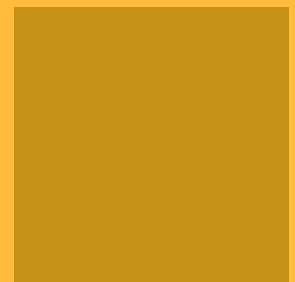
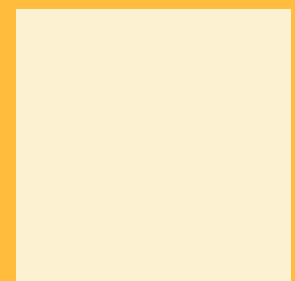


Rivendell School Annual School Report 2013



School context

Rivendell School is located within the historical Thomas Walker Estate at Concord West. It shares the site with the Department of Health's Rivendell Child, Adolescent and Family Unit. Rivendell School provides access to education for students from Year 7 to Year 12 in both the Department of Health and the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) programs.

Principal's message

This Annual School Report for 2013 provides our community with information regarding our programs, achievements, initiatives and evaluations.

The Rivendell School community prides itself on promoting shared and individual responsibility for:

- positive and respectful relationships;
- safe behaviour; and
- cooperation and participation in quality learning.

This year we have been very focused on developing an inclusive school culture. While we have students enrolled in Rivendell across five different programs, our aim is for all students to have a sense of belonging as a group to the Rivendell School community. We have changed a number of school structures to foster this sense of belonging and community.

The report details some of the ways in which we are developing an inclusive school culture and the ways in which we care for and embrace our diverse student population, providing every student with opportunities to achieve their individual goals.

Our positive student outcomes are supported by the strong supportive and collaborative relationship we have with the NSW Health staff, mainstream schools, Sydney Distance Education High School (SDEHS), Meadowbank TAFE, Rotary Club of Concord, community agencies and local business personnel, especially the Kokoda Cafe.

As always, the ongoing support of our parents and care givers is greatly appreciated. My thanks go to the dedicated and enthusiastic staff at

Rivendell for providing a quality educational experience for our students. Thank you also to all the students who took the opportunities on offer and made the most of them.

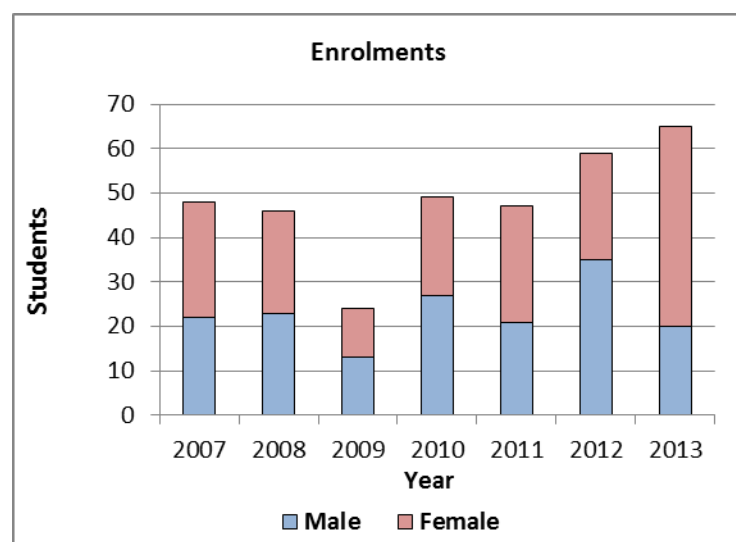
I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school's achievements and areas for development.

Anne Reddie

Student information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Student enrolment profile



The above table represents the number of students enrolled on the census date. It does not include the student numbers from the ten bed Gna Ka Lun unit at Cambelltown. The school can cater for up to 63 high school students on-site and up to 17 high school students in our off-site learning centres.

Management of non-attendance

Each student who is enrolled at Rivendell has a personalised learning plan (PLP) that addresses a number of areas including school attendance if relevant. A significant number of students who attend Rivendell experience anxiety based school attendance difficulties. Their attendance is managed in a collaborative manner with clinical staff.

