



# SOTA *Speak*

School of the Air Newsletter

## February 2025 Term 1



### Message from the Head of Campus

#### Welcome Back to the 2025 School Year at SOTA

Welcome back, everyone, to the 2025 school year at SOTA! I am thrilled to be joining the SOTA community. The high praise that Lai Kuan and the staff have shared about our students, families, and supervisors has been overwhelmingly positive, and I cannot wait to meet you all.

I hope you had a relaxing holiday period and enjoyed making memories with your family and friends. It was wonderful to take a break, disconnect from work, and reconnect with my family over the Christmas and New Year period.

A little about me—your new Head of Campus. My name is Rachael Russell, and I live in a small farming community called Mundoorra with my husband and two children. We have a 1,500-acre property where we primarily grow crops and run a small number of cattle (80–100 head—not much compared to some of your properties, I know!).

I have lived in this area for 17 years and have taught at various schools in Port Pirie, the Yorke Peninsula, Spalding, Laura, and surrounding areas. For the past four years, I have worked in corporate roles focusing on Inclusive Teaching and Learning, with an emphasis on legislation and policy for students with disabilities.

#### Our Focus in 2025

As a staff, we will continue to build our understanding of effective learning. We aim to bring the Education Strategy to life, ensuring that we consider the unique educational context of our students at SOTA.

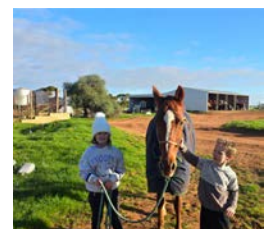
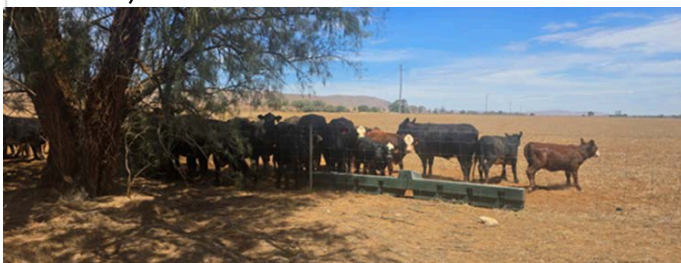
#### A Warm Welcome to Our New Families, Students, and Staff

We are excited to welcome our newest families, students, and teachers!

- New Reception Students: Hudson, Airlie, James, Elsie, Memphis, Aria, and Asher.
- New Year 1 Student: Jovie.
- New Year 1/2 Teacher: Janine.

We have been in contact with the families of our new young learners to offer an early itinerant visit to support a smooth transition to online learning.

You will also see me working with the Reception class, as Miss Stringer takes on her new role as B1 Leader at SOTA, supporting our supervisors.





## Student Leadership and Support

- **Student Council:** Miss Morley did a fantastic job leading the Student Council last year and will continue in this role in 2025. She has shared some exciting and innovative ideas, so stay tuned for updates!
- **Miss Kaur:** will be leading the quiz for those precious team points for Sports day. Go Brumbies! ;)
- **Mr Moyne:** He will be working 0.9 FTE, meaning five days one week and four days the next. However, this will not impact visits—he will still be out and about, with careful planning in place.
- **ICT Support:** Jordan will be available on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays for all your ICT needs. If you require support outside these times, please contact the OAC tech team at 8309 3500 (extension 3). Several ICT guides are also available on the SOTA Community Team.
- **Learning Support Officer Recruitment:** The recruitment process is underway, with applications closing on 5 February. I will keep families informed once the process is finalised.

## Strengthening Community Connections

Before the school year commenced, I spent time meeting many stakeholders who support SOTA students and families. We are looking to strengthen our partnerships with organisations such as RICE, Landcare, Revise, other Department schools, and additional resources to ensure our students and families have as many opportunities as possible.

