W complex at the corner of Cross Roads and Goodwood Road, and the Unley Shopping Centre and Target on Unley Road, Unley.

Other local facilities

Locality guides online provide comprehensive lists of services in the Mitcham, Unley and Netherby areas.

Availability of staff housing

The Principal's residence and Farm Manager's residence are both managed by Urrbrae. The Principal's residence is currently being utilised by the Tailored Learning students and houses the NGISA office and the Farm Manager's residence currently houses the Farm Manager.

Accessibility

Urrbrae Agricultural High School is easily accessible via public and private transport. It is situated on the corner of Cross Road and Fullarton Road, with access points from either main road. Public bus stops exist close to the school on each of these roads.

Local Government body

Our local body is City of Mitcham Council located on Belair Road, Mitcham. The present Mayor is Dr Heather Holmes-Ross.

Website: City of Mitcham | City of Mitcham.

9. Further Comments

Industry support and patronage has been and continues to be a major aspect of Urrbrae's successful programs. In the 1950's the Mortlock family bequeathed a sum of money to establish a scholarship for the enhancement of academic success. This continues as a significant component of the school's "rewarding success" program. In addition, there are a number of smaller scholarships and prizes given to the school by various donors to support student progress, both academically and through application to studies.

- Mortlock Bequest
 - Approximately 8 prizes at Years 7,8,9,10,11,12 (each year level)
 - 6 Undergraduate (Agriculture related areas of study)
 - Up to 2 Honours (Agriculture related areas of study)
 - Up to 2 Masters (Agriculture related areas of study)
 - 1 PhD (Agriculture related areas of study – in conjunction with the Urrbrae Memorial Fund)

Total \$50,000
- AJ and PA McBride Pty Ltd Agriculture Prizes
 - Up to 2 per class in Years 7,8,9,10,11 and 12, by application in Years 11 and 12

Total \$5,000
- Royal Adelaide Agricultural and Horticultural Show Society
 - Awarded to top student proceeding to Agriculture and/or Horticulture Studies at tertiary level.

Total \$2,000