Workforce information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Workforce composition

Position	Number
Principal	1
Assistant Principals	3
Classroom Teachers	7
Outreach Teachers	2
District Guidance Officer	1
School Counsellor	1
Teacher Librarian	.4
Teacher RFF	.84
Unique supplementation	.2
School Administrative & Support Staff	11.922
Assistant Principals Learning & Support*	2
Assistant Principal Student Wellbeing*	1
Learning & Support Regional*	4.02
Vocational Transition Teacher*	1
Teacher Student Wellbeing*	.3
Total	36.68

The Australian Education Regulation, 2013 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

In 2013 Rivendell School staff did not include anyone who identified as being of indigenous background.

All staff indicated in the shaded area are those whose base school is Rivendell but whose direct service is across the South Western Sydney Region.

The regional Assistant Principals Learning and Support and the Vocational Transition teacher join with Rivendell School staff for professional development and attend the School Development Days including the annual conference for all staff working in ED/BD schools.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Qualifications	% of staff
Degree or Diploma	40
Postgraduate	60
NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation	12



Financial summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

Date of financial summary	30/11/2013
Income	\$
Balance brought forward	953133.62
Global funds	142826.22
Tied funds	93908.21
School & community sources	5500.00
Interest	28561.97
Trust receipts	392312.32
Canteen	0.00
Total income	1616242.34
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	24790.65
Excursions	0.00
Extracurricular dissections	10176.79
Library	0.00
Training & development	5291.55
Tied funds	97580.81
Casual relief teachers	6389.65
Administration & office	51191.91
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	4938.18
Maintenance	28732.91
Trust accounts	375777.14
Capital programs	0.00
Total expenditure	604869.59
Balance carried forward	1011372.75

Rivendell School holds funds in trust for South Western Sydney Region and for the Families First organization.

A full copy of the school's 2013 financial statement can be obtained by contacting the school.



School performance 2013

Academic achievements

Higher School Certificate (HSC)

In 2013 there were nine students either completing their HSC or completing a pathways towards their HSC. Of these nine students, two students completed their studies and gained entrance to their selected university to complete tertiary studies.

Record of School Achievement (RoSA)

Twelve students completed their Record of School Achievement. This was achieved through a combination of curriculum provided by SDEHS and Rivendell.

Significant programs and initiatives

Other Programs

Yaralla Program

The Yaralla program consists of two classes catering for students with mood disorders, psychotic illness or who are on the autism spectrum. This program provides a supportive environment for up to six students in each of the two classes.

The academic programs are provided by SDEHS, students' home school, OTEN and/or Rivendell teachers. Nursing staff conduct programs for students such as Mindfulness, psycho-educational discussion groups, individually based relaxation strategies and protective behaviours.

During 2013 the Yaralla program continued to deliver weekly Personal Development lessons focusing on Identity, Community and communication skills. A daily Circle Time program was introduced during the second semester. This program focused on engaging students through relationship-building and restorative practice, the development and enhancement of students' social skills and emotional literacy.

A Healthy Eating initiative was also commenced, which included an information evening supported by the Rivendell medical and nursing staff. A plant stall was held at the Kokoda Cafe markets to raise funds for seedlings for the establishment of the Yaralla vegetable garden.

In 2013, 22 students were supported through the Yaralla program:

- Six students returned to a mainstream school to continue their education.
- Two students received placements in support classes within mainstream schools.
- Three students received placements in other Schools for Specific Purposes.
- One student transitioned to TAFE and another to a Rivendell DEC program.
- Eight students remained in the Yaralla program and will continue their studies in 2014.

Lawson Program

The Lawson program caters for students with depression and anxiety disorders. Their individual academic program can be accessed through SDEHS, OTEN, TAFE and the Open High School. The program can cater for up to 6 students in each of the three classes.