## Important Reminders for Week 2

As we look forward to reconnecting with our friends and meeting each other in person,

### Here are a few key reminders:

- **Uniform:** All students must wear the school uniform, including a sun-safe hat for outdoor play and enclosed shoes (no Crocs or thongs).
- **Playground Rules:** No rough or physical play.
- **Aquatics Preparation:** Bring swimming gear, including bathers, goggles, sunscreen, and a towel.
- **School Photo Day:** Monday morning—come dressed and ready!
- **Library:** Thursday morning.
- **Hydration:** Bring a water bottle, as it will be hot.
- **Swimming** was not able to be confirmed due to a shortage of swimming instructors. We will explore booking for Term 1 week 8.

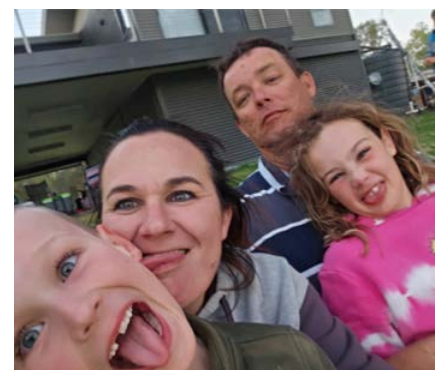
## Aquatics Update

At this stage, Aquatics will proceed as planned. However, we will be advised on Monday if it needs to be cancelled due to hot weather policies.

I am looking forward to an exciting and rewarding year ahead at SOTA. Let's make 2025 a fantastic year together!

Best Regards

*Rachael Russell*



SOTA Head of Campus



## EVENTS

Online Orientation: **28 - 30 January**  
 Student Free Day: **31 January**  
 Summer School (Induction): **3-7 February**  
 School Experience Week: **17-21 March**  
 Canberra Camp (Years 5/6): **28 April - 2 May**  
 Camp @ Woodhouse: **30 June - 4 July**  
 Mini School @Coober Pedy: **22- 26 September**  
 Get Together: **5 - 6 December**

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## OPFA and SOTA CGC

### Outback Parents and Friends Association (OPFA)

An opportunity for the parents, supervisors and staff of students enrolled with the Port Augusta School of the Air (SOTA) to discuss any aspects associated with the school.

### SOTA Committee of Governing Council (CGC)

The SOTA CGC discuss governance issues that require further discussion from OPFA meetings.

### OPFA/CGC upcoming meeting dates All meetings at 3:00pm

OPFA: Week 3 (T1) Wednesday  
 CGC: Week 4 (T1) Wednesday

## LIBRARY NEWS

We welcome Julie Staley as our OAC Library Director. We are fortunate to have Julie attending our Induction Week on Wednesday and Thursday to run a Library session with our students and families.

We urge all families and students to look at the Library website and borrow books to be sent via mail as well as electronically. The wonderful Library team also work closely with our teachers to send books to families supporting learning throughout the year.

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## SOTA STAFF CONTACTS

PHONE	
RECEPTION/ANGELA	86428 302
Louise KIRKHAM	86428 301
Jordan NOBLE BUSH	86428 305 86428 351
Navneet KAUR	86428 321
Rebecca MORLEY	86428 309
Janine ANDREWS	86428 306
Madlen STRINGER	86428 308
Rachael RUSSELL	86428 316
Spare	86428 375
Spare	86428 373
ITINERANT TEACHERS	
Megan Thoms	86428 313
Rhys Moyne	86428 307








# UPCOMING FACE TO FACE EVENTS

- Term 1 Week 2** Summer School @ Port Augusta: **3-7 February**
- Term 1 Week 8** School Experience Week @ Port Augusta: **17-20 March**
- Term 2 Week 10** Camp - Woodhouse, Adelaide: **30 June-4 July**
- Term 3 Week 10** Mini-School: **22-25 September**
- Term 4 Week 8** Get Together @ Port Augusta: **5-6 December**