Some of the highlights of student engagement in Lawson during 2013 were the Rock and Water, Drum Beat and Tame the Beast Programs with MTC Solutions. Excursions into SDEHS for curriculum support and student engagement were a great success as was a theatre visit to the Opera House. Lawson students benefited from programs run by therapeutic staff such as Mindfulness, Protective Behaviours, psycho-education and relaxation.

Lawson students also participated in art and music therapy and several participated in the Rivendell end of year concert. Group lessons with

specialist teachers in History, Geography, English and Maths were also a highlight of the academic year in Lawson.

In 2013 a total of 40 students were supported through the Lawson Program. 10 of these students continued in Lawson into 2014 while 26 transitioned to mainstream schools, home schooling, Sydney Distance Education and TAFE. One of our students completed their Higher School Certificate and six Students completed their School Certificate.

Future directions for the Lawson program include increasing our facility to develop and deliver curriculum with Rivendell specialist teachers and connecting students with vocational training organisations such Ostara in terms of future planning.

Walker Program

The Walker Unit caters for secondary students with treatment resistant mental illness. In 2013, the Walker Unit Learning Centre employed one full time teacher and one full time SLSO and was a ten bed ward with a plan to increase to 12 beds in 2014. As the number of students attending the learning centre in 2013 increased above 7 an extra teacher and SLSO were employed.

Students in the learning centre received work from either their mainstream school, SDEHS or had work programmed for them individually by Rivendell teachers.

Students also took part in Rivendell whole school initiatives including PDHPE group lessons and the Rivendell School achievement awards system. Students who were well enough to have leave from the ward were also offered Rivendell School workshops, whole school sport activities and access to activity days.

In 2013, 21 students were supported through the Walker Unit program:

- Five students transitioned to another special education setting.
- Two students transitioned to another hospital setting and one to a school-to-work program.
- Six of the students who were discharged were successfully studying their preliminary HSC year at the time of their discharge.



Sulman Program

The Sulman Program is an academic based program for students in Years 11 and 12. Sulman provides a small group flexible approach for students who have had difficulty attending mainstream schools.

Regular individual review meetings with students and their parents were introduced this year. These meetings assisted in clarifying academic pathways as well as enhancing communication between home and school.

To increase the students' knowledge base, regular visits to SDEHS were arranged to allow senior students to meet with specialist teachers. These visits also increased the students' social skills, confidence and travel experiences.

TAFE and TVET courses are becoming an increasing option chosen by Sulman students. These environments provide the opportunity for students to increase their knowledge and experience in identified career paths whilst also gaining units towards their Higher School Certificate.

In 2013, 21 students attended the Sulman Program in 2013. Ten of these students transitioned from Sulman in 2013:

- Two students enrolled at a university.
- Two students returned to a mainstream school.

- Six students enrolled into full-time TAFE courses.

In 2014 the Sulman Program will be moving to a larger building within the Rivendell complex. It is also anticipated that the Sulman focus will remain on providing students in Years 11 and 12 with academic stability and post-school planning.

Paterson Program

The Paterson program caters for secondary school students experiencing difficulties managing their behaviour in a mainstream school setting. It currently has one class with a maximum of seven students and is a structured, intensive program designed to provide students with opportunities to learn, improve and self-manage their behaviour.

Through consistent management and explicit teaching, students practice new skills and strategies to enable them to manage their own behaviour in a variety of settings. The long term goal for students in the Paterson program can include a variety of pathways such as integration into a mainstream school, enrolment at TAFE in 'taster' courses or TVET courses, school based apprenticeships or a combination of these.

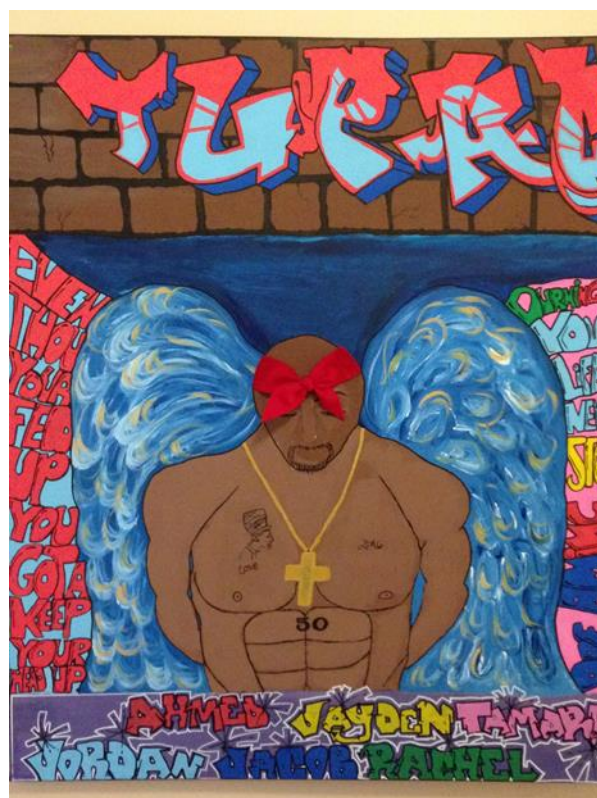
Students in the Paterson program participate in regular personal development lessons with the aim of improving relationships, communication, preparing the students for integration and TAFE, and to acknowledge student success. Opportunities to practice positive social skills are made available to students through daily social lunches with other programs, social morning teas to celebrate success and outings to local cafés. Students are involved with the planning, preparation and delivery of these activities.

This year, students were involved in an irrigation project which involved the planning, purchasing and construction of an irrigation system for the gardens in the Paterson program. All students were also involved in a whole class art project with the major work being displayed in the hallway of the main building.

In 2013, eight students were supported in the Paterson program:

- Four students successfully completed their RoSA.
- Two students successfully integrated back into a mainstream setting.

- Four students successfully completed TAFE Taster courses



Gna Ka Lun Program

Gna Ka Lun (GKL) is an acute Adolescent Mental Health Unit based at Campbelltown Hospital. Rivendell School operates a learning centre in GKL, staffed by two outreach teachers and the Rivendell specialist school counsellor.

The role of the GKL learning centre teacher is to provide young people with learning opportunities appropriate to their health so that they are able to maintain a connection with their educational pathway. GKL teachers liaise with each student's school to ensure this continuity of education and that the best possible return to school occurs.

Schools are advised when a student has been admitted to GKL and are requested to provide some background information which is passed on to the treating team. Communication is maintained with schools during the admission to:

- update them on their student's progress in the learning centre;
- notify them of a discharge date; and
- inform them of the community agency or mental health professional whose care the student will be transferred into.

In 2013, there were 74 admissions and nearly all these young people accessed the GKL learning centre.

Aboriginal education and Multicultural education

In 2013, Rivendell students experienced a number of high quality performances to support learning outcomes in both Aboriginal Education and Multicultural education. These performances also supplemented their distance education work across a number of curriculum areas.

In Term 1, Fred Reid (from the Daingattie tribe of North Western NSW) with the assistance of one of his sons presented *Let's Bridge the Gap*.

Fred's mission is to bring about a better understanding of Aboriginal people and their culture. Fred delivered his message in a fun, positive way as he talked of the history of his people, their traditional way of life and the challenges facing Indigenous people today.

The performance included dances of Australia's unique animals, the didgeridoo and its many sounds, stories from the Dreamtime, the symbolism of his body paint, traditional dress and artifacts. Aspects of traditional culture were woven throughout – clans, sacred rituals and laws governing male and female roles.

His deep respect and knowledge of Aboriginal culture, along with his gentle, humorous rapport with the students, made for a very enriching experience. The performance was tailored to the audience and participation was greatly encouraged.

In Term 2, Sean Dewar (from the Yindinji Kimoy clan of Northern Queensland) presented many different aspects of his culture which he has been studying with his elders since he was sixteen years old.