## ACTIVITY GEAR LIST

### COMPULSORY ITEMS FOR AQUATICS:

	<b>SIGNED CONSENT FORM &amp; PERSONAL MEDICATION</b> <small>(Consent form provided prior to program)</small>	<b>TICK</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>HAT</b> Preferably wide brimmed with cord/strap	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>SHIRT</b> With sleeves down to elbow (preferably long sleeved)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>OLD SHOES</b> (Will get WET and MUDDY)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>WATER BOTTLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### RECOMMENDED ITEMS TO BRING TO AQUATICS



## Miss Megan's Home Visits

Hello everyone,

A warm welcome to all the new members of SOTA! I'm thrilled to be part of this amazing community again this year as one of your Itinerant Teachers.

For those who haven't met me yet, I'm a laid-back vegetarian and an experienced educator with over 13 years of teaching experience here in South Australia. I'm qualified in Early Childhood and Primary education and am truly passionate about supporting students in their learning journeys.

Being in this Itinerant teaching role for the past four years has been an absolute privilege, and I look forward to continuing for many more years to come. I feel so fortunate to work closely with our students and their families during my visits, creating opportunities to enhance learning in meaningful and fun ways.

I'm proud to be part of the SOTA team, and I can't wait to make the most of another fantastic year with all of you.

Please don't hesitate to contact me at any time using my school email address:  
[megan.thoms132@schools.sa.edu.au](mailto:megan.thoms132@schools.sa.edu.au)

Kind regards,  
Megan



## Mr Moyne's Itinerant Visits

Hi everyone,

I would like to welcome you all to the 2025 school year. For those who have not met me, my name is Mr Rhys Moyne, and I am very much looking forward to working with you and your children—whether through home visits, online teaching of the Health and Physical Education curriculum, or during face-to-face weeks at SOTA. I have had a restful and rejuvenating holiday break, and I hope the same is true for you.

This year, I will continue in my role as an itinerant teacher alongside Miss Megan. For those new to SOTA, we provide assistance and support for supervisors within the schoolroom, as well as delivering additional engaging and enrichment activities. I encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity by making an itinerant teacher booking through the Google Calendar set up for this purpose. It is a great privilege to support you in your schoolrooms, and I look forward to working with everyone in the year ahead.

I have a particular interest in Technologies and Health and Physical Education, having taught both subject areas at a high school level for several years. However, I enjoy supporting student learning across all areas and age groups.

If at any point throughout the school year you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in touch via email or phone.

Looking forward to the year ahead.

Best regards,

Mr Rhys Moyne

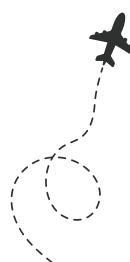


# Miss Stringer - Reception

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08 8624 8304

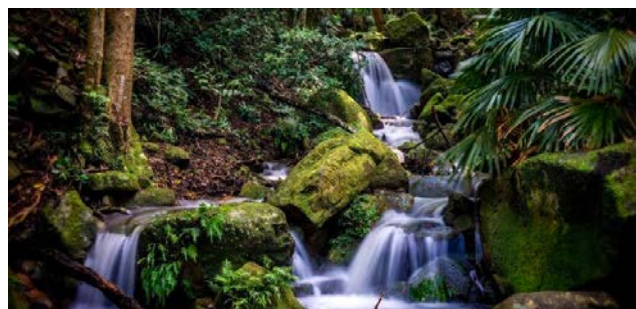
After a very busy holiday break traveling and exploring the world, I am ready and excited to start the 2025 school year here at SOTA.



- I have worked across many year levels ranging from Reception to Year 8, although my love lies with the Junior Primary.
- I have a dog (Rona) and a cat (Molly) who live with me here in Port Augusta. They are the best of friends!
- I grew up on a farm with my parents and siblings, breeding sheep and pigs, and growing cereal crops.
- I LOVE to travel, and have been very fortunate to travel and live throughout Australia and the world. I am always planning my next trip so if you have any recommendations, please let me know!