Sean shared his experiences through demonstration, explanation and participation, combining traditional and contemporary aspects. The areas covered included: traditional cultural dance, rap dancing and beatbox, didgeridoo, boomerang, spear throwing and spear launching demonstrations, bush foods and their medicinal properties, costumes, body painting and artwork.

Sean captivated students with his thoughtful and well-informed delivery. His performance demonstrated a special balance between entertainment, humour and information, which

ultimately brought a deeper understanding of his culture in a contemporary and traditional context.

In Term 3, Tony Mason introduced his audience to the rich and diverse culture of Polynesia from where he grew up. The students accompanied Tony on a bright, energetic journey of his ancestry to his homeland New Zealand. They learnt a basic Maori action song and then participated in the Haka (a Maori war dance). Tony also used the famous Maori poi balls to demonstrate rhythmical movements such as a helicopter and the flight of a bird. Through this creative environment of songs, chants and rhythms Tony demonstrated the deeper meaning of his culture, customs and spirit of the people of Polynesia.

Tony had a wonderful ability to communicate with the students to help foster an appreciation of his culture and to encourage them to embrace the multicultural society in which we live.

In Term 4, the focus was on West Africa with a performance by Pape Mbaye and Teranga. He is a Senegalese Griot: a poet, musician, storyteller and 'praise singer' renowned for his quick wit and sharp tongue. Combined with some talented African drummers, Papa Mbaye transported the students on a musical experience through the rhythms from the colourful continent of West Africa. As well as a variety drums, students recognised melodic instruments such as the flute and sousaphone. They were also introduced to the West African musical traditions of tama, djembe, doonoon, balafon, fula and Griot. Outta Africa is essentially a rhythm-driven journey through song and dance into the heart of Senegalese culture. What Teranga really did best was to bring the rhythm of life, to life!



Physical Education and Sport

In 2013, Rivendell School carefully selected a range of activities that comprised of two main areas of focus to maximise student participation in physical education and sport.

The sports committee decided this year to create two workshops that ran simultaneously and were referred to as the Active group and Active Plus group. One workshop focused on students who preferred to be challenged with new high level skills and performance exercises in a specific sport while the other workshop focused less on being physically active but equally challenging exercises during the session.

Rivendell School followed the PDHPE syllabus and focused on a particular sport and/or skill set for each term during the weekly allocated whole school sport and workshop times. In Term 1 the focus was on invasion games. For Term 2, team games were our focus, developing skills in basketball and netball. During Term 3, the net games focus was on the skill set required for volleyball and tennis. The focus for Term 4 was on developing the skills for cricket and tee-ball.

The enthusiasm and consistency of participation shown by the majority of students throughout the year was extremely pleasing to see. The sports committee met regularly to discuss progress and issues with sport at Rivendell such as curriculum access, sports resources and student engagement. We also built in a reward system that acknowledged students willingness to help others and show good sportsmanship behaviours.

Organised sport also played an important role in developing and maintaining positive peer relationships.

Transition

The Transition Coordinator works with students and staff from all programs to explore a variety of alternative pathways which support positive outcomes for the continuity of the student's education.

The role is varied at Rivendell School and supports students according to their needs. The focus is to look at a student's interest and goals and focus transition around achieving these goals. Some students are looking to integrate into a mainstream high school while others are focused on a vocational pathway.

For students whose focus is to return to a mainstream setting, the transition coordinator ensures that students in Year 10 are provided with opportunities to engage in work experience programs. A number of students were involved in interest based work experience including cafe work, construction and retail (trade industry).

Many students this year were involved in TAFE 'taster' and TVET courses to consolidate their educational pathway as well as providing them with some vocational training. A number of students enjoyed the 'taster' courses so much they then chose to continue on with further study in that area of interest.

A number of agencies were involved with Rivendell School to promote engagement in learning and assist students in reaching their vocational goals. MTC training solutions ran workshops throughout the year while Ostara assisted students completing a curriculum vitae and looking for work.



School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include:

- Surveys to staff and students
- Reflective evaluations from supervision meetings
- Feedback from parents at our regular information evenings and family meetings
- Feedback from health and nursing staff at our weekly case review meetings

- Feedback from mainstream schools at our regular integration meetings

School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013

School priority 1

Literacy and Numeracy

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Improved student learning outcomes for all students in literacy and numeracy.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- in collaboration with Rivendell Health staff, a timetable that prioritized the delivery of discreet classes for Year 9 and 10 students was introduced; and
- a timetable of subject specific visits from SDEHS teachers was negotiated to better support students' learning.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

- continue with discreet classes and include all students in Stages 4 and 5; and
- provide more in-depth analysis of student's abilities when preparing SDEHS applications to that student's work can have the appropriate adjustments made.

School priority 2

Student Engagement and Attainment

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Enhanced engagement in learning.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- the percentage of eligible students completing a TVET or TAFE Taster course was maintained at 71%; and
- the number of students in the Sulman program achieving their attendance goals increased to 65%.
- **Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:**
- continue to promote TVET and TAFE Taster courses and explore other registered providers so that all student's interests can be catered for; and

- continue regular review meetings for all students in the Sulman program who have attendance goals.

School priority 3

Curriculum and Assessment

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Increased time in quality learning for students.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- all classroom teachers achieving Professional Competence or above in Element 5 of the Professional Teaching Standards; and
- 87% of staff achieving competency in the ICT component of their professional learning plan.
- **Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:**
- professional learning to continue to focus on best practice for achieving the Professional Competence components; and
- the inclusion of an ICT component in the individual professional learning plans of all staff.



Professional learning

During 2013 all staff participated in professional learning consisting of school based training, supervision, peer tutoring, mentoring, online learning as well as courses run by the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) and external providers.

Individual staff members targeted areas to develop their skills through establishing and using their own Professional Learning Plan that focused

on school and DEC priority areas along with their particular roles in the school.

Our student wellbeing toolkit project under the Every Student, Every School funding for SSPs formed the basis for most of our professional learning in 2013. Staff received specialist training in how to develop training packages and in presentation skills. Our toolkit is a training package mainly for mainstream school staff specifically targeted to assisting students requiring support in the area of mental health. This package will be distributed to the wider education community in 2014 through school presentations and a conference shopfront.

The professional learning program for all staff has continued to result in staff being able to reflect on their practice, providing a positive impact on learning outcomes for students.

Program evaluations

Background

Traditionally students attending Rivendell have had their entire curriculum provided by outside sources with SDEHS being the main provider. While this has ensured that students across all stages have had access to subject specific teachers, it has not been conducive to students

being well prepared to return to a mainstream setting.

This year we established a *Learning Centre* in the Paterson building where students had the opportunity to attend for English, Maths, History and Geography lessons. Students from across all programs attended these lessons on a weekly basis.

The outcome of these lessons was to better prepare students for integration back to a mainstream setting by getting them to experience a:

- change of classroom
- change of teacher
- mixture of students other than those in their home room
- classroom atmosphere where discussion and turn-taking takes place.

Findings and conclusions

Some students found it difficult to leave the security of their home room, an environment they have been familiar with since enrolment. Despite this however, they were able to acknowledge that attendance at the learning centre helped with:

- self-confidence;
- goal setting; and
- becoming comfortable working with other students and teachers

Future directions

In 2014, we plan to continue with the *Learning Centre* concept and run simultaneous lessons for all students in Stages 4 and 5. This will allow students in Stage 6 to be able to attend a combined curriculum support lesson during this time.



About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school's practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school's future development.

Anne Reddie, Principal

Kim Bold, Assistant Principal

Rachael Spitzer, Assistant Principal

Andrew Dickinson, R/Assistant Principal

Heather O'Brien, School Learning Support Officer

The Rivendell School staff

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Parents can find more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the report and have the opportunity to provide feedback about the report at:

<https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/high-performance/annual-school-reports>