This year sees a bit of a role change for me at SOTA as I step into the Supervisor Support and Pedagogy Coordinator position, along with teaching Reception.

My Reception group consists of seven enthusiastic students, four of whom I had the pleasure to work with in 2024 as mid year entry students, and three who are joining us in 2025. Together we will learn the fundamental skills that will set students up for successful schooling. This includes academic fundamentals academically, growth mindset skills, building stamina and emotional regulation. I work very closely alongside Supervisors, Governesses and families to achieve these important skills. We will begin the year with a rainforest-themed Linked Learning Project for Term 1, incorporating arts, technologies, science, HASS and some sneaky maths and literacy as well!



My SOTA Leadership role involves supporting supervisors and will see me take over the weekly Supervisor Sessions to guiding them towards both school and personal success in 2025 and beyond. I am excited about this increased responsibility and look forward to getting to know all Supervisors, not just those I work with as a class teacher. We will begin the year with some informative sessions in Week 2 when families come to Port Augusta for Induction Week.

I look forward to working with Supervisors and families this year. Please feel free to contact me at any time with any queries, and I will respond as promptly as I can. My email is [madlen.stringer12@schools.sa.edu.au](mailto:madlen.stringer12@schools.sa.edu.au) or my direct phone line is 08 8624 8304.

I wish all SOTA families and our dedicated staff a successful 2025 filled with personal growth and learning. On a final note I warmly welcome new families to our SOTA community.





## Miss Andrews - Year 1/2

janine.andrews164@schools.sa.edu.au

08 8642 8306

Hello everyone,

After Christmas and celebrating another birthday, I packed up my bus and moved into a house here in Port Augusta with my finance, Kelly, and our two dogs, Nicko (a Kelpie) and Storm (a Border Collie). We worked out that we have not lived in a house for 18 months now and have been in the bus for the last 8 months!

### About me

- I grew up in Eaglehawk, a suburb of Bendigo in Central Victoria, with my parents and 3 siblings.
- I'm an aunty to 5 nieces and 4 nephews.
- I have played hockey since I was 8 years old and represented Victoria in a few junior country teams.
- I started my teaching career in 2005, and have been at 5 small country schools, teaching across all year levels.
- I spent one year as a governess on Eva Downs Station in the Northern Territory.



- I love travelling and have explored many parts of Australia including to the northern tip of Cape York to just across the WA border through the Great Victorian Desert.
- My future plans are to live on the road, working in many parts of Australia, starting with this year at SOTA.

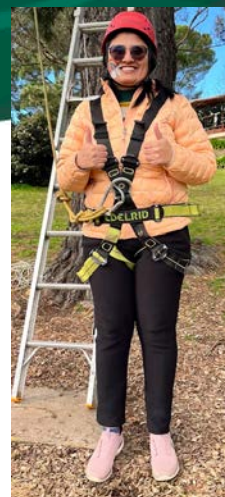
### My role at SOTA

Although I have enjoyed classroom based teaching throughout my career, I have always been attracted to the idea of teaching students in remote areas of Australia. I am excited to be a part of the team at SOTA, where I can build rewarding experiences with our Year 1/2 students and their families.

I look forward to working with you all this year, please feel free to contact me anytime via Teams, email or phone, should you have any concerns or questions.



## Miss Kaur - Year 3/4



Welcome back, everyone! I hope you all had a great holiday and are all charged up for the new school year. I spent my holidays in India, catching up with friends and family and eating lots of homemade food. After all that, I think I have lost my ability to cook and will need a refresher on how I prepped my meals last year.

### A little bit me:

I started my teaching journey in 2021 with some relief work in Melbourne. After that, I moved to Alice Springs and taught a lovely year 1/2 class there. In 2022, I moved down to Port Augusta and taught a wonderful year 4/5/6 class for a year. I got the privilege to become a SOTA teacher in 2023, and have been here ever since, and absolutely love it. I love seeing my students during face-to-face events and have fallen in love with the Gymkhanas, since attending my first two last year. I love reading, going for a walks, and spending time with friends and family. I have been trying to get into guitar practise since last year, but I think I need to embrace a growth mindset to get a started on that..

### My role at SOTA:

I started as a year 5/6 teacher in 2023, so I had to say goodbye to that class last term as they graduated. In 2024, I taught the wonderful year 4/5s, who are now the seniors this year, and this year I am very excited to be a year 3/4 teacher. I can't wait to see all the amazing learning my year 3/4 Rockstars will do this year.

### Quiz Master:

I am the SOTA Quiz master and run the whole school quiz every Tuesday. So, I get the privilege of announcing the Quiz winning house at the End of Year award ceremony. If you have a quiz that you would like me to play on Tuesday's assembly, please feel free to share it on my email.

Contact:

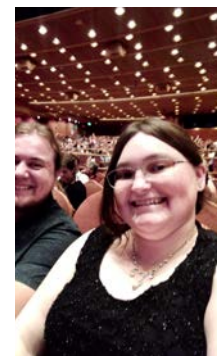
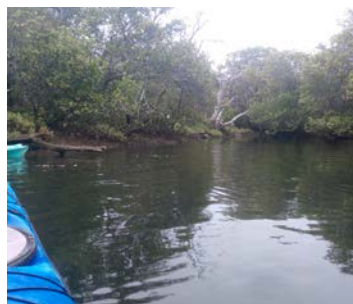
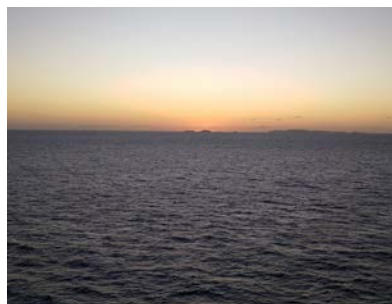
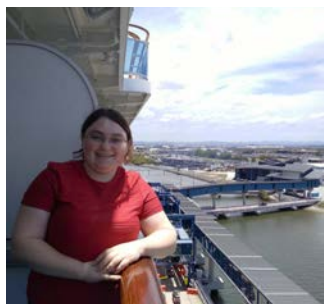
86428321

navneet.kaur145@schools.sa.edu.au



## Miss Morley - Year 5/6

Welcome back everyone! After a quiet Christmas with family and a relaxing visit to sunny Queensland, I'm back and ready for a new year at SOTA – I hope you are too!



### A little about me –

Before studying to become a teacher, I spent years overseas exploring Europe and Asia. Having grown up moving between various places in Australia - including a number of years on a small country property in NSW, and two years of distance education as my family travelled around Australia - I developed a love for travelling and learning about different cultures.

My hobbies also involve a variety of arts and crafts, I love being creative and trying out new things. My personal goal for this year is to get back into dancing and to get a dog!

### My role at SOTA -

In 2023, I started at SOTA, taking on the year 3-4 class, and last year I guided our double graduate class of year 6/7 students through to high school. This year I am delighted to return to my original students as they become the new year 5/6 seniors of SOTA. This year, we will be following a different learning framework as we introduce Linked Learning, as a subject which will combine HASS, Science, Tech, and Art into interconnected themed units.

**Student Council:** This year I will be replacing Lai Kuan as the Student Council Advisor. I'm looking forward to helping our council members step up into leadership roles and support our SOTA community.

**Canberra Camp:** As the year 5/6 teacher, Mr Moyne and I will be attending the Term 2 Canberra camp. With the camp approaching soon, we will be finalising details and handing out consent forms in Week 2 at Induction week.

I look forward to working with you all this year. Please don't hesitate to get in touch via Teams, email or phone should you have any concerns or questions.

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08 8642 8309